Episode #41 - The Lord of the Dance

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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. It's great to be here with you today. If you're joining us for the first time, we're thrilled to have you here. You're in for the theological ride of a lifetime. I have to give you a friendly heads up though, because you're gonna get a lot out of today's episode kind of as a standalone, but know that you are tuning into a discussion that's been unfolding for over a year and a half now. The podcast is
00:59
designed with a progressive structure in mind, kind of like a college course, where each episode or each class builds on the concepts and discussions of the previous classes. To truly grasp the depth of the ancient theological ideas that we're exploring, I highly recommend that at some point you listen to the podcast sequentially. This approach will allow you to follow the evolution of our discussions and
01:27
see how each episode contributes to a deeper understanding of the theological tenants taught by the ancients. And by doing this, you're gonna get a richer and a more nuanced perspective of the material that we cover. For example, today we're gonna explore some pretty important theological ideas. Many of them, if you're a new listener, are probably gonna be new to you. These ideas were as theologically familiar to the ancients.
01:55
as they are theologically foreign to us today like primordial waters, sea serpents, special weapons, chaos and order, battle between gods, the lit of hell and dancing. Now some of these ideas may sound familiar to you because you've read about them in a fantasy novel or something or you've seen them in epic movies or even acted them out in a popular video game but
02:23
What you likely don't know is that these novels and movies and video games are remnants of a deeply significant theology. A theology that the ancients themselves trace back to the very dawn of time. And a theology that we can trace back to literally the very first known written religious text on the planet. The Keshe Temple Hymn dated to 2600 BC.

02:49
If you'd like to listen to an audio recording of the Keshe Temple Hymn, it's pretty short. You can find it on our sister podcast, The Ancient Tradition Audio Rit. All of this is to say that in past episodes, we've developed the theological significance of things like the primordial waters and sea serpents and special weapons. And it all comes straight from what the ancients themselves wrote in their ancient texts.
03:18
They're all worth listening to, the episodes, because they'll give you a much more in-depth understanding of why the things we talk about on today's episode are significant. I absolutely guarantee that you'll learn something new in each episode. Take a road trip or something somewhere beautiful and binge listen on the drive there. I promise it will greatly expand your understanding of the world you live in. With that, let's jump in.
03:48
In today's episode titled, The Lord of the Dance, I wanna pick up where we left off in our last episode and share with you an absolutely remarkable narrative found in Hindu scripture that brings together in a single account so much of what we've discussed to this point on the program. And it ties all of those stubborn bits directly to dance.
04:14
After you listen to this account, it'll be really, really difficult to discount the contention that the religions of today are remnants of a religious tradition that was revealed to human beings as the ancients tell us by a divine source in deep antiquity. Before I jump into that remarkable account, I want to illustrate an important point. A point I just alluded to when I referenced fantasy novels, epic movies, and popular video games.
04:44
On this program, we focus on the stubborn bits, those elements of the ancient tradition that we can trace all the way back to the dawn of time and which stubbornly persist through the centuries right up to today. An example of this is sea serpents. I've already developed this quite a bit on the program, so I'm not gonna rehash the important theology behind the sea serpent again, but the sea serpent is a great example of a stubborn bit because we can trace it all the way back to ancient times.
05:13
to the likes of the Egyptian Apophis, the Mesopotamian Tiamat, the Greek Python, and we can trace it right up to today in the likes of the Loch Ness Monster, Godzilla, and the basilisk snake in Harry Potter. And really to all of the terrible monsters and dragons that we see in modern media. What we notice when we study the concept of the sea serpent over time is that
05:42
the narrative or story around the sea serpent moves from a religious context to a secular context. The meaning behind the sea serpent devolves. It loses the deep religious theology behind it as it moves into the realm of popular secular storytelling. Over time, the theology behind the sea serpent is either lost or the form in which we get it is highly corrupted or degraded. Yet,
06:11
the stubborn bit is still there. The sea monster is still alive and well today. Loads and loads of fantasy novels, video games, and movies center around slaying this awful monster. So if you

know what you're looking at, you can see clear indications of its ancient religious past, the theological context from which it originated. And as hard as some storytellers might try,
06:37
they can't actually ever fully extinguish the religious subtext. Everyone still knows, or still seems to know, that when Harry Potter battles the basilisk snake, the terrible monster, that it's a battle between good and evil. So even though Harry Potter is a deteriorated version of the original, everyone, at least subconsciously, seems to still know that Harry Potter
07:06
and the Harry Potter series is about and is addressing deeply religious concepts. Another great example of a stubborn bit and its subsequent deterioration is the Ring Dance. Archaeologists and anthropologists have traced the Ring Dance all the way back to Mesopotamia and Greece. But we clearly see secularized versions of the Ring Dance alive and well right up to this day.
07:35
in folk dances all over the world. When Germans dance around the Christmas tree in the town's center plaza, or when elementary children dance around the maypole to celebrate the end of the school year. Or how about a nursery rhyme? Yes, a nursery rhyme. See, if you've studied the ancient world and the religious context behind the ring dance,
08:05
You can see a corrupt remnant of this sacred dance even right up to today in a nursery rhyme. You just have to know what you're looking at. Little children across the United States and Europe still play this game every single day. And what nursery rhyme and game am I talking about? Well, let me help you out a little bit. I'll give you a big clue. The rhyme actually starts with the word ring.
08:34
Yes, ring. Did you figure it out? Or do you need another clue? If you need another clue, the second word is around. Ring around. Yes, a corrupt secularized version of the ring dance can be found in the nursery rhyme, ring around the rosy. The rhyme as most commonly known goes, ring around the rosy.
09:03
pocketful of posy, ashes, ashes, we all fall down. Now you might be thinking to yourself, wait a second, I thought that nursery rhyme was about the bubonic plague that killed millions of people in 1665. That's actually a common belief, but it's an entirely erroneous belief. In 2014, Steven Winnick, a folklorist at
09:30
the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress dug through all the annals of folklore at the Library of Congress and he found that several variations of the rhyme existed before this commonly known version, which he says, quote, none of which fits the plague interpretation, which means that the plague was not the origin of the rhyme. It had a different origin. Steve Round,
09:59
an English folklorist and librarian found a similar thing. And he said, quote, the plague origin is complete nonsense. Another guy by the name of John Solo, who looked into the rhymes background, concluded that the rhyme had no meaning at all. He says, quote, when it comes to

the meaning of the lyric, it's a nonsense song. The kids sang when playing a game. It doesn't mean anything because they didn't need it to. And it stuck around to this day because it was
10:28
easy to remember. Now, John's conclusion is easy to make if you don't know what you're looking at. So what is the rhyme's origin? Well, like John Solo, folklorists will tell you that they don't really know. They just know that it isn't the great plague. They've come up with a theory or two, and Stephen Winnick of the Library of Congress refers to one of these theories as the
10:57
theory of survival, which I really like. And this theory holds, quote, that cultural materials such as nursery rhymes preserve important information from the past that was otherwise forgotten. In this theory, a shard of pottery, a riddle, or a child's jingle could be the key that
11:26
is to interpret or decode the cryptic message within these fragments.
11:34
This is exactly what I'm arguing too. When we take a closer look at the rhyme, we find some interesting clues. For example, what are the children making a ring around? Rhyme tells us that they're making a ring around a quote, Rosie. Well, what in the world is a Rosie? Believe it or not, Rosie is the French word for rose tree.
12:03
Yep, these children are holding hands, making a ring, while singing and dancing around a tree. Now, why in the world would these children be singing and dancing around a tree? Well, if you've been listening to the program for a while, you know exactly why these children are dancing around a tree, forming a circum-punked. But I'm betting that very few of the folklorists who study this rhyme know why these children are making a ring, dancing around a tree.
12:32
You'd have to study the theology taught in the ancient tradition to know that. If you'd like to see an early depiction of children dancing and singing, ring around the rosy around a rose tree. I've posted one to the webpage for this episode. Let's turn to the second line now. Pocketful of posies. So what is a posy? Well, a posy is the English term for a small bouquet of flowers or in singular form.
13:01
single flower. So a pocketful of posies refers to a pocket full of flowers. Well, what flowers? Obviously they must be referring to roses. Roses that they plucked from the rose tree around which they are circle dancing. In other words, the children seem to be referencing loading their pockets up with the flowers, the fruit of the tree, as part of the dance. Now think on that.
13:33
When we turn to the third line of the rhyme, it doesn't seem to make much sense. Ashes, ashes. Why would the children say this? Well, folklorists have found that this part of the rhyme varies quite a bit. The very first known print version of the rhyme was published by Anne Stevens in 1855, and it actually says, awake, awake, instead of ashes, ashes. And awake, awake is a whole lot different than ashes, ashes.
14:03
I don't claim to know what is supposed to be meant by awake awake. I could come up with a lot of possibilities, but I'd be willing to bet that if we could find even older versions of the rhyme that

we'd find that it originally said, amen, amen, right there instead of awake awake. I of course have no evidence for this. We don't have earlier versions, but it just makes sense.
14:31
with what we know about the antiphonal chorus nature of the ring dance is performed in the ancient world, where members of the ring would sing the words of the song after the leader sang them, like a chorus does today, which is very similar to saying amen after a prayer. And what about the last line of the rhyme? We all fall down. Well, in one of the earlier variations of the rhyme, this line is actually all.
15:00
bow down. And in another variation, it's all kneel down. My guess is that these versions are a lot closer to the original. It makes complete sense that the dancers in the ring would show reverence to the tree by kneeling or bowing, and that over time this degenerated into the more corrupt form that we're familiar with today of we all fall down. So if I'm
15:30
ring around the rosy pocket full of posies. Amen, amen. All bow down.
15:41
What is clear is that when we combine the words of past variations, the popular nursery rhyme ring around the rosy with the circular formation of the dance around the rose tree and the choral nature of the singing that accompanies the dance around the tree, that this is a secularized corruption of the sacred ring dance performed by adherence of the ancient tradition in the ancient world.
16:07
This far into the podcast, you should be beginning to notice that so, so much of the world around you has its roots in the ancient tradition, from nursery rhymes to dragons to choirs to dancing to kings to architecture to swords to literature, and I can go on. I wanna continue this discussion by examining the presence of the ancient tradition in the Vedic tradition, in Hinduism, especially as it relates to the ring dance.
16:35
The count that I'm gonna take a look at is pretty darn amazing because it combines so many of the stubborn bits that we can trace back to the ancient tradition in a single account. It's pretty darn amazing. Before I jump into doing that though, I wanna quote David Leeming, you remember him. He's my go-to mythologist. Leeming makes a really important point about the interplay between universal mythic themes or motifs.
17:05
those stubborn bits and their cultural expression. He says the following on page 108 and 109 of his book World Mythology. Quote, to come to life, myths require cultural details. Greek myth is what it is because of Greek culture. Sumerian mythology clearly reflects the details of Sumerian culture.
17:35
That said, there are certain elements or motifs that exist in nearly all cultural mythologies and that can be said to transcend cultures. It's fair to say that within the cultural expressions are motifs or narrative structures that cross many cultural barriers. Basically, Leeming is telling us here that he
18:03

along with a cadre of mythologists have identified certain universal themes or motifs, which I argue have their origin in the ancient tradition. Present in world mythology, yet different cultures tend to express those universal themes, the stubborn bits, in uniquely cultural terms. So it's crucial when we analyze a particular myth to distinguish between the universal theme, the stubborn bit, and the cultural expression of that theme.
18:32
And we're going to do a little bit of that today as we look at this extraordinary account and found in Hinduism, known as Lord Krishna and then Nagaraja Kalia. Sounds like a loaded title, doesn't it? Before we get into this account, we need to take a look at the key players, Krishna and Kalia. In Hinduism, Krishna is one of the most widely worshiped and revered.
18:59
Hindu gods. He's believed to be the incarnation of Vishnu, one of the principal deities in Hindu's Trimurti, which is a trinity of supreme beings consisting of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. If you're familiar with the Christian tradition, you should see some obvious parallels here. In the iconography of Hinduism, Krishna is pretty easy to identify. He's usually depicted with blue skin playing a flute.
19:28
and we'll talk about the importance of the flute in our next episode. Kalea, on the other hand, was a terrible, multi-headed, venomous snake that lived in water. The monstrous sea serpent spent his days poisoning the river and terrifying the people who lived near the river. Kalea is sometimes referred to as Naga Raja. Naga is the word for snake in Sanskrit,
19:58
is the word for Lord or King. So when you put the two words together, Nagaraja, it means Lord or King of the snakes. And since he lives in water, we're clearly talking about a sea serpent here. Now that you know who Krishna and Kaliya are, let's jump right into the text as it's found in the Bhagavata Purana, which constitutes part of sacred Hindu literature. In Sanskrit,
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Bhagavata means follower or worshiper of Vishnu, who as we just saw is a member of the Hindu Trinity and of whom Krishna is an incarnation of. And Purana in Sanskrit, as I've mentioned before, means ancient or old. So we're talking about ancient or old writings related to the god Vishnu. Scholars believe the Bhagavata Purana was composed sometime between 500 and 1000 AD.
20:58
It's in the 16th chapter of the 10th canta of the Bhagavata Purana that we find the battle between Lord Krishna and Nagaraja Kalia. It's one of the most famous stories in Hinduism about the Lord Krishna. We're gonna read directly from the text starting in verse four. And this comes from the Anandadhar translation. The text reads, quote, in the Kalindi, the river,
21:27
There was a certain pool where Kalea, as the serpent was called, resided, and its water boiled because of the fire of his poison. Birds flying over it would fall dead into the waters. All plant and animal life on the shore died because it came into contact with the poisonous vapor that by the wind was carried from the waves. Let's stop here for a second to talk about a few things.
21:55

We learned from this text that the awful, venomous king of the snakes, Kalea, lives like we would expect, like most of the awful monsters we see in the ancient world, in water. He is a sea serpent. But why does he live in water? Well, we learned a long time ago in episode number 11, the mysterious primordial waters, that this snake lives in water because those waters represent the vast ocean or sea of chaotic…
22:25
disorganized, disordered elements that filled the pre-creative universe. The sea serpent dwelt there because he was wicked. He didn't uphold ma'a or zedek or as the Hindu call it, rita, righteousness. And because of that he didn't have the ability or power to organize the elements into something like a world. So he was relegated to living in the world of chaos, which the ancients symbolized by water.
22:56
Because the sea serpent doesn't uphold righteousness, the only thing that he's capable of producing is chaos, sickness, aging, death, and destruction, which is exactly what the Hindu account tells us about the sea serpent. The Hindu tell us this snake poisoned the waters. Poison, which we've learned on this program, symbolizes in part thermodynamic entropy, where everything moves from a state of order to disorder.
23:24
And when that happens, the only outcome is death, which is exactly what this text says. It says that when the birds flew over it, they died, and quote, all plant and animal life on the shore died. Everything that came in contact with the snake's poisonous vapor died. So at this point, everything in this Hindu account is perfectly in keeping with what the ancients taught about two stubborn bits, the primordial waters and the sea serpent.
23:55
There's a lot more to this, so if you haven't given the episodes on the primordial waters and the second law of thermodynamics, listen, they're worth your time. Right here's a really good time to talk about stubborn bits and the cultural expression of those stubborn bits. In this text, we clearly have a reference to the primordial waters. But farther down in the text, we learned that the Hindu give these primordial waters a specific location, a specific location in India.
24:24
The text tells us that the wicked serpent Kalia lived in the river Yumana. The river Yumana is an actual river in India. In fact, it's one of the largest rivers in India. It's a tributary, the second largest tributary of the Ganges River. So this is a great example of what David Leeming means by the cultural expression of a universal motif or stubborn bit. The Hindu take the primordial waters and express it.
24:52
culturally as an actual river in India. Kalea, the sea serpent, is also expressed in cultural terms. There are literally hundreds, if not hundreds of thousands of depictions of Kalea. And almost always, Kalea is depicted as a Naja Naja, which is an Indian cobra, a venomous snake with a large hood, which is native to the subcontinent of India.
25:21
We learned in episode number 15, Sea Monsters, Sea Serpents, and Leviathans, that the sea serpent is not a literal monster that exists. It's the symbol the ancients used to represent the wicked son of the high God, who was banished from the high God's kingdom for threatening to

usurp the high God's throne. So when we examine these ancient accounts, we can't get all wrapped up in the differences produced by cultural expression.
25:51
It doesn't matter if the sea serpent is represented as an Indian cobra or a dragon or a mythical Leviathan. It still represents the same thing theologically. The wicked son who rebelled against the high god. All right, back to the text. Let's begin again. In the Kalindi, there was a certain pool where Kalia, as a serpent was called, resided, and its water boiled because of the fire of his poison.
26:21
birds flying over it would fall dead into the waters. All plant and animal life on the shore died because it came into contact with the poisonous vapor that by the wind was carried from the waves. Krishna had descended to subdue the wicked. Seeing how severely the river was contaminated by the terribly effective powerful poison, he climbed in a Kadumba tree,
26:51
tightened his belt and jumped into the poisoned water. Oh, this verse is loaded with great stuff. Here, Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu, quote, descends to, quote, subdue the wicked one. He sees how the king of the snakes poison is contaminating everything it touches. So what does he do? He climbs a tree.
27:20
the Kadumba tree. At this point in the story, why in the world would Krishna be climbing a tree? I looked through the Hindu literature for an explanation for this and I couldn't find anything. Commentators don't seem to know why Krishna climbed the Kadumba tree before he jumped into the poisonous waters. They say things like, oh, he was just in a really playful mood. So like a child, he climbed a tree. Others say he did it to get ready to fight
27:50
Kaliya, which is actually what the text seems to suggest as well. Because once he climbed to the top of the tree, he slapped his arms and tightened his belt like someone getting ready for battle. What these commentators don't seem to know is that in the ancient world, this little detail of Krishna climbing a tree before going into battle is extremely important. According to the Hindu, this tree,
28:20
was a solitary tree that stood on the bank of the Yamuna River. We haven't talked about this on the program yet, but in the ancient world, key temples were built along the banks of rivers. For example, in Mesopotamia, in the ancient Sumerian city of Eridu, the temple of Enki, known as Isira, was built on the bank of the River Euphrates.
28:47
The temple stood there at least until 2200 BC when a Sumerian hymn from Iridu was written. The cuneiform tablet on which the hymn was written says this, quote, the temple is constructed with gold and lapis lazuli. Its foundation, which we've talked about on the program, on the Nether Sea, Opsus is filled in by the river of Sippar, which is the Euphrates, it.
29:16
stands. O Isira, the name of the temple, may thy king stand within thee. And in Cuneiform tablet 306, plate 3, lines 11 to 15, we read how there was a sacred tree, the sacred Coscano tree in Anki's temple, which sat on the bank of the Euphrates river. The tablet reads,

29:46
of Enki, his pure and beloved dwelling, the temple. He built for him of his ancient Kiskanu tree, its place he restored for it. Geo-Wittigrim, who examined this text, wrote this of the tree in Enki's temple, quote, I wish to point out that this tree is erected where Eridu is situated. It is stated that the tree is planted in the sanctuary.
30:15
We are carried to the conclusion that the tree, being a symbol of the deity, is situated in or near the sanctuary. When we read about Krishna climbing the Kadumba tree that stood along the bank of the Yamuna River, we clearly see a connection here to the Cascano tree that stood along the banks of the Euphrates River, a tree which stood in the center of Enki's temple.
30:46
When we see accounts like this, where a solitary tree sits on the banks of a river, we know the tree represents a holy sanctuary or temple, the sacred dwelling place of God. You already know from listening to this program that the sacred tree, which Wendigrind just says, represents the deity or God, stood in the heart of the Garden of Eden, the garden sanctuary. So when we read of Lord Krishna climbing a tree,
31:13
before going into battle against the terrible King of the Snakes. We know that it signifies more than just a playful pre-battle act. It signifies that he prepared for his battle against the snake by first entering God's holy sanctuary and second by, quote, climbing or ascending to God's throne, where we presume from what we've read in other ancient texts, that he was given special weapons and armor.
31:42
we saw with Marduk with which he could go to battle and with which he could successfully slay the dragon. Now some astute Hindu may recognize this and just not be stating it. I don't know because very much in keeping with the ancient tradition, Hindus associate gods with trees. In Hinduism, the sacred tree is usually culturally expressed as the pipell tree, a sacred fig tree.
32:11
Brahma, get this, is associated with the roots of the tree and very, very interestingly, Vishnu, who Krishna is considered the incarnation of, is associated with the tree's trunk, which will be incredibly significant in a couple of months. At any rate, listen to what Alka
32:39
in an article published in Pharmacognoshew Review titled Kadumba, a miraculous tree having enormous pharmacological implications. He wrote, quote, The Kadumba is one of the ornamental plants with religious significance. It has crucial significance in Indian mythology and religion. Various religions in India have strongly believed that God lives in
33:09
side a Kadumba tree. The Hindu believe God resides inside this tree. This is perfectly in keeping with what we just saw in ancient Mesopotamia and what we saw in ancient Egypt with Osiris whom Isis found embedded in the trunk of a tamarisk tree. So it's pretty darn significant in this account that Krishna climbs and the word climb here is very important in
33:37
We'll talk a lot more about it in the future. The Kadumba tree in preparation for his battle against the wicked sea serpent, Kalia. Here's the neatest part about the Kadumba tree though. The real

Kadumba tree. The Kadumba tree that actually exists in India. Get this, it actually has anti-venom properties. Yes, you heard that right.
34:05
the Kadumba tree has anti-venom properties. I quote Davidi again. He says, quote, many Indian medicinal plants are recommended for the treatment of snakebite. It has been found that methanolic extract of the root bark of the Kadumba tree can be used as an antidote against snakebite. Okay, so I kind of geek out when I see things like this.
34:33
I love how the Hindus picked a tree in the real world that had anti-venom properties to be the tree that Krishna climbs before he goes to battle against the venom breathing serpent in the waters. Don't lose sight of the fact that we aren't talking about a real sea serpent or tree here. The sea serpent and the tree are symbols used to teach us about spiritual realities.
34:58
What we're supposed to glean from this text theologically is that Krishna prepared for his battle against the awful Kaliya, the rebellious son, by entering the holy sanctuary or temple where God dwelt, and while there, acquired something from God, from the tree, that could either protect him against Kaliya's venomous bite or heal him once he was bitten.
35:26
I have to draw your attention here to the healing properties of this sacred tree, which we discussed in depth in episode number 24, Oh Christmas Tree. If you recall, it was with the healing gift of Myrrh, the sap that bleeds from the camphora myrrh tree, that the wounds of the king, the hero, and the pauper are healed, and with which kings and Christians were anointed.
35:55
It's really astounding that we're getting the exact same symbolism in India. Here, Krishna climbs a tree, the bark of which can protect and heal him from the poisonous attack of the terrible sea serpent Kalia. We're getting the same theological message here among the Hindu about the importance of the tree, the protective and healing properties of the tree, and the ability of the tree to help Krishna conquer the dragon.
36:26
If you're interested in taking a look at an Indian depiction of the Kadumbha tree on the banks of the river Yamuna, you can find it on the webpage for this episode. All right, let's return to the text. Krishna had descended to subdue the wicked, seeing how severely the river was contaminated by the terribly effective powerful poison. He climbed in a Kadumbha tree, slapped his arms,
36:55
tightened his belt and jumped into the poisoned water. When the snake heard the sound that Krishna produced while he playing like a big elephant with his mighty arms was engaged in whirling the waters around, Kalia rushed forward, unable to tolerate the violation of his territory. Okay, I've got to stop here again. I apologize. I know that we haven't gotten very far in the text, but I have to stop.
37:24
Here we see another stubborn bit. This one directly connected to the creation because remember in the Anuma Elish, Marduk battled the awful sea serpent Tiamat before the creation. Marduk had to conquer Tiamat before the chaotic primordial elements could be ordered into the

creation we know as the earth. Here in this Hindu text, we read that Krishna jumps from the top of the Kadumba tree.
37:53
which I'd argue is akin to coming out of the holy of holies or the cracking open of the cosmic egg into the venom-filled chaotic primordial waters. And what does the text tell us that Krishna does once he's in the waters? It says, quote, playing like a big elephant with his mighty arms was engaged in whirling the waters around. Okay, why would Krishna do this?
38:22
Well, if you've read a lot of ancient texts, it's pretty easy to parse out why. This is a key element in creation narratives. Do you remember in the Japanese creation accounts how Izanami and Izanagi stirred the primordial waters with a cosmic spear? Or how in Mesoamerica among the Maya, Huracan, from which we get our word hurricane, whipped the primordial waters into a vortex? Well,
38:49
Krishna whirling around his arms like a quote, big elephant is the cultural equivalent of the creative act performed by Izanami in Hurrican. You can read more about this in episode number 13, the incomprehensible brooding wind.
39:08
It's clear from this little detail that the original source for this Hindu account actually contained an account of the battle that took place before the creation. The original creation context of this account will be really important in our next episode. Let's return to the text. Quote, when the snake heard the sound that Krishna produced while Krishna.
39:34
playing like a big elephant with his mighty arms was engaged in whirling the waters around. Kaliya rushed forward, unable to tolerate the violation of his territory. And while Krishna, so attractive in his yellow garments, note that they're yellow and as delicate as a glowing white cloud. With the Shravitsa, now
40:02
The Shrivita is really interesting. It's actually a triangle-shaped mark that Vishnu wears on his chest on the right side. It's considered auspicious in Hinduism. His smiling, beautiful face and with his feet, which resembled the inside of a lotus. Note the emphasis that the text places on Krishna's feet here. This is important.
40:30
The text tells us that Krishna's feet quote, resembled the inside of a lotus. So we're getting a symbolic connection here between Krishna's feet and a lotus flower. And I'd love to talk about the feet flower connection, but I'm gonna have to save that for another time. Just keep it in your back pocket. I continue, thus Krishna fearlessly was playing. He was angrily bitten in the chest by him and enveloped
40:59
in his coil. In this verse we see that Krishna is wounded by the terrible Kaliya. Kaliya sinks his venomous fangs into Krishna's chest. I don't have time to get into the importance of the wounded hero here, but I wanted to point it out so that you are aware that this stubborn bit is in the text too. If you're interested in learning more about the wounded hero, you can find a whole episode dedicated to it on our companion website, TheA

41:30
just check out episode number 22, The Wounded Hero. I hope you're starting to see how nearly every major stubborn bit we've talked about on the program is showing up in this Hindu account. Don't lose sight of how truly amazing this is. This account of the battle between Krishna and Kaliya is absolutely loaded with the ancient tradition. And it's evidence that Hinduism is a descendant of the ancient tradition.
41:59
Let's continue. Quote, his smiling beautiful face and with his feet, which resembled the inside of a lotus, thus fearlessly was playing. He was angrily bitten in the chest by him and enveloped in his coils. Seeing Krishna in the grip of the snake's coil being immobilized, his dear friends, the tenders of the animals were greatly disturbed.
42:28
With their intelligence bewildered, in pain and full of remorse and fear, they fell to the ground for they had dedicated everything, themselves, their relations, their wealth, their wives, and objects of desire to Krishna. The cows, the bulls, and the she calves, with their eyes fixed on Krishna, cried out loudly in great distress while they fearfully lamented in shock.
42:58
thereupon most fearsome ominous disturbances arose in Vraja. This is the name of Krishna's village. Three kinds of signs to be observed in the sky, upon the earth and in the living beings, heralded imminent danger. When the people see Krishna, quote, "'In the grip of the snake's coils being immobilized, the people follow the ground. The animals are…
43:28
quote, greatly disturbed. The animals cry out, they're in distress, and terrible signs are seen in the sky and on the earth. At this point in the account, the people go to the edge of the Yamuna River. Verse 19 reads, quote, when they at a distance saw Krishna, motionless with the lake enveloped by the coils of the snake body.
43:54
and the cowherd boys lying unconscious in the flooded water with all the animals crying around them. They in their distress were delivered to the greatest despair. Now that their sweetheart was seized by the serpent, the gopies, now gopies are female cow herders, who in their hearts were so attached to him, the supreme unlimited personality, while remembering his
44:24
glances and words were tormented by the greatest agony being deprived of their darling. Holding back Krishna's mother, they with their eyes fixed upon her son equally pained shed a flow of tears." The textual emphasis here on women watching the motionless Krishna as well as the textual emphasis on Krishna's mother is pretty darn interesting because
44:52
It parallels the account given of Christ's crucifixion in John chapter 19 verse 25, which reads, quote, Now they're stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene. And Matthew chapter 27 verse 55, which reads, and many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him.
45:22
Let's continue. Krishna put an end to his imitation of the mortal away, the illusion of his mortality, and rose up from the coils of the serpent. This is interesting. The text tells us here that in the

moment Krishna lay motionless in the water, he transcended the limitations of the physical world of mortality, of death, which we learned in past episodes as a consequence of the snake's
45:51
presence and quote, rose up from the coils of the serpent. So we're getting hints of a resurrection motif here. The text continues quote, by expanding his body, this is Krishna, the serpent was forced to let him go because of the pain. Kaliya thereupon furiously raised his hoods high.
46:18
Hoods here refers to the hood of the Indian Cobra. Multiple hoods here refers to a serpent with multiple heads. Breathed heavily through his nostrils that were like two vessels of boiling poison and stared the Lord in the face with eyes like firebrands. Kalia moving his double pointed tongue to and fro between his two lips. And with his terrible look full of poisonous fire,
46:48
eagerly spying for an opportunity to strike, was by Krishna playfully approached from all sides by moving around him like he was the king of the birds. It's at this point in the story that things get really, really interesting. What will Krishna do next? The awful snake staring him down, waiting for the perfect time to strike. The battle isn't over. What will Krishna do?
47:19
Well, you'll never guess. Just listen to this. Verse 26 reads, quote, thus turning around him, Krishna exhausted him and forced him to bend down his highly raised shoulders. Krishna thereupon climbed on top of the broad heads, and then as the original one, the first spiritual master of all the arts, started to dance.
47:49
So what does Krishna do when the snake stares him down, looking for the opportune moment to strike? Krishna forces the snake to bend his head down, all of his heads down, and he climbs on top of the snake's hoods and starts to dance. Krishna starts to dance. To the average reader, this doesn't make any sense. Why would he do this? Why would he start dancing on the snake? But you listeners are no longer average readers.
48:18
For those of you who haven't listened to our last two episodes, we know that by the word dance, the text is referring to Krishna engaging in some kind of very, very important sacred rite. A rite which we learned in our last episode from Lucian of Samasata was incredibly ancient and of divine origin. On page 63 of the complete works of Plato,
48:46
Plato described this ancient dance as a partnership with the gods. Plato says this, quote, the gods were given to us as partners in the dance and have granted us the pleasurable perception of rhythm and harmony. They animate us and lead us in the dance. Let's return to the battle with Krishna and Kaliya and see what happens next.
49:16
Krishna exhausted him and forced him to bend down his highly raised shoulders. Krishna thereupon climbed on top of the broad heads. And then as the original one, the first spiritual master of all the arts, he started to dance. His lotus feet in touch with the snake, therewith turned red from the light of the many jewels on the heads.
49:42

Note in this passage how the sea serpent has jewels on his heads. This is keeping with the other accounts that we've read of the dragon appearing like gold or having jewels. Recall that those are reminders of the glory the sea serpent or the rebellious son had acquired before he rebelled against the high god. Note also here how the jewels on the wicked Kaliyah's heads tanked.
50:11
Krishna's feet the color red. Let's continue. Pay close attention in this next section to how quote, Krishna's servants and their wives seem to join in the dance along with quote, heavenly singers and perfected souls, which sounds like what Plato was hinting at by playing drums and singing songs and giving praise.
50:41
The text reads, that very moment, Krishna's servants arrived together with their wives, the heavenly singers and the perfected souls, the sages and the venerable souls. Taking notice of him being engaged in his dancing, they all were greatly pleased and expressed their joy.
51:05
with playing two-sided clay drums, smaller drums and larger drums, and with songs and flowers and other forms of praise. Whichever of Kaliya's 101 heads would not bow down, my best one were immediately trampled down by Krishna. The Lord Krishna, who with his kicking feet punished the evil ones, made the serpent that still moved
51:34
but the life of which ran at its end, spit horrible poisonous blood from its mouth and nostrils while it experienced the greatest anguish. Poison oozed from his eyes, and whichever vomiting head that he breathing heavily in his anger would rise, Krishna, while dancing with his foot, forced down into submission. The dance is clearly beginning to take effect.
52:03
The dance is destroying the awful sea serpent. Poison is oozing from its eyes. Its 101 heads are vomiting. Krishna's dancing feet are forcing the sea serpent into submission. A couple of episodes ago, we talked about the insignificance in the ancient world of the placement of the hero's foot on the enemy's head or neck as a sign that the hero had triumphantly slayed the dragon. And here we see the same thing.
52:31
Here, Krishna's foot forces the sea serpent into submission. In India, depictions of Krishna, his foot on Kaliya's head, is one of the most popular representations of this text. You can find some artistic representations of this on the webpage for this episode. The text continues. Perfusely vomiting blood, with his numerous hoods broken, and with his body defeated,
53:00
by Krishna's amazing dancing. I love this line. Kaliya is defeated by Krishna's amazing dancing. The text continues. Seeing that the serpent got tired of the heavy weight of the heels of Lord Krishna, in whose abnimum the entire universe is found, and this, his umbrella-like hoods, speaking of Kaliya, were shattered by Krishna's
53:29
trampling. It's pretty obvious from the text that it was by way of the dance that Kaliyah's destruction was assured. It was by way of the dance that Krishna was able to slay the dragon.

That's what this Hindu text is teaching us. It's an absolutely remarkable text in terms of the theology that's being taught here. At this point, the wicked Kaliyah is on the verge of death.
53:59
the terrible snakes consorts, come and beg Krishna not to kill Kaliya. And what does Krishna do? The text reads, quote, "'Thereupon Krishna released him, the snake, whose heads were defeated by his trampling feet.'" This is interesting. Through the dance, Krishna defeats Kaliya, but he is not dead.
54:28
The text tells us that Krishna quote, releases him. But what does that mean? For the answer to that, we need to keep reading. Verse 60 reads, quote, The Supreme Lord Krishna said, quote, You, O serpent, must not stay here any longer. Go directly to the ocean with your folk. So instead of extinguishing Kaliya's life,
54:57
What does Krishna do? He banishes him to quote the ocean, along with his quote folk. Krishna banishes him along with his minions to the realm of chaos, to the realm of chaotic, disorganized, disordered elements, to the only place in the cosmos where he can rightfully belong. Kalia's banishment to the waters of chaos.
55:25
rather than His permanent annihilation is actually a very important theological point, which we'll discuss in coming days. In verse 63, we're told that Krishna left the mark of His feet on the snake. In verse 63, Krishna says this to the wicked snake, quote, You are marked by my feet. That's one to ponder.
55:52
Chapter 16 ends with the following, quote, immediately after Kalia's departure to the island in the ocean, the nectarine water of the Yamuna River became free from poison by the grace of the Supreme Lord, who for his pastimes had assumed a human form. Kalia, along with his minions, depart and the land
56:22
is restored. Can you imagine the joy and the festivities that took place after this? I imagine that it was quite a celebration.
56:32
took an entire episode to walk you through this Hindu account to demonstrate how deeply the ancient tradition runs through the Hindu tradition. The evidence here is pretty incontrovertible. I think it's remarkable. When we focus on the stubborn bits, we see the same theology is taught all over the globe from
57:03
When you saw the title of today's episode, the first thing that you may have thought of was Ireland and Michael Flatley's famous production, Lord of the Dance. You might've even wondered while you were listening to this episode, if there was any relationship between Flatley's highly spirited Lord of the Dance, the sacred ancient ring dance, and Krishna's dancing on the head of the hideous sea serpent, Kyla. And guess what?
57:32
there absolutely is. According to Catherine Burton and Caitlin Buchanan, who studied the origin of Irish dance, Irish dance can be traced back to the Druids. To understand who the Druids

were, we have to start with the Celts. The Celts were a group of Indo-European peoples who lived in the territory that we now call Europe as early as 1200 BC. Among the Celts,
58:00
there was a high ranking priestly class known as the Druids. Listen to what Wikipedia says about the meaning of the name Druid. Based on all available forms, the hypothetical proto-Celtic word Druid may be reconstructed as Dru-Wid-Is, whose original meaning is traditionally taken to be Oak.
58:30
knower based on the association of druids beliefs with oak trees. Encyclopedia Britannica says this of the name druid quote their name may have come from a celtic word meaning knower of the oak tree. Of course I find this hugely significant. Wikipedia goes on to say this of the name druid quote
58:59
Nowadays, it is more often understood as originally meaning, quote, one with firm knowledge or a great sage or good knower. Two elements go back to the Proto-Indo-European roots, Daru and Wid, which mean to see. So to know the oak tree would be to know God, like a sage or seer, to see God.
59:29
Okay, so how is all of this connected to the Lord of the Dance? Well, Burton and Buchanan tell us that contemporary Irish dance has its root in the rituals that these Druid priests performed. They write, quote, "'It is believed the dance was part of pagan rituals "'performed by the early Druids.'" Now listen to this. "'They are said to have done
59:58
circular dances around sacred trees. Yes, you heard that correctly. Druid priests used to perform a circle dance around a sacred tree. This was done, we know, at least around 400 AD. And it's believed that it's from this ritual dance that Irish dance was derived. According to the Boland School of Irish Dance,
01:00:27
Folk dances similar to the Druid Circle dance were performed once a year at a huge festival known as the Anach. And you'll never guess where this festival was held. The Bolin School of Irish Dance tells us the following, quote, the roots of Irish dancing come from the Celts and the Druids who roamed the island before the onset of Christianity.
01:00:57
dancing, usually in a circular fashion around sacred trees. Although these dancers are different from modern Irish dancing, traces of the formations and patterns can still be seen. A thousand years ago, music and dance were a huge part of Celtic life. At a fesh, which is a festival, Celtic communities came together to celebrate music and dance at the Hill of Tara.
01:01:27
Then the seat of the High King of Ireland and the epicenter of Celtic life, a huge fesh known as the Anach, the great festival, was held once a year. So where did the Celts perform the circle dance? At the Hill of Tara. This is hugely significant. Do you remember what the Hill of Tara is? This is the exact location in Ireland where the Leofoil.
01:01:55

The phallus-shaped stone stands in the county of Meath in Northern Ireland that we discussed in episode number 36. If you recall, this stone stood in the kingdom of Meath, the kingdom of the middle, the sacred center of Ireland. And you probably don't remember this, but speaking of the Hilatorra, the word tara is the Anglicanized version of the word tamer. This word is believed to come from the Proto-Celtic word
01:02:25
which you see shares the word tem, which we've previously talked about on the program in reference to the Roman word temenos, the Latin word templum in the English word temple. So it's gonna come as no surprise that tara, which comes from the word temeris, means sanctuary or a space cut off for sacred ceremonies. And what was one of the things
01:02:51
they did at the great festival that was celebrated at the stone at the Laeafoil. The sacred ring dance. So here we are on a hill in the middle of Ireland around a stone that marks the center of the world and the Celts are performing the ring dance there. Here we are thousands and thousands of miles away from India and we're getting the same theology
01:03:21
Listen to what else the Boland School of Irish Dance has to say. Quote, the carol was a common Norman dance that was performed in conquered Irish towns and villages. The carol involved one singer placed in the middle of a circle of dancers who then followed his singing and danced accordingly. For the next few centuries, dancing naturally evolved.
01:03:51
formations became common. So here we see that chorus aspect of the dance where the leader in the middle sang and danced and then the rest of the dancers followed. But we also learn here that over time the circle dance evolved into line dancing, both of which we see quite a bit in Flatley's production of The Lord of the Dance. The Boland School of Irish Dance notes quote, religious
01:04:20
traditional cause for dancing. All goes back to the religious aspect. From this, we see the roots of Irish dance is performed in Flatley's Lord of the Dance, go back to ritual dancers performed by Celtic priests, the Druids. And I, of course, argue like Lucian Samasita that this dance goes back way farther to the first ancestors.
01:04:50
And one more thing, the storyline in Flatley's Lord of the Dance is in conformity with the ancient tradition too. It's also in keeping with the battle between Krishna and Kaliya found in the Bhagavata Purana. See, Flatley's Lord of the Dance tells the story of a mystical figure, the Lord of the Dance, who uses the power of dance to defeat Dandorcha, the Lord of Darkness.
01:05:20
who wants to take over planet Ireland. If you haven't seen this show, you should. It's a high energy, wonderful time. There's a point where the Lord of the Dance and the Lord of Darkness face off and battle each other through dance. And the Lord of the Dance triumphs and restores joy and harmony to Ireland, just like we see in Hinduism and the Bhagavata Purana.
01:05:50
From today's episode, I hope you see that Flatley's Lord of the Dance, the account of Nagaraja, Kaliya, and Krishna, the Hindu Lord of the Dance, and the nursery rhyme or ring around the

rosy all have their origin in the ancient tradition. Who knew? In our next episode, we'll talk about how this dance is directly connected to the creation.
01:06:20
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.
01:06:33
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Episode #42 - An-Ki - The Earth in Heaven's Embrace

https://theancienttradition.com/42-an-ki-the-earth-in-heavens-embrace/

00:00
Music
00:09
You're listening to The Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.
00:25
Welcome to the Ancient Tradition. It's great to be with you today. I'm your host, Jack Logan. Before I get going here, I wanna tell you about our sister podcast, the Ancient Tradition Audio Rit. That podcast is important because it has full audio recordings of the texts that we talk about in this program, like the Enuma Elish, the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Book of Joseph and Azanath, along with a lot of others.
00:51
In our last episode, I mentioned the Mesopotamian text, the Assyria temple text, which describes the Assyria temple, home to the sacred Kiskanu tree, as being situated right along the banks of the Euphrates river. Last week, I decided to upload an audio recording of that text to AudioWrit. So if you're interested in checking it out, just search for the ancient tradition AudioWrit, wherever you get your podcasts.
01:19
or you can also find it on our companion website, thea It's a pretty short text, it's pretty easy to follow, and I've even added a little bit of commentary. So if you are interested in listening to the ancients in their very own words, I recommend giving those ancient texts a listen. For today's

episode, I had originally planned to cover the link between the Ring Dance and the creation, but…
01:49
I've decided that doing that is gonna take us too far a field from where we are right now in the podcast. So I'm gonna save that material for when we dive into religious ritual, which may be a little while yet. So today we're gonna return to the creation. Up to this point, we've been talking about the major themes, the stubborn bits that the ancients taught in their texts and in their myths and symbols and in their architecture.
02:16
that we can find remnants of right up to today in the religions of the world. It's the contention of this program that these stubborn bits constituted fundamental theological doctrines taught in the world's original religious tradition, which we refer to on this program as the ancient tradition. So let's start by taking a minute to recap.
02:44
the stubborn bits that we've covered to this point. The ancients taught, number one, the doctrine that the precreative universe consisted of a vast, endless expanse of matter. Matter which was disorganized and chaotic and disordered. Matter that was in a state of complete thermodynamic entropy.
03:09
Matter which the ancients refer to symbolically as water or a sea or an ocean. Scholars refer to this vast expanse of ordered elements as the primordial waters or the primordial sea.
03:24
Number two, the second thing that the ancients taught is that a divine being appeared over the disordered chaotic elements. The ancients used all kinds of symbols to convey this. Sometimes it was via the cracking open of a cosmic egg from which God emerged like a brilliant sun, kind of like the yolk of an egg and appeared over the waters. The ancients often associate the emergence of God from the cosmic egg
03:52
or the gourd with a brilliant light, which is really similar to modern day astrophysicists' notion of the Big Bang. Other times, the ancients portrayed God appearing above the primordial waters as a goose or a brilliant bird or a phoenix that soared above the waters.
04:12
Number three, the ancients tell us that after appearing above the waters, God commanded by divine authority, the disordered primordial elements to organize themselves into a creation, into ordered matter. The ancients, in particular the ancient Egyptians, referred to this efficacious ability of God's word or commands to cause things to happen as divine utterance.
04:41
The ancients tell us that God commanded the elements to move from a state of disorder to a state of order, reversing thermodynamic entropy. And they tell us that the elements did. Number four, the ancients consistently taught that after God commanded the elements to order themselves, a wind, which represented
05:09
something coming out of God's being brooded over the primordial waters. The ancients tell us this brooding caused the elements to whirl in a vortex or a circular motion similar to a hurricane.

The ancients tell us that the divine essence that came out of God permeated every single element right down to the subatomic level. Number five, the ancients tell us that
05:37
The reason God had the ability to command the elements to move from a state of total disorder, which in scientific speak is thermodynamic entropy, to a state of order, which all of the current laws of physics tells us is impossible in a closed system, was on account of God's upholding righteousness. And this was known among the ancients, as Maat, Tzedek, Rita, the Tao,
06:07
The ancients unequivocally taught that God had the ability to reverse the second law of thermodynamics, to replace chaos with order because he upheld rightness or righteousness.
06:26
Number six, the ancients tell us that one upheld righteousness by following the laws of the cosmos or the laws of heaven. They tell us that in the heavens, one of God's sons rebelled against the high God and the laws of heaven when he tried to usurp the high God's throne. This rebellious son who is symbolized uniformly in the ancient world as a sea serpent or monster
06:55
was banished from the high gods kingdom and exiled to the outer realms of chaos. The realm of chaotic, disorganized, and disordered elements, the primordial waters, which is why the rebellious sun is almost always portrayed as a sea monster or a water dragon. Number seven, the ancients tell us that in a council that took place in the heavens before the earth was created,
07:25
another one of the high god's sons stepped forward and volunteered to battle the rebellious son who was threatening the high god's kingdom. The ancients tell us that before this son, referred to in the ancient texts quite often as the beloved son, could obtain the authority to reverse the second law of thermodynamics. He first had to conquer the sea dragon, the rebellious son who lived in those
07:54
Among scholars, this battle is referred to as the Great Primordial Theomache. Number 8. The ancients tell us that the high god gave the beloved son special weapons and armor in preparation for his battle against the rebellious son. Special weapons and armor which the ancients symbolized as weapons like swords and bows and arrows and maces and nets.
08:24
indispensable in helping him battle and conquer the awful sea dragon. And as we learned in the last two episodes, important religious rituals like the ring dance were vital in the defeat of the dragon. Number nine. The ancients tell us that a terrible battle took place. A battle which the beloved son triumphantly won.
08:54
The ancients tell us that the son of the high god conquered the rebellious son who aimed to destroy him, spiritually destroy him and usurp his father's kingdom. The beloved son of the high god victoriously triumphed over the dragon. And having done so, he gained the authority to command the elements through divine utterance. Number 10.
09:24
The ancients tell us that upon conquering the sea dragon, the high god crowned the victorious son, a heavenly king, gave him the power to divinely utter and granted him a kingdom over

which he could reign as king. Having perfectly upheld ma'at or tzedek, he could be trusted, fully trusted to rule in rightness.
09:52
as a heavenly king over a new heavenly kingdom.
09:58
Number 11, the ancients tell us that upon defeating the sea dragon, this newly crowned heavenly king began the material creation of his new kingdom by commanding the elements to form the world that you and I are currently standing on, the earth. Number 12, the ancients tell us that
10:26
as the heavenly king looked down upon the disordered elements that he was troubled because there was no place for him to rest from his battle with the sea dragon. He had no home or royal palace in which to dwell in his new kingdom. So he initiated the creation of this world by first forming a sanctuary or temple where he could dwell.
10:56
Number 13, the ancients tell us that before he built the sacred sanctuary or temple where he could rest, he first built a firm rock foundation on which his temple could be built. Referred to in the ancient literature as the foundation stone. And where in the cosmos did he place the foundation stone? The ancients tell us that he placed the foundation stone for his temple in the very
11:25
center of the world.
11:29
Number 14. In the ancient record, the ancients describe the newly crowned Heavenly King's temple sanctuary as a primordial mound or a mountain sanctuary or a garden sanctuary. And they tell us that it was from this sacred temple palace located at the center of the world that the earth began to expand.
11:55
gradually forming into a fully ordered and harmonious creation that we understand today as the earth. These 14 stubborn bits dominate the ancients accounts of the creation. These are the main tenets the ancients taught about the creation and we find them taught over and over and over again in the ancient record and all across the globe.
12:24
Okay, so what do the ancients tell us next? Well, the most famous detailed account given of the creation is found in Judeo-Christianity in the book of Genesis. And there we learned that God created the earth in a very orderly manner. We learned that over a series of seven days, he progressively perfected the creation of the earth. And you should note in the Genesis account, the prominent use of the number seven,
12:53
And that's because the number seven is tightly associated in ancient texts with temple liturgies and initiation rights. So I'm going to save our discussion on the Genesis creation account for when we talk about ancient temple rights. Just note that many scholars today believe the creation account given in Genesis is less about the actual material creation than it is about an account of spiritual perfection.

13:22
which is associated with temple literatures. If these scholars are correct, and I believe that they are, this would make the Genesis creation account a temple text rather than a detailed account of the material creation. When we take a look at the ins and outs of the material creation in the ancient texts, like what was created first and what was created second and how long did it take to create certain aspects of the creation.
13:50
we actually don't find very much uniformity. The creation accounts are all over the map when it comes to this aspect of the creation. It's pretty impossible to really establish any sort of coherent stubborn bit, which tells me that there may not have been a reliable account given of the actual ins and outs of the material creation given to the ancestors in the ancient tradition, which is actually something that's indicated in the Book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch.
14:20
where the secrets referred to in the title of the text actually refer to the secrets of creation. If you remember in chapter 22, Enoch was not given the secrets of the material creation until he, like the beloved son, had been crowned a heavenly king in the Holy of Holies. It was right after this in chapter 23 that God commanded Vervoil to teach Enoch the secrets of the material creation.
14:49
And this took a long time. It took Vervoyal 30 days and 30 nights to teach Enoch how to reverse the second law of thermodynamics. And because this teaching took place in the Holy of Holies, we can conclude that the ins and outs of the material creation were and are some of the most protected and esoteric of all religious teachings. Think about it for a minute. To know how the material world was created.
15:19
is to know for oneself how to create a world. Yeah, you would wanna protect that information. For that reason, I'm gonna skip the particular ins and outs of the creation, what was created first and what was created second and how long it took and just stick to the stubborn bits that we find in the ancient record. We'll just establish that the earth is fully formed at this point and move on to the next stubborn bit because the next stubborn bit is as strong as they come.
15:48
Do you remember Marinus Vandersloos? Well, he tells us on page 65 of volume one of his series called Traditional Cosmology, that there is incredible consistency in how the ancients describe the primordial state of the universe. This is what he says, quote, "'The characteristics assigned to this primordial state in far-flung cultures are remarkably uniform
16:18
and can be traced to the very earliest civilizations. That's definitely what we're gonna see with this next stubborn bit. And what is the next stubborn bit that we find? Well, it's pretty darn remarkable. See, the ancients tell us that in the early days of the creation, the earth did not reside where it resides now. As mind-boggling as that is.
16:46
They tell us that it resided instead right next to heaven in the center of the cosmos where dwelt the high god. Now that's a pretty darn fascinating stubborn bit. So to see what I'm talking about, let's take a look at one of the earliest accounts that we can find. And it's found in ancient Egypt,

in the oldest corpus of religious texts in the world, which you know by now are the ancient Egyptian pyramid texts. In this account,
17:14
The ancient Egyptians refer to the earth as Geb and the vault of heaven as Newt. Pyramid text 432, which we can find in King Pepe the first and King Pepe the second's tombs, reads, and this comes from the James P. Allen English translation, speaking of Newt, who represents the vault of heaven. The text reads, quote, great thing has happened in the sky.
17:44
which is heaven, where you have taken control, become powerful and filled every place with your beauty. The entire land, and it's referring to the earth, is under you, for you have acquired it. You have encircled for yourself the land, the earth, and everything within your arms.
18:15
I love this text. I love how it depicts the earth at the onset of the creation as having been encircled in the arms of heaven. The last line of the text provides us with a really intimate depiction of the relationship between heaven and earth in the early days of the creation when it tells us that Newt, the vault of heaven, wrapped her arms around and embraced the earth.
18:44
tells us on page 50 of his book, Speaking of Heaven Encircling its Arms Around the Earth, writes, quote, this symbolism, and note that he's saying that this imagery is symbolic, is based on a legend that originally Earth and sky were together in total union.
19:10
When we look at the text, we can see that the ancients personified heaven and earth as gods. One was always personified as male and the other one was always personified as female. In ancient Egypt, the vault of heaven was personified by the goddess Newt and the earth was personified by the god Geb. When the text describes Newt enveloping Geb, the earth in her embrace, the ancient Egyptians want us to imagine the close
19:39
intimate relationship between heaven and earth in the early days of the creation. As one would, the loving union between a husband and a wife. What they want us to understand is that heaven and earth were that close, that intimate. The ancient Egyptians wanted us to understand that the closeness between heaven and earth was at one time as profound as the marital bond. It's important to point out that
20:04
the ancient Egyptians did not believe that the earth was literally male and that the heaven was literally female. You know in later times perhaps some did and that's something that we see when the symbolic nature of the symbols lost and people start to interpret the symbol as literal that the earth was literally male and that the god Horus was literally a Falcon. When that happens which we see
20:30
It signifies that the original meaning of the symbol had been lost or corrupted and had reached a highly deteriorated state. The ancient Egyptians are using male and female here as symbols to teach us about the reality of spiritual things. The symbolic nature of the personification of heaven and earth is pretty apparent in the next text in pyramid text 433, which reads, quote,
21:00

and this is Newt speaking, the vault of heaven, have fertilized, and some translators have translated that as impregnated, you, speaking of Geb, the earth. From this passage, the ancient Egyptians want us to understand that heaven was the source of the fertilization of the earth. It was heaven that gave the earth fertility and abundance in life. They weren't saying that literally heaven impregnated the earth.
21:30
Okay, the next text that falls right after that, Pyramid Text 344, which we're not gonna actually cover in this episode, tells us that something tragic happened. Something caused the close bond between heaven and earth to rupture. Something caused heaven and earth to separate, to move away from each other. The ancient texts around the world offer a lot of really interesting explanations for why this occurred. And some of them are kind of amusing.
21:58
We'll get into a couple of those today and in the next episode or so. It's worth noting that the pyramid texts that I just read were recited as part of the dead king's funeral rites. So these texts were used in rituals, which were patterned after the dead king Osiris. See, when the priest lowered the lid of the sarcophagus, which contained the dead king's body, over the top of the sarcophagus,
22:28
they uttered those texts. And why did they do that? They did that because the sarcophagus itself represented Geb, the earth, and the lid represented Nut, the vault of heaven. In fact, the ancient Egyptians often painted Nut, the personification of the vault of heaven, on the inside of the sarcophagi or coffin lids. If you'd like to see a couple of examples of this,
22:57
I've posted them to the website for this episode. They also painted the ceiling above the King's sarcophagus, dark blue, with those five pointed stars that we've talked about on the program. And they did this to represent heaven, Newt. When the priests sealed the sarcophagus with the lid, it represented the rejoining of heaven and earth. And where did the dead king lay in the sarcophagus?
23:25
He lay literally smack dab in between the two of them, right where heaven and earth converged in the center of their union. He was in fact the quote, son, and I'm saying that in quotes, of their union. This idea is really similar to what we see in ancient Mesopotamia. Do you remember the Anunnaki, the council of the gods? If you don't, the word Anuna comes from the word on.
23:54
which was the Sumerian name for both the high god An and the place where he dwelt, heaven. The Sumerian word Anuna when translated into English literally means the offspring of An. Key in Anuna Key is the name of the Sumerian goddess
24:24
Sumerian word for the earth. So in the name Anunnaki itself we get this really interesting dual message. First we get the message that the Anunnaki are the literal offspring of the union between the high god An and his wife Ki. They are the royal sons and daughters of the high god. All of the ancient Mesopotamian
24:54

In fact, note how the placement of the words in the name Anunnaki itself convey the same idea. The Sumerian word for offspring, Unna, is physically placed between An and his wife, Ki, in the word itself. The royal offspring of An are the An-unna-ki, Anunnaki. The way the word is actually structured conveys the notion that these children came as a result of the union of
25:24
and his wife, Key. The second message that we get is the implication of another type of birth, a spiritual birth of some type that occurs in the place where heaven and earth meet. Remember, in Sumerian, the word on also means heaven and the word key also means earth. So the offspring or quote sons or quote daughters here are talking about a birth.
25:53
or rebirth of some type that takes place where heaven and earth meet, which the ancient Egyptians also implied when they buried dead Egyptian pharaohs in the middle of a coffin where the base represented the earth and the lid represented heaven, when they buried him right where heaven and earth meet. This suggests that
26:17
to be a member of the Anunnaki, the council of the gods. One had to be both a literal son or daughter of the high god and his wife, Kee, and one had to be spiritually reborn in the place where heaven and earth meet. That's what the name Anunnaki implies. We haven't talked about this too much yet, but recall that
26:43
Isis found Osiris's dead body embedded in the trunk of a tree. The trunk, the wood of the tree, wrapped itself around his body like a coffin. All of this matters. It's highly significant. I'm not going to divulge right here what all of this means, but I want to point it out while we're talking about it so that it's on your radar. And if you just can't wait and you'd like to ponder this a little bit.
27:10
consider how the trunk of a tree might be symbolically connected to where heaven and earth meet, and how that might be symbolically connected to King Osiris, and how all of this might be connected to spiritual rebirth. Note how all of this, the symbol and the myth and the ritual are tightly interconnected. On page 50,
27:38
Rundle notes of Pyramid Texts 432 to 434. Myth and ritual are closely interwoven in this hymn. The deceased is Osiris who lies within the earth, still in great danger from Seth. And Seth is the dragon, the demon of death and decay. So there's thermodynamic entropy.
28:06
So he's still dead, the king is still dead. So he's still subject to Seth. As the lid is set down on the sarcophagus, the sky makes union with the earth. All right, there's a lot to think about there. Let's take a closer look at ancient Mesopotamia. An interesting text that comes to us from a Sumerian tablet found in Ur titled Gilgamesh and the Hulupu Tree. I love these titles.
28:36
dated to approximately 2000 BC, tells the story of a Hulupu tree, believed by scholars to be a weeping willow, that had been planted, catch this, on the bank of the Euphrates River. In this account, the Mesopotamian goddess Inanna desires to use the wood of the tree to craft a throne and a bed, but surprise surprise,

29:05
A dragon, quote, set up its nest at the base of the tree. Of course it did. The mighty Gilgamesh comes to Inanna's aid, slays the terrible dragon, cuts down the trunk of the tree, note that it's the trunk of the tree, and gives it to Inanna so that she can craft a throne and bed from it. If you're a long time listener to the program, so, so much of that should have sounded familiar to you.
29:35
In this episode, we're not gonna talk about Enana making a throne in a bed out of the trunk of the tree, but we'll definitely talk about it in a future episode when we're talking about the building of ancient temples. In this episode, we're gonna focus on a section of the text that tells us about heaven and earth. The first undamaged line of the text, which starts in line seven, reads, and this is the Samuel N. Cremer translation.
30:02
published by the University of Chicago Press. Quote, after heaven had moved away from earth, after earth had been separated from heaven. In this text, we clearly see that the ancient Mesopotamians too taught that heaven and earth during the early creation were close together, that earth resided close to heaven, that the earth did not originally reside where it does today.
30:32
The text tells us that after this period, heaven moved away from earth and that earth separated from heaven. The text continues in line nine, quote, after the name of mankind had been fixed, after Anu had carried off unto himself the heaven, after Enlil had carried off unto himself the earth. It's important to recognize who Enlil is here.
30:59
Enlil is a member of the Anunnaki. He's one of the sons of the high god On and his wife Ki. Give a listen to what Britannica says of Enlil. Quote, Enlil meant Lord of the wind. Both the hurricane and the gentle winds of spring were thought of as the breath issuing from his mouth and eventually as his word or command.
31:30
That description of Enlil ought to mean something to you long time listeners. What's more, Enlil reigned from his palace temple, Ikur, also known as Durankhi in the ancient Sumerian city of Nippur. The name of Enlil's temple should have caught your attention there, because note that it's Durankhi. We see that the words on and ki are right in the name of the temple. In English, the name Durankhi actually means
32:00
quote, the bond that unites heaven and earth. Now, this is interesting because this name explicitly links the place where heaven and earth meet with Enlil's temple. The place where heaven and earth meet is the temple. That's what the ancient Mesopotamians are telling us here. In this light, the ancient Egyptian coffin was essentially understood to be a little miniature temple.
32:29
or at least to symbolize the importance of one. In Lille's temple, Joranke was understood to be established in the center of the world, the location where heaven and earth united. The name Ikor, which is another name for the same temple, translates into mountain house. This reveals an additional layer of significance.
32:57

linking the temple not only to the convergence of heaven and earth, but also to the imagery of a mountain, which will be quite significant a bit down the line. We find a similar reference to the original closeness of heaven and earth in a Mesopotamian text titled, The Creation of the Pickaxe. That's another really interesting title. This Sumerian creation myth is
33:25
preserved on a clay tablet that came from the Temple Library in Nepal. It's dated to 2100 BC. If you want to take a look at this tablet, it's housed in the Louvre in Paris. The text it's sometimes referred to as a song begins with Enlil separating heaven and Earth. This translation comes from the electronic text corpus of Sumerian literature published by the University of Oxford.
33:53
Beginning in the first couple of lines, the text reads, and Lil, who will make the human seed of the land come forth from the earth. Not only did he hasten to separate heaven from earth and hasten to separate earth from heaven, but in order to make it possible for humans to grow, in quote, where flesh came forth, he first suspended the axis of the world.
34:23
He did this with the help of the hoe, which is the pickaxe. In this text, we learn why and little separated heaven from earth. The text tells us that he did it to quote, make the human seed of the land come forth from the earth. This statement implies that had heaven and earth stayed in close proximity to each other, humans, or as the text says, the human seed, would not have been able to come to earth.
34:52
or as the text says, come forth from the earth. This aspect of the separation of heaven and earth is important and we'll develop it more in just a minute. The other aspect of the text that I find interesting is the line that says, quote, in order to make it possible for humans to grow, he first suspended the axis of the world, Duranki. This line actually refers to Enlil building a temple.
35:18
The text tells us that after and Lil separated heaven from earth, the first thing that he did was establish a temple, a temple named Duranki, which we just pointed out meant quote, the bond that unites heaven and earth. He built a temple that reestablished the bond that had been ruptured between heaven and earth. At any rate, these texts establish that the
35:46
taught that during the early days of the creation, heaven and earth were in incredibly close proximity to one another.
35:54
Among the Hurrians, who were people who lived in Syria and upper Mesopotamia, between about 30,300 and 1200 BC, we learn how a copper knife was used to sever earth from heaven. The text, which you can find in KUB 33, line 106, reads, quote, when it happened that one cut heaven and earth,
36:24
with a copper knife. Susan Gork of Maynes University who wrote about this text on page 45 and 46 of the book, Heaven on Earth, finds a connection between this text and ancient Mesopotamia. She writes, quote, Otten and Sigalovah linked this passage to the Sumerian myth of Gilgamesh and Enkidu, when the heavens had been separated from the earth, when the earth had been delimited

36:54
from the heavens, when On had taken the heavens for himself, when and Lil had taken the earth for himself.
37:02
So let's turn to ancient Greece. In Hesiod's Theogony, which is considered the standard account of Greek mythology, the Greeks use conjugal imagery to describe the profound closeness between heaven and earth. Among the Greeks, the earth was personified as the goddess Gaia, and heaven was personified as the god Uranus.
37:27
In the theogony between lines 105 and 135, we find the Greek account of the creation. The account reads, and I'm only gonna read lines that are relevant to this discussion. And I'm gonna be reading from the Hugh G. Evelyn White translation. The theogony reads, quote, Hail, children of Zeus, grant lovely song and celebrate the holy race of the deathly gods who are forever. Those that were born,
37:57
of earth and starry heaven. Note here like we saw in ancient Mesopotamia, children or offspring are born out of the union between heaven and earth. Quote, tell me how at the first gods and earth came to be and the wide heaven above and the gods who were born of them. These things declared to me from the beginning. In truth, at first chaos came to be.
38:27
That refers to the Primordial Waters. But next, Wide Pathed Earth, the Evershore Foundation and Eros, love. Recall how in a past episode, we talked about how the Greeks believed that the creation came about as a divine act of love. That's what the text is saying here. The creation came as an act of Eros, love, the conjugal aspect of which we're gonna see in just a second. Quote,
38:57
first bore starry heaven equal to herself, to cover her on every side and to be an ever sure abiding place for the blessed gods." Note how we're getting the tight embrace aspect of heaven and earth here when the text says that the heaven quote, covered her on every side. Then listen to what the text says. It says quote, she referring to Gaia earth.
39:26
lay with heaven, Uranus. This is an obvious reference to the sexual union of heaven and earth, out of which the text tells us offspring were born. The text continues, quote, she lay with heaven and bore deep swirling oceanus, coios, creus, and hyperion, and iopetus. And then the text goes on to name several other children.
39:56
So like we saw with the Anunnaki, children or offspring are born out of the union between Gaia and Uranus, Heaven and Earth. Note in this Greek account how the closeness between Heaven and Earth takes place right after the creation. We're talking about the onset of the creation again. This text attests that Heaven and Earth were in incredibly close proximity to one another at the time the Earth was formed. That's what this text is telling us.
40:25
The theogony goes on to tell us that at some point, Gaia, angry at Uranus, fashions a sickle and urges her son Cronus to castrate Uranus. Starting around line 160, the theogony reads, quote,

she, Gaia, made the element of Gray Flint and shaped a great sickle and told her plan to her dear sons. Cronus the Wily.
40:54
took courage and answered his dear mother, mother, I will undertake to do this deed. So he said, and vast earth rejoiced greatly in spirit and set and hid him in an ambush and put in his hands a jagged sickle and revealed to him the whole plot. And heaven, Uranus came and longing for love, he lay about earth spreading himself full upon her.
41:23
Then the sun from his ambush stretched forth his left hand and in his right took the great long sickle with jagged teeth and swiftly lopped off his own father's member and cast them away to fall behind him." While I'm reading that, don't forget that the sexual imagery that's employed here, at least as it pertains to the physical earth and the nature of heaven, is employed symbolically.
41:51
It's supposed to teach us something about the loving nature and close proximity between heaven and earth in the early days of the creation. So for Cronus to castrate Uranus, to castrate heaven, to cut off Uranus's phallus, the organ keeping heaven and earth in a loving embrace is to symbolically convey that the close proximity between heaven and earth was ruptured. Now they are cut off from one another. They're separated.
42:19
Now there's distance between them. To castrate Uranus is to cut off the link between heaven and earth. The phallus symbolism used here, like the trunk of a tree, is gonna be incredibly important in a couple of episodes. So tuck that away in your pocket. Let's take a look at Nigeria and the Yoruba people. These people tell how the ruler of the heavens and the creator of the Yoruba people, Elodomari,
42:48
which means the great everlasting majesty, also called Olorun, the owner of heaven, created the earth out of a primeval swamp. So there's the Primordial Waters. Oxford Reference published by Oxford University Press titled, Alotamari Moves Away From Earth, tells us the following Eurubian account. Quote, at one time, Alotamari
43:17
sky, that is his abode, were nearer to earth than they are now. So near that one could reach up and touch the sky. Heaven and earth were so close that the denziens of heaven used to descend and ascend by means of a spider's web or chain. If we turn to Polynesia we find the Maori myth of Papa and Rangi. In this myth heaven is personified by the male deity Rangi
43:45
and the earth is personified by the female deity, Papatawanuku, referred to as Papa. On page 307 of David Liming's Oxford Companion to World Mythology, he writes, quote, Papa was the earth goddess and Rangi the sky god, the mother and father of the Maori people of the Polynesian world. Earth and sky embraced tightly, leaving no room for creation between them.
44:13
The cover art for this episode is actually a modern depiction of Rangi and Papa Tawanuku holding each other in a tight embrace. Note here in this account how Earth is personified as female whereas in ancient Egypt the earth was personified as male. David Leeming notes on

page 18 and 19 of the world of myth quote, the male-female arrangement is unusual since it, and he's
44:44
the male representing the earth below Newt, the female who represents sky above him. The more usual arrangement in world mythology is reflected in the Polynesian version of the Maori people of New Zealand in which the sky above is the male God Rangi and the earth below is his female counterpart Papa. I suspect that this shift from personifying the earth as male to personifying the earth as female
45:11
which is evident today in phrases like mother earth, can be traced to the conjugal symbolism associated with heaven and earth as a divine couple, where women are associated with a submissive conjugal position. We're gonna see in a couple of episodes though, that the personification of the earth is male, as conceived by the ancient Egyptians, remains even today, the dominant symbolic.
45:39
expression worldwide, even though it's commonplace to refer to the earth as female. And there's a reason for this and we'll get to that. David Leeming on page 33 of World Mythology refers to the embrace of Rangi and Papa Tawanuku as a coital embrace. He says, quote, the Maori tell how Rangi and Papa were spoken into existence by the words of the great god
46:09
Rongi and Papa cleaved together in a coital embrace, leaving little space for their offspring. Here again we see the ancients express the primordial closeness of heaven and earth symbolically or metaphorically as a sexual union. The rest of this myth though is pretty interesting. Leeming writes, quote, some Maori say that while Rongi and Papa were coupling, their children
46:38
them but could not see because there was no light. This is interesting because here this Maori account is emphasizing children or offspring again and this reminds me of the Mesopotamian account, the creation of the pickaxe that we just read where the Sumerians taught that when heaven and earth were in close proximity, humans were not able to come forth on the earth and there seems to have been something about how close
47:06
heaven and earth were at the outset of the creation that was particularly problematic for human beings in terms of occupying the earth. And we get the same idea here in the Maori myth. When Leeming tells us that when heaven and earth were coupling, the children were wandering around in darkness and they couldn't see. The earliest written account that we have of Rangi and Papatawanuku comes from a manuscript titled.
47:33
and I hope I really don't mangle the pronunciation here. Ko nāg Tama'a Rāni'iki, which means children of heaven and earth, which was written in 1849 A.D. by Meihite Rangikahiki of the Ngāti Rangiwewe tribe of Rotorua, which is located southeast of modern day Auckland, New Zealand. In this text, we learn that the children that were stuck between heaven and earth
48:04

held a council to decide what to do. Because as long as heaven and earth clove together, the humans could not come into existence on the earth. So what does the council decide to do? Well, let's read. The text says, quote, "'At last the beings who had been begotten by heaven and earth, worn out by the continued darkness, consulted among themselves saying, let us now determine what we should do with Rangi and Papa.'
48:34
whether it would be better to slay them or to rend them apart. Then spoke Tumutuwanga, the fiercest of the children of heaven and earth. It is well, let us slay them. Let's pause for a second. This is a really interesting account. Here we read of a council being held among the children or offspring of heaven and earth. And in this council, a figure
49:02
who the text refers to as the fiercest of the children of heaven and earth, stands up and declares that the children ought to slay heaven and earth. If we read heaven and earth here as actual divine parents, then Tumatawanga is advocating the slaughtering of the high God and his wife. If we read heaven and earth in this text as the heavenly realm and planet earth, then
49:31
Tumutuwinga is advocating destroying heaven and earth. In either case, Tumutuwinga, the fiercest of the children of heaven and earth is advocating for complete and utter destruction. Is any of this sounding familiar to you? Because it should. This Maori account sounds suspiciously similar to the Mesopotamian account found in the Enuma Elish where we read about a fierce sea monster named Tiamat.
50:00
who aimed to usurp the high gods kingdom. And don't forget that that account, like we see here, took place not on earth, but in the heavenly realm within the context of a council of gods. Tumutuwanga is the Maori rebellious son. Let's return to the text. After Tumutuwanga offers up his plan to the council, another son,
50:29
named Tani Mahuta steps forward. The text reads, quote, "'Then spake Tani Tahu'a, the father of the forest and of all things that inhabit them or that are constructed from trees.'" Okay, I absolutely have to stop here. Did you catch what the text said about Tani Mahuta? It's unbelievable. The Maori tell us that in the council that took place in the pre-earthly realm,
50:57
The second son who came forward was, quote, the father of the forest. Now, you may not have thought much of this epitaph. You might have just glazed right over it, but we absolutely can't, because this epitaph tells us so, so much. See, the text tells us that the son who stepped forward after the fierce Tumutuwanga was, quote, the father of the forest. And of all things that inhabit them,
51:27
and that are constructed from trees. So here we are in New Zealand, thousands of years and thousands of miles from ancient Mesopotamia and we're back to talking about trees. Right here in this text, the sun that counters the fierce Tumatauanga is associated with trees, trees. And not only that, he's referred to as the father of the forest. And what is a forest? It's a large stretch of trees.
51:55

I don’t have time to develop this right now, but the reference here to Tane Mahuta as the father of the forest, when cross-referenced with everything else that we’ve learned from the ancients about trees and heavenly kingship, is a reference to Tane Mahuta as the father of heavenly kings, which is akin to Revelation chapter 3 verse 21. Christ tells those who ever cometh that they will sit on a throne.
52:24
Christ is the father of heavenly kings. Tani Mahuta, the father of the forest, is the Maori beloved son. And don’t think for a second that the Maori just randomly picked out father of the forest as Tani Mahuta’s epitaph, because they didn’t. This epitaph is in complete conformity with the ancient tradition of symbolically depicting God as a tree.
52:50
We’ve talked a lot on this program about the significance of the tree, the sap of the tree. And in a couple of episodes, we’re going to talk about the significance of the trunk of the tree. And the symbolism is magnificent. The following is Tani Mahuta’s response to Tumatawenga’s plan to destroy heaven and earth. Then spake Tani Mahuta, Nay, not so. It is better to rend them, them being heaven and earth.
53:20
and to let the heavens stand far above us and the earth lie under our feet. Let the sky, heaven, become as a stranger to us, but the earth remain close to us as our nursing mother. Here, Tane Mahuta, in order to solve the problem of humans being stuck between heaven and earth and darkness, proposes to rend the heavens and earth apart. Upon hearing Tane’s words,
53:48
the majority of the council agrees to the plan. At this point in the text, several different members of the council attempt to separate heaven and earth, but they fail. That is until Tani Mahuta, the Maori beloved son tries. And the text reads, quote, then at last slowly up rises Tani Mahuta, the god and father of forests. With his parents,
54:14
In vain he strives to rend them apart with his hands and arms. Lo, he pauses. His head is now firmly planted on his mother, the earth. His feet he raises up and rests against his father the skies. He strains his back and limbs with mighty effort. Now are rent apart Orangay and Papa. Far, far beneath him he presses down the earth.
54:44
sky. Note here that Tane is using his body to hold heaven and earth apart. Yet it’s also Tane’s body that still keeps them connected even though they are apart like a giant pillar or column or dare I say it like the trunk of a tree. Where Tane’s body is the trunk and the canopy of heaven is like the branches of a tree.
55:14
Once Tawny does this, listen to what the children who had been stuck between heaven and earth do. The text reads, quote, From that time clear light increased upon the earth and all the beings which were hidden between Rongi and Papa before they were separated now multiplied upon the earth. So whereas humans couldn’t populate the earth when Rongi and Papa were in a tight embrace,
55:43

Now that they were separated, humans could populate the Earth, which they did. This draws me back to the original problem. Why was it that humans couldn't come to Earth when heaven and Earth were in such tight proximity? Unfortunately, for the answer to that, we're gonna have to wait an episode or two. Before I leave this account, I'd like to highlight an important point. Note how this account indicates that human beings existed in a pre-earthly realm.
56:13
before their birth on earth and that it was only after earth was pushed away from heaven that humans were able to populate the earth. This is an intriguing theological tenet and we'll look into it more in the future. Among the Karachi people of Ghana and Togo, we see them similarly describe the closeness between heaven and earth in sexual terms. On page 33 of World
56:43
The Karachi people of Togo and Ghana tell how in the beginning, Wulbari, which is heaven, lay on Asaseya, which is earth. So there's the conjugal symbolism. Now listen to this, causing the humans crowded between them to squirm. So here again, this time in Africa, we see that children, humans, humans who have not yet been born,
57:12
squirming between them. Quote, so much that Wulbari had to withdraw from Asasea. Here we see that the unsettled children, the unborn humans are the reason why the two, heaven and earth, must separate. Note how we're getting the same connection between unsettled offspring and the need for the separation of heaven and earth, whether we're in Mesopotamia, New Zealand, or Africa. In Polynesia, we find a myth
57:41
similar to the myth of Rangi and Papa in Tahiti. In Tahitian mythology the closeness between heaven and earth is described as a marriage. Oxford reference says, quote, in Tuamotawan mythology, which is a Polynesian language that's spoken in Tahiti, Atea was made into the sky god and Fa'ahotu became his wife.
58:07
Marriage, of course, is being used symbolically here. It's meant to teach us something about the loving bond that existed between heaven and earth in the beginning. These examples that I've just covered are really just the tip of the iceberg. There are literally dozens and dozens, if not hundreds of accounts all over the globe that attest that in the beginning, heaven and earth were in close proximity to one another, like in a loving embrace. In fact,
58:33
Stephen Oppenheimer, a British writer in a book titled Eden in the East, traced this stubborn bit across the continent of Asia. If you're interested in reading more about it, you can find a copy of Eden in the East on Internet Archive. On page 320, you're going to find a map that traces the migration of this stubborn bit across the continent of Asia. And on page 322, you'll find a really
59:03
with other prominent stubborn bits that we've discussed on this program, which he refers to as the water dragon, which is the sea serpent, the creative word, which is divine utterance, the cosmic egg, and the appearance of light, the primordial singularity. Since there's so many more examples of this stubborn bit that I'd like to share with you, and we're running out of time.
59:27

I'll conclude this episode by reading a brief list of examples that were given by Marinus van der Sluis on page 69 and 71 of volume one of his series, Traditional Cosmology. Van der Sluis titles this section, The Sky Close to the Earth. It reads, quote, In the earliest state of the universe, mythologies report that the two future extremities of the cosmos, heaven and earth, were still united.
59:57
The Kashi, and these are people who are located in Northeast India, avered, quote, in olden days when the earth was very young, they say that heaven and earth were very near to one another. And, quote, in the beginning, heaven and earth were near each other. The Wachabalik, which is in central Western Victoria, Australia, quote,
01:00:23
account for the space between the earth and the sky by saying that at one time they touched each other. That is to say the sky lay on the earth. Again, a tribe of the Wajuri from the headwaters of the Marumbiji River, which is in central New South Wales, Australia, held that quote, the sky at one time in the ages ago was not up high where it is now.
01:00:50
It was down so low to the ground that man could not walk upright. Similarly in Benin, which is located in West Africa, it quote is said that in early times, the sky was quite close, only about two meters from the earth. And members of the Sikwani Nation in Columbia, recall at a time when quote, the sky was rather low, quote, the sky still hung low, quote, and the sky was not as it is now.
01:01:20
for, quote, previously it had been very low. A parallel type of tradition places not the sky itself, but the deity of the sky, the supreme being in former proximity to the earth, presumably implying a lower position for the sky as well. For example, the Ashanti, who live in Ghana, related that, quote, long ago, Onyankapan lived on earth, or at least was very near to us,
01:01:49
quote, not then high in the sky. For the Dinka, which is in the Southern Sudan, the contention that quote, the sky at first was so low, equated with a close presence of God, as to touch the sky would be to quote, touch God. And listen to this last account. The Razi, which live in Western Zambia, claimed that quote, in the beginning, God created the earth and all living creatures.
01:02:19
At that time, God and his wife lived here below among men. Throughout Africa, in fact, it is generally agreed that in the earliest times God lived on earth, though God inhabits the sky today. I think it's interesting in this account how the Razi tell how not only God roamed the earth, but his wife did too.
01:02:45
What we learned from all of these accounts we've discussed in today's episode is that whether the ancients used the symbolism of an embrace, a sexual union, or a marriage, they all tell the same story. They tell us that in the beginning, heaven and earth were not far apart like they are today. Rather, they were very close, like in an intimate, loving embrace. I wonder what that must have been like.
01:03:15

That's it for me. As always, I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare, knowledge is the wing we're with when we fly to heaven. And of course, we have to fly there because heaven and earth are no longer in close proximity. I'm Jack Logan.
01:03:38
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Episode #43 - Terra In Illo Tempore

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Music
00:09
You're listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.
00:25
Welcome to the ancient tradition. I am your host, Jack Logan. Glad to have all of you listening in. I really hope that you've been learning a lot. If this is your first time listening to the program, you will learn a whole bunch and we extend to you a hearty welcome. On today's program, we're gonna pick up where we left off in our last episode. In that episode, we examined several ancient accounts that
00:54
attested that in the beginning the Earth wasn't originally located where we find it today in the Milky Way Galaxy. Instead, those ancient accounts taught that the Earth was initially created and resided in very close proximity to heaven. Heaven and Earth were so close, in fact, that the ancients described the relationship as an intimate embrace.
01:22
Today's episode is titled Tierra in Ilo Tempere, and that's Latin for the Earth at that time. Our favorite Romanian scholar, Mircea Eliade, used this phrase to describe that time when Earth was in very close proximity to heaven. As you can imagine, heaven and earth being in such close proximity to one another had very important implications
01:52
for the nature of the earth itself. And in this episode, we're gonna examine what the ancients taught about the nature of Tierra in Ilo Tempere. You'll probably hear several things in the episode today that sound familiar. It's not super earth shattering, but it is theologically, and I wanna stress from the outset how theologically significant this time period is in the overarching theology of the ancient tradition. And I also wanna stress how
02:22
What we see during this time period reconfirms so many of the theological principles that the ancients taught, which we've discussed up to this point on the program. Hopefully you learned

something new about this time period that you didn't previously know. Maybe you will, maybe you won't, but it should give you a better understanding of how this time period fits into the larger theological picture that we're beginning to develop.
02:50
I don't know about you, but it's pretty darn amazing to me that even when we limit ourselves just to the stubborn bits that we find around the world, that we are already starting to see a fully coherent theology beginning to form. It's making sense and I find this amazing. According to most of the accounts, this time period is described in paradisal terms.
03:20
Paradise on Earth. On page 255 of Eliade's really important article titled The Yearning for Paradise in Primitive Tradition, it was published in the Journal de Dallas, Eliade writes, quote, we encounter the paradise myth all over the world in more or less complex forms. Besides the Paramount Paradisal Note,
03:49
it always has a certain number of characteristic elements. In today's episode, we're gonna look at those characteristic elements. We're gonna look at them one by one as they're described by the ancients themselves in their writings. For the first characteristic, we need to turn to the ancient Egyptians. In ancient Egypt, the Egyptians referred to this time period when heaven was close to earth as Zeptepe.
04:19
According to James P. Allen, Zeph-Tepi translates as the first occasion or the first time, which refers to the time of the creation before it was separated from heaven. Ancient Egyptian texts refer to this time period with great frequency. It's very important. R.T. Rundle Clark in his book, Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt, on pages 263 to 264. This is what Clark says. He says, quote,
04:50
Zeptebi, the first time, stretched from the stirring of the high god in the primeval waters to the settling of Horus on the throne. All proper Egyptian myths relate events or manifestations of this epic. Anything whose existence or authority had to be justified or explained must be referred to the first time.
05:19
This was true of natural phenomena, rituals, royal insignia, the plans of temples, et cetera. So what Clark is saying is that the time period before heaven and earth was separated, Zeptepe was so important to the ancient Egyptians that they tied everything they did after this period directly back to this period, to Zeptepe.
05:45
This will be especially evident when we get into ancient Egyptian temple ritual and temple architecture. We'll see that very clearly. So what is one of the main things the ancient Egyptians tell us about Zeptepe, about this time period? On the propylon of the temple of Khonsu at Karnak, if you're not familiar with what a propylon is, it's that large monumental gateway that we see outside of.
06:10
Egyptian temples and some other temples. It's kind of like the Arc de Triomphe that you see in Paris. We find the following inscription and this inscription is rather late. It's dated to the

Ptolemaic period around the third century BC. The inscription reads, quote, Law was established in their time. Now, there here refers to the primeval gods, to the time of the primeval gods.
06:39
Maat came down from heaven to earth in their age and united herself with those on the earth.
06:50
El Kikosi who studied this inscription writes on page 206 of his article ideas about the fallen state of the world in Egyptian religion writes quote it was thus in primeval times that Ma'at who played the role of the law of the world in Egyptian philosophy descended upon the earth so
07:17
The first thing that the ancient gypsons tell us about Zeptepe, number one, is that Maat descended upon the earth during this time. It's absolutely critical that we start our discussion of the first time with this understanding. Cause if you recall in episode number 28, Lord of Maat, King of Zedek, and if you haven't heard that episode, I highly recommend giving it a listen cause you're going to get a much, much fuller understanding of what the Egyptians
07:44
and the ancient Hebrews meant by Maat and Zedek, then I have time to cover today. We established in that episode though that Maat fundamentally means 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, rectitude, meaning rightness. And we often refer to this concept as righteousness.
08:14
The rightness or righteousness the ancient Egyptians are talking about here is actually righteousness on a cosmic level. It's the notion that the very foundation of the cosmos itself is governed by a principle of rightness. So we're not just talking about an ethical system of morality here. We're talking about a concept with profound cosmic implications, which we're gonna see here with Zeph-Tepi.
08:43
Ma'at's the notion that the very fabric of the cosmos, including every single thing in it, everybody and everything, operates according to a grand principle or law of rightness. And that it's by upholding or adhering to or following or doing rightness that any type. And the ancient Egyptians mean any type of true order is established. Be that
09:12
order, political order, social order, familial order, marital order, or the order of the natural material world itself, which is huge conceptually. Only adherence to the cosmic law of Ma'at or Tzedek can produce order. Rebellion against Ma'at produces disorder.
09:42
political disorder, social disorder, familial disorder, marital disorder, and the disorder of the natural world itself. You have to capture that understanding of Ma'at and Tzedek. The ancient Egyptians referred to this disorder as Isfet, which means chaos or injustice or violence or to do evil.
10:08
So when the ancient Egyptians tell us that Ma'at, the law upon which the very fabric of heaven itself was produced, a realm of perfect order, descended upon the earth during this time, it

follows that we should see a much higher manifestation of order on the earth then, in its myriad forms and expressions than we do now, which is exactly what the ancients tell us. In fact,
10:38
Another inscription on the Khansu Propeplon tells us that during Zeph-Tepi, the first time, quote, there was no Isfet in the land. Remember Isfet is the Egyptian word for chaos. It's the opposite of order, the order that can only be established by upholding Ma'at. So for the ancients to say that during this time there's no Isfet in the land, we're to understand that order in all of its forms
11:07
on the earth in the first time. And let's not forget that the beloved son commanded the chaotic elements to order themselves into this world after he triumphed over the dragon, the author and producer of all chaos. It's really important to point out that the beloved son destroyed the dragon, which means that not a drop of disorder contaminated the original creation of the earth.
11:38
In the pyramid texts, in pyramid text 249, a text that's found in King Unus's pyramid, the creator Atum tells us he 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 of the earth. Having put Ma'at in it.
12:07
place of disorder. So Ma'at, rightness, destroys disorder. He's telling us that he placed righteousness in the primordial waters in the place of disorder and that it was that rightness that initiated the creation of this world. And we have to start here understanding that Ma'at descended on the earth when it was close to heaven.
12:38
The second thing that the ancients tell us about the initial state of the earth is that number two, time as we know it, did not exist then. If you gave episode number 30, the grand primordial singularity, listen, then you probably aren't at all surprised by this. It's in complete conformity with what we saw there and with what we'd expect. If you recall in that episode, we established that the Holy of Holies, where God dwells in the center of the cosmos is
13:07
beyond time, it's outside the limitations of space and time. God dwells in eternity. There is no terrestrial notion of time there. And since the earth, as the ancients tell us, was in such close proximity to heaven, where God dwelt in the Holy of Holies, then we would naturally expect that the earth would take on the properties of timelessness. In fact, it could not be otherwise.
13:36
which I'll explain in just a second. Mercea Eliade on page 261 of that article I just referred to, yearning for paradise, notes that shaman, when they richly ascend to heaven, enter eternity. He writes, quote, "'For the shaman in the state of ecstasy, "'this world, this fallen world, "'which according to modern terminology "'is governed by the laws of time and history, "'no longer exists.'"
14:05
The shaman can only temporarily abolish the rupture between heaven and earth. In other words, for the shaman, the world that we now live in, the one that is separated from heaven, is subject to time. But when the shaman ascends the ladder that temporarily, quote, abolishes the rupture between heaven and earth, he enters eternity where time no longer exists.

14:35
What this suggests is that time, as we understand it, is a function of disorder. Time only seems to appear where the awful sea dragon has access to that realm. In realms where the dragon does not have access, where the dragon is cut off or restricted, where the fabric of the cosmos is completely ordered,
15:05
there is no time, only eternity. And since God conquered the dragon and perfectly upholds Ma'at and thereby lives in a state of perfect order, he thusly lives where there is no time, he lives in eternity. And remember, time is a necessary requisite of physical entropy. The second law of
15:33
thermodynamics states that in a closed system, over time, the elements move irreversibly from a state of order to disorder. Wikipedia says this of the relationship between entropy and time. Quote, entropy is one of the few quantities in the physical sciences that require a particular direction for time.
16:03
which is disorder and chaos of an isolated system increases. The implications here are mind blowing because what this means is that where there is no time, there is no entropy. And since God dwells where there is no time, nothing in his realm is subject to entropy. A second ago, I stated that the earth in close proximity to God
16:33
would have to have been timeless too. Okay, but why? Well, because had the earth been subject to time, this would have meant that the earth would have been subject to disorder. And disorder is the antithesis of God. Disorder cannot survive where God is. Disorder is the manifestation of rebellion against God. Consequently,
17:01
It would have been impossible for an earth that resided so close to God, intimately close, like a cosmic embrace, to contain, as the ancient Egyptians called it, Isfet, chaos or disorder. Had it, God would not have truly been a God. Back to the earlier mind-blowing point. Since God dwells where there is no time, nothing in his realm is subject to entropy.
17:31
And guess what? That's exactly how the ancients describe the physical state of the first time.
17:41
Number three, the ancients tell us that the first time was completely free from physical entropy. In particular, they tell us that sickness and disease and aging and death, all of the products of thermodynamic entropy did not exist then. So let's take a look at a few of the ancient texts. In a Sumerian text titled Enki and Ninhursag, we read a creation story.
18:11
It's set in a place in the East where the sun rises, named Dilmun, where there's no disease and no aging. And in this text, Anki, the Lord of the Earth, lays with the mother goddess Ninhursag in Dilmun. So note how we're getting the heaven and earth in an intimate embrace motif playing here. The text reads,
18:36
and I'll be reading the translation published by the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature. Starting in line five, it reads, he, and he refers to Enki, laid her, which refers to

Ninhursag, down all alone in Dilmun, in the place where Enki had lain down with his spouse. And then line 20 goes on to describe this place. Now listen to how diseases and sickness can't
19:05
present themselves in Dilmun. Quote, no eye diseases said there, I am the eye disease. No headache said there, I am the headache. Now listen to what the text says about aging in Dilmun. No old woman belonging to it said there, I am an old woman. No old man belonging to it said there, I am an old man.
19:35
We clearly see here that in Dilmun, there was no disease and no aging. In Greece, in the Greek poet Hesiod's poem, Works and Days, we get a similar thing. There we read of a golden age at the dawn of creation where no one grew old and no one's limbs failed them. The text reads, and this is the A.N. Athanasakis translation starting in line 117. It reads, quote.
20:05
At first, the immortals who dwell on Olympus created a golden race of mortal men. They lived like gods. Line 121. Helpless old age did not exist. And with limbs of unsagging vigor, they enjoyed the feasts out of evil's reach. In this text, Hesiod, like we saw in Mesopotamia.
20:34
tells us that at the dawn of time during a golden age, the people did not age, their limbs did not weaken. The people during this time were not subject to the disorder of physical entropy. If we go to India and the Vaya Purana, a Hindu scripture, the period after the creation is referred to as the Sucha Yuga. In English, Sucha Yuga means the age of truth and sincerity.
21:03
This time period is also referred to as the Krita Yuga, which means the accomplished or completed age or the age of righteousness. The time when people performed pious acts.
21:18
In the Mahabharata, a Hindu epic, it states this of the Age of Righteousness, quote, "'The Krita Yuga,' which is the name the Hindu give this period, was without disease. There was no lessening with the years." The Native American Maidu people of California give us a similar description of this period in one of their creation accounts. We find this description on page 83 of David Leming's
21:47
the Oxford Companion to World Mythology. And while you're listening to this, see if you can't recognize some of the other stubborn bits that we've discussed on the program. The Maidu people tell us the following, quote, they say that at the beginning of time, when there was only darkness and the primal waters, two beings arrived in a raft, turtle and a creator figure called Earth Initiate.
22:15
Okay, this is not directly connected to today's subject, but I've got to stop here and point out how in this Native American account, the creator arrives on the Primordial Waters on a raft. Now, what is this raft? Well, this raft is the Native American cultural expression of the Ark. Yes, the Ark. Now,
22:42
I'm not talking directly about Noah's ark here. I'm talking about the predecessor to Noah's ark, because we're not talking about Noah here. We're talking about the earth initiate in this account.

I'm talking about the creator's ark, God's ark, God's ark that was built so that he could float on the Primordial waters, the ark that provided a place for him to dwell on the waters. Remember how we read in the ancient texts that when God
23:10
looked out over the Primordial Waters, he found nowhere to rest. So the first thing he did was create a place on the waters where he could rest. Well, in this account, that's the raft. This raft represents his place to rest. This raft is the Native American expression of the creator's temple on the Primordial Waters. The Mesopotamian Apsu.
23:41
This is also the same idea we get when the Sumerian god Enki names his temple in Eridu the Apsu because the temple sits on the primordial waters. This is the same reason in ancient Egypt, the sun god Ray travels across the night sky, where live the waters on a bark. And this is the same reason why among the ancient Hebrews, the Ark of the Covenant,
24:07
was housed in the Holy of Holies of the Mosaic Tabernacle and King Solomon's temple. And yes, it is the same symbolism that's used in the account of Noah's Ark. This symbolism tells us that Noah's Ark was supposed to be understood as God's temple floating on the waters too. And I'm gonna develop this idea a lot more when we discuss the Ark in ancient Egypt and the world flood. Among all of
24:37
and the bark represent God's temple on the Primordial Waters.
24:45
Okay, I'm getting a bit sidetracked, but sometimes this stuff just blows me away. There we are in North America among a Native American tribe in California, getting the same story of the boat, holding the creator on the primordial waters as we get in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia and Israel and India and things like this have me convinced that these accounts were derived from a single original religious tradition in deep
25:14
antiquity. All right back to the mydews account of the first time it reads quote they say that at the beginning of time when there was only darkness and the primal waters two beings arrived in a raft turtle and a creator figure called earth initiate so the one who initiates the earth which we would call the creator these two preceded to create the world
25:44
the sun and stars, dry land, trees and other things. Meanwhile, Earth Initiate went on working, making a perfect world, even teaching the people to jump in a certain lake to renew their youth when they happen to get old. When Coyote came to this paradise to visit them, the people told him how wonderful life was.
26:10
how they could spend their time eating and sleeping and how they could always be young. From this Maidu account, we learned that the people who inhabited the earth right after the creation did not age. They experienced eternal youth. From these accounts, we see that during the golden age, right after the creation of the earth, the people didn't get sick or age or die. And this makes perfect theological sense when we understand
26:40

Maat or Tzedek, the cosmic law of rightness that underpins the fabric of the cosmos. For this law dictates that those who perfectly uphold rightness are imbued with the power to impose order on chaos, right down to the subatomic particles. God
27:03
is a god precisely because he perfectly upholds rightness and because of that he has the power to impose order, to order everything in his kingdom right down to the subatomic particles. He has the power to prevent or reverse thermodynamic entropy, the disorder of subatomic particles caused by the awful dragon.
27:33
when the earth was very close to God, were not subject to the disordering effects of physical entropy. So they did not get sick or age or die. In fact, since they were in such close proximity to God, like I mentioned, it could not have been otherwise, else the God to which they were close would not have truly been a God.
28:01
Along these same lines, the ancients tell us that during the Golden Age, there was no physical pain, which is also not surprising since pain is a biological signal of physical disorder in the body. A broken bone, an abscessed tooth, a burned finger. According to the Cosmic Law of Rightness, all types of physical disorder, all types
28:30
are brought about by the awful dragon who rebelled and continues to rebel against rightness. Wherever he has access to a particular realm, physical disorder becomes a key component of that realm. Since he does not have access to God's realm, there can be no physical disorder or entropy there. And consequently,
29:00
no pain. And that's exactly what the ancients tell us. In ancient Egypt on the propylon of the temple of Kamsu that I mentioned earlier, it says this of Zeptepe the first time. Quote, Thorn did not prick in the time of the primeval gods. Here we see that during Zeptepe, Thorns did not cause pain. In the Greek
29:30
Hesiod says this of pain during the Golden Age in lines 120 and 121. It says, quote, they lived like gods carefree in their hearts shielded from pain and misery. As we would expect those who lived during the Golden Age were quote shielded from pain. There was no physical pain caused by entropy when the earth was in heaven's embrace.
30:00
The fourth and perhaps the most salient feature the first time is the ancient description of the earth as a pristine natural paradise, an expanse of breathtaking beauty and boundless abundance around more flowers bloomed in vibrant splendor. Life thrived in its fullest expression and fertility was a natural ever-present force.
30:27
The propylon of the Temple of Khansu in ancient Egypt describes Zeph-Tepi like this, quote, there was an abundance on the earth, stomachs were full and there was no lean year in the two lands. In ancient Mesopotamia, in the text Enki and in Herzog, Dilmun is described as, quote, pure is Dilmun land, virginal is Dilmun land.
30:55

Pristine is Dilmun land. That place was virginal. That place was pristine. In Greece in Works and Days, Hesiod describes the Golden Age in line 25 as, quote, the barley giving earth asked for no toil to bring forth a rich and plentiful harvest. In Greece,
31:19
in Plato's Critias, lines 113e to 114e, 115a, 117b, and 118d. Plato describes the grove where the god Poseidon dwells in these terms. Poseidon as a god easily organized the central island. Note how we're talking about an island
31:49
So we're getting the earth coming out of the primordial waters motif here and caused all kinds of food to grow in sufficient quantities from the soil. Everything aromatic the earth produces today in the way of shoots and roots and shrubs or gums exuded by flowers or fruits was produced and supported by the island then. Any water which overflowed was channeled to the Grove of Poseidon.
32:19
where all the various species of trees grew to be beautiful and extraordinarily tall thanks to the fertility of the soil. Plato continues this description of the Grove of Poseidon between lines 271C and 272C of his work, The Statesman. Quote, they had an abundance of fruits from trees and many other plants, not growing through cultivation.
32:47
but because the earth sent them up of its own accord. In Hebrew scripture in the Song of Solomon, chapter four, the author compares his beloved to the earthly paradise, which he describes in terms of its lush beauty. Verses 12 to 15 read, and this comes from the King James Version. Quote, a garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse.
33:15
Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits, campfire with spikenard, spikenard and saffron, calimus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices, a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters and streams from Lebanon.
33:40
There's a lot I could say about these verses, but what I want you to note in these verses is how the author associates the earthly paradise with a beautiful garden. A garden that contains calimus, cinnamon, and myrrh. Do you remember where we've seen those ingredients before? We saw those ingredients in the book of Exodus 30 verse 22, because those are the key ingredients in the anointing oil.
34:10
which was a temple rite. We also see in those verses, spikenard and frankincense, which were also used in temple rites, which is just more evidence that the garden within the earthly paradise was a temple. And don't miss the interplay here in the Song of Solomon between the beautiful physical abundance in the garden and the beautiful spiritual abundance that comes from God in his temple.
34:40
In China, the Taoist sage, now Taoism is akin to Ma'at and Cedic. Suangzu, who lived around the 4th century BC, wrote in a book known as Suangzu of an age which he refers to as the age of perfect virtue when, quote, the grass and trees grew luxuriant and long.

35:09
In Mesoamerica, the K'iche Maya write in the Popol Vuh, the chronicle of their sacred stories, this of the earth after the creation. Chapter one of part two of the Popol Vuh reads, quote, They were filled with joy because they had found a beautiful land full of pleasures, abundant in ears of yellow corn and ears of white corn and abundant also in potoxity. Now that's a tropical
35:39
and cacao and innumerable, and then it lists a whole bunch of tropical fruits and honey. There was an abundance of delicious food. There were foods of every kind, small and large foods, small plants and large plants. And let's not forget the Australian Aboriginal account of the first time that we talked about in our first and sixth episodes.
36:05
This time is known among the Aboriginals as the Every When. I love the name that they give it because it basically means eternal time, the Every When. And they sometimes refer to this time as the time of the ancestors. Anthropologists have referred to this as the Dream Time. In the account that we covered in the sixth episode, the Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales told us that during the Dream Time, quote,
36:35
in perfusion. Along with these paradisal descriptions, the ancients tell us that the first time was characterized by a lack of toil or a lack of difficult labor. The people who lived during this time didn't have to toil for food. Food was produced in abundance by the earth itself.
36:58
Plato between lines 271c and 272c of his writing, the statesman notes that people living during this time had quote, a life without toil, so much leisure available to them.
37:16
That very same idea is implied in the Bible in the Genesis account, where we learn that after Adam partook of the fruit of the tree of good and evil, that he would have to toil for his food. In Genesis chapter three, verse 19, God tells Adam, and this is the King James version, quote, "'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, "'till thou return unto the ground.'"
37:45
So here God tells Adam, who had just partaken of the fruit, that from that moment forward, he'd have to work and toil for his bread. And he'd have to do that until he died. We actually get quite a bit of information out of this passage. God is essentially telling Adam that in the moment he partook of the fruit, physical entropy took effect in the world.
38:11
God's super clear on this point. He tells Adam that from that point forward, he would have to toil and he would die. Two things that do not exist in a realm free from physical entropy. What this means is that when Adam and Eve partake of the fruit, the earth had to have moved away from God's direct presence and influence. According to the Cosmic Law of Rightness, this had to have occurred.
38:40
which is exactly what the ancients tell us over and over and over again. In accounts all over the globe, the ancients tell us that the bond between heaven and earth was severed, severed. Remember in our last episode, how Zeus castrated Cronos? That striking imagery was used to symbolically convey that the bond between heaven and earth had been severed.

39:08
All of these ancient accounts that I've just mentioned paint a picture of the earth during the first time as a lush verdant expanse marked with serene beauty and boundless fertility and eternal vitality much like a resplendent garden and this characterization shouldn't surprise us because when the earth was close to heaven the plant life Like the people who lived during this time was not subject
39:38
to physical entropy. And because of that, the plant life produced food in abundance. No toil and no labor was required to obtain sustenance by those who lived there.
39:50
The fifth prominent characteristic of the first time that we find highlighted in the ancient texts is the harmonious bond between people and animals. In ancient Egypt on the propylon of Khansu's temple in Karnak, it says this of the animals, quote, The crocodile did not seize prey. The serpent did not bite in the age of the primeval gods.
40:20
Now this is a little bit hard for a lot of us living today to comprehend, but here the ancient Egyptians tell us that during Zeptepe, crocodiles did not eat other animals and snakes didn't bite other creatures. There was no hostility or aggression or deadly primal instinct in them. In Mesopotamia in the text Enki and Ninhursag between lines 11 to 16, it says this of the animals in Dilmun.
40:51
In Dilmun, the raven was not yet cawing, the partridge not cackling. Now that's pretty interesting because it suggests that the birds and perhaps other animals didn't make the sounds or the roars that they do today. The text continues, quote, the lion did not slay, the wolf was not carrying off lambs, the dog had not been taught to make kids curl up.
41:21
and kids here I think refers to baby goats. In this passage, we get the same picture that we do in Egypt of docile animals, animals that don't kill or threaten other animals. In Greece, Plato between lines 271C and 272C of the Statesman tells us something very, very interesting about the animals. He writes the following about the Grove of Poseidon, quote,
41:50
in conversation, not only with human beings, but also with animals, to do philosophy, talking both with animals and with each other and inquiring from all kinds of creatures whether any one of them had some capacity of its own that enabled it to see better in some way than the rest with respect to the gathering together of wisdom. Those who lived then were far, far more fortunate than those who live now.
42:21
If Plato's correct here, then during this time period, people and animals could communicate in some way with one another. And that's pretty intriguing. I think my husband would absolutely love this because he's always wondering what his dog is thinking. In China, the Taoist sage, Zhuangzu, wrote this in the Zhuangzu of the animals during the Age of Perfect Virtue, quote,
42:51
and herds. In this condition the birds and beasts might be led about without feeling the constraint. The nest of the magpie might be climbed to and peered into. Here we learn that

during the first time animals did not resist the guidance or the commands of people. They didn't need a rope or a leash or a yoke. And if you wanted to climb a tree and take a look at a magpie nest you could. The magpie
43:22
I think it's really interesting that Suang Tzu used the magpie in this passage, because if you know anything about magpies, they can be really vicious birds. In fact, in Australia, they're known to actually dive bomb people while they're riding their bikes. So Australians actually wear these special helmets with spikes on them so that the magpies don't attack them when they're out for a ride. The helmets are called pie proof or magpie defender helmets.
43:51
If you wanna see some video of this, I've linked a couple of videos of magpie attacks on innocent Aussie bike riders to the webpage for this episode. Just so you can get a feel for what I mean. The magpies are crazy. But according to Zhuangzhu, the magpies were not always like this. During the first time, they were docile. So all of our Australian listeners to the program should be thrilled to hear this.
44:21
Let's read what else Zhuangzhu says about the animals. He writes, quote, "'Yes, in the age of perfect virtue, men lived in common with birds and beasts, and were on terms of equality with all creatures as forming one family.'" You get the sense here of a beautiful symbiosis between people and animals during the age of perfect virtue. As an interesting little aside,
44:50
Mercea Eliade points out in his article, yearning for paradise in primitive tradition, that shaman, when they prepare for their ritual ascent to heaven, often make these really loud squawking noises that if we heard them today, we'd probably find them troublesome or even super perplexing. Eliade notes that this is actually in perfect keeping with the shaman's attempt to restore
45:19
the paradisal state that was lost when the earth was severed from heaven. The squawking noise the shaman is making is actually him communicating in a language with the animals like was done during the first time. On page 257-258, Eliade writes, quote, It's significant that in order to prepare for the trance, the shaman makes use of a secret language or as it is called in some regions,
45:48
language of animals. On the one hand the shaman imitates the behavior of the animals, on the other he tries to imitate their cries above all those of the birds. He speaks their language and becomes their friend and their master. We should emphasize this fact, friendship with the animals and knowledge of their language represents a paradisal syndrome. In Illo Temporae, before the fall,
46:16
Such friendship was an integral part of the primordial situation. By doing this, Eliade is telling us that the shaman quote, restores part of the paradisal situation of primordial man. And he does this by speaking with the animals. This is an important trope in several animated Disney films, especially the princess movies. In Cinderella, the birds and the animals
46:44

befriend Cinderella and they help her prepare for her happily ever after, which clearly has paradisal connotations. My favorite example of this comes from Disney's remaking of the classic princess film Enchanted. In the movie Amy Adams, who plays the princess Giselle, wakes up to an apartment that's in utter chaos. Clothes and trash litter the living room and the kitchen's packed to
47:14
Princess Giselle looks around at all of the chaos and says, this just won't do. At that moment, she walks over to the window and she throws open the window and like the shaman belts a beautiful melody, similar to the call of a bird into the morning air. And what happens? All of the animals in the city perk up and they come running and flying to her aid. And once they all arrive, they gather around her.
47:44
waiting for her command. And she looks around the room and she says, "'All right, everyone, let's tidy things up.'" And she claps her hands and the animals get to work, scrubbing and cleaning and turning the chaos of the apartment into a perfectly ordered urban paradise. If you'd like to see a clip of this, I've posted it to the website for this episode. I have no idea if the screenwriters for Enchanted
48:13
And the screenwriters for all of the other Princess movies, you know, sat around and consciously decided to use friendly talking animals in their films to mirror the characteristics of animals in the beginning, in the first time, when the earth was close to heaven. I doubt it, but that doesn't mean that they aren't using the animals in precisely that way where the friendly animals are associated with paradisal themes like happily ever after.
48:42
royalty and kingship and order because they absolutely are. You should note in these films how the animals are usually the princess's friends and usually help her reach her paradisal ends. Whether it's the animals that make Cinderella's gown for the royal ball or the animals that clean Giselle's dirty apartment or Pascal and Maximus, a chameleon and a horse who provide comfort
49:11
to the isolated and lonely Rapunzel. I saw a comment on one of these clips that sums it up perfectly. The comment said this, quote, "'How could Rapunzel ever doubt she was a princess? "'Look how easily she talks to animals.'" That's paradisal imagery if I've ever seen it. The arm of the ancient tradition is long and wide.
49:41
Unfortunately, I'm gonna have to leave it there. We're in a new semester and I have a busy week ahead, but I hope that in this episode, you're starting to get a feel for the characteristic elements of Tierra in Hilo Tempore, the earth at that time when earth was in heaven's embrace. Whether the ancients refer to this time as Zeptepe, the first time, Dylmun, the Garden of Eden, the Grove of…
50:10
Poseidon, the Golden Age, the Kriyayuga, the Age of Righteousness, the Age of Perfect Virtue, the Every When, or the Dream Time. I hope you can see how they all shared very similar descriptions of Earth when it was wrapped in Heaven's Embrace. The ancients tell us that during that time, the cosmic law of Rightness governed the Earth.

50:40
that there was no time the earth existed in the realm of eternity, that the earth and people were completely free from physical entropy, that there was no sickness, no disease, no aging, no death, and no pain. That the flora on the earth was also free from physical entropy. So vegetation flourished, producing flowers and trees and food in abundance.
51:09
and that the animals were tame, docile, friendly creatures who lived in complete harmony with people. If this is what it's like to live near God, then all who abide by rightness are in for a treat. The ancients have more to say about the Tierra and Hilo Temporae, so we'll pick up here in our next episode. Until then, I'll leave you.
51:38
with the words of William Shakespeare, knowledge is the wing we're with, we fly to heaven. I'm Jack Logan.
51:51
You've been listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production.

Episode #44 - Who is God? - A Corporeal Being

https://theancienttradition.com/44-who-is-god-a-corporeal-being/

00:00
Music
00:09
You're listening to The Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.
00:25
Welcome to the ancient tradition. I'm Jack Logan. Welcome back to all of our long time listeners. I'm so glad to have you back. If you are a new listener, welcome, welcome. We're glad to have you join us. I want to tell you a little bit about the podcast. On this podcast, we're trying to reconstruct the original religious tradition that was given to human beings in deep antiquity. And we're doing this based off of evidence.
00:51
evidence that we can find in the world's ancient texts and myths and symbols and rituals and architecture. And so far, it's been pretty darn fruitful. It's been quite a ride. The podcast is set up

kind of like a college course where we start with the basics and then we build from there. So each episode builds off of the previous episode. So if you're interested in this subject, I highly recommend after you listen to today's episode.
01:18
that you begin with episode number one and then you work your way through. You'll get a much greater understanding of the theology and it's a quite mind blowing theology at that. So it'll be worth your time. With that, let's jump into today's episode. In our last episode, we began an examination of the first time known among the ancient Egyptians as Zeptepe.
01:44
Among the Mesopotamians is Delume, the Hindu is the Krita Yuga, and among the ancient Egyptians is Paradise or the Garden of Eden, and there's others that we can find as well. The ancients had quite a bit to say about what took place and the importance of what took place during that time, during the first time, so much so that we haven't even scratched the surface yet. It's really important that we take our time here and flesh out what took.
02:13
place during the first time because as you're going to see in the next couple of episodes the ancients placed great importance on this time period. So much so that everything that they did after this temple building, kingship rites, marital rites, festivals and the performance of religious rituals and their full theology was tied directly back to this time. Before we can properly understand what took place in the Garden of Eden
02:40
the Golden Age, the Every When or the First Time. We've got to pause for an episode or two and talk about who God is, who the ancients tell us God is. Because as you're going to see in this episode, who God is makes all the theological difference in the world. We must begin with the ancients description of the nature of God, or we're not going to grasp the full theological significance of what they're going to tell us took place in the first time.
03:10
For centuries, the nature of God, particularly the material nature of God, has been a topic of intense debate. It's engaged thinkers like Plato and prominent early Christian theologians and philosophers like Augustine and Tertullian, as well as some influential Jewish rabbis like Maimonides. This debate has spanned the Renaissance and the Enlightenment and it rages on today. And all you got to do is jump onto YouTube.
03:40
or crack open the latest edition of the Harvard Theological Review to see that the debate over the material nature of God has not been resolved. This debate matters. It really, really matters because it has vast implications for who God really is. If we come down on the wrong side of this debate, we're going to end up with an entirely incorrect understanding of who God is.
04:08
an entirely incorrect understanding of the theology tied to God, and an entirely incorrect understanding of ourselves and our relationship to God. So it's absolutely critical that we get this aspect of the nature of God correct from the very start. The central issue in this debate is whether the true nature of God is corporeal or incorporeal. So what does that mean?
04:37

The English word corporeal comes from the Latin word corpus, which means body, as well as the Latin word corporeus, which means physical body. So the English word corporeal means a physical or material body. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines corporeal as, quote, having, consisting of, or relating to a physical material body. So this debates over which of the two.
05:05
corporeal or incorporeal is the true nature of God. Does God have a physical material body or does he not? Now you might be wondering to yourself does it really matter if God has a material body or not? Yes, it absolutely matters. In fact it's hugely consequential, which you're gonna see in today's episode. Basically
05:35
argue that God is materially embodied, that he has a human-like form with eyes and ears and toes and lips and hair and a face. Those who argue that God is incorporeal argue that God does not have a material body, that God is not made of physical substance. They argue that God is invisible, which makes God unseeable, omnipresent, which makes God everywhere,
06:03
and bodiless, which means God has no form or shape. The 12th century Sephardic rabbi and philosopher, Mammonides argued that God was incorporeal, that he could not be bound by any limitation. In Mammonides' 13 Principles of Faith, he writes, quote, we believe that this oneness is neither a body nor a bodily force.
06:30
Nor is he subject to any bodily characteristics, movement, rest or dwelling. Above there is no sitting, standing, division or cohesions. You cannot conceive of him of having any form. As you're going to see in just a minute, the ancients are going to have a whole whole lot to say in regards to Maimonides position here. And you should also keep in mind that Maimonides wrote this towards the end of the 12th century AD.
07:00
some 4,000 years after the ancient Egyptians and Mesopotamians, not to mention the later Canaanites, Hittites, and Hebrews. The corporeality or incorporeality of God can be kind of a touchy subject. It can be polarizing. A lot of people have very strong opinions on which of these two positions constitutes the correct true nature of God. But these two views are antithetical. The true nature of God can only be one or the other.
07:29
Either God has a physical material body or he doesn't. Either God is invisible, omnipresent or bodiless or he's not. Only one of these views can be the truth about the true nature of God. Since the premise of this podcast rests on the declaration given by the ancients themselves that God imparted a pure religious tradition in the beginning, we would assume
07:57
And as you're going to see in a minute, this really isn't an assumption that God would have had to have given the ancients a correct understanding of who he was, of his true nature. So today we're going to turn to the ancients and let the ancients speak for themselves. Let them teach us who God is. And how are we going to do this? Well, as usual, we're going to do this by taking a dive into the world's oldest texts.
08:26

And we're gonna start with the ancient Egyptian pyramid texts. The first text that I wanna talk about is pyramid text 422. It's found in the pyramid of King Pepe I, who was the third king of the sixth dynasty, dated to 2289 to 2255 BC. In this passage, the deceased King Pepe ascends to heaven and he finds a door there. And this is what the text says, quote,
08:57
The sky's door is opened to you. The cool water's door is made to pull open to you. So the deceased King Pepe arrives at the door of heaven and the door opens for him. Now listen to what he finds on the other side of the door. Quote, and you find the son standing waiting for you. The deceased King Pepe arrives at the door of heaven and he opens the door.
09:26
and who's standing there? The sun, S-U-N. The sun here is the high god, Ray. Note that the text tells us that the sun was, quote, standing there, waiting for King Pepe. Ray is a god who has the ability to stand. The ancient Egyptians used the sun to symbolize the glorious light that radiated from Ray's being. You can learn more about the glorious light that emanates from God.
09:54
He who upholds Maat in episode number 29, who is God, a glorious being of ineffable light. Now listen to what the glorious God Ray does next. Quote, you find the sun standing waiting for you. He takes hold of your arm, leads you into the sky's dual shrines. In this passage, the high God Ray takes hold of King Pepe's arm.
10:21
and he leads him into the sky's dual shrine. The shrine here refers to a temple. So we're talking about a heavenly temple. So take note that the ancient Egyptians are teaching us that there is a temple in heaven. So in this passage, the high God takes King Pepe's arm. Now listen to what happens next. Quote, he takes hold of your arm, leads you into the sky's dual shrines and puts you on
10:51
Osiris' throne. Oh did you catch that? The radiant glorious high god, Re, takes King Pepe by the arm. He leads him into the heavenly temple and he puts him on a throne. I hope you catch what's going on here. The high god just made King Pepe, who had previously been a human being on the earth, a heavenly king.
11:17
The same thing that Christ promised to those who overcome in Revelation chapter 3 verse 21. That's what's happening in this passage. I could say a lot about this, but I'm using this text, Pyramid Text 422 today, to illustrate that the ancient Egyptians description of God here is clearly a description of a corporeal God. The high God Ray stands, takes King Pepe by the arm, leads him into the inner sanctum of the heavenly temple.
11:47
and puts him on a throne. Ray is not an invisible, bodyless, omnipresent God. He's visible. King Pepe can see him when the door of heaven opens. He's not bodyless. He takes King Pepe by the arm and he leads him to a throne. And he's not omnipresent. He dwells in a particular location in the cosmos, which we've learned in this program, is in the very heart.
12:15
the very center, the very bosom of the cosmos, which we see expressed in symbols like the circum-punct and in shrines like Stonehenge. And we just learned in this passage that in the

sacred center of the heavens, there's a heavenly temple. And it's precisely in that temple that God dwells. He dwells in a specific place. I know that the notion that God is omnipresent is widely believed, but
12:44
The ancients never taught this. Merriam-Webster dictionary tells us that omnipresent means to be present in all places at all times. This would mean that God would be everywhere all the time. And again, the ancients never taught this. And this can be easily illustrated by what the ancients tell us about the primordial waters. As we've discussed on the program, the ancients are pretty darn clear that God is not present in the primordial waters. He is not…
13:13
present in that place. The primordial waters are the antithesis of who God is. God is order. The primordial waters where the awful dragon, the father of chaos, along with all of the awful monsters who follow him dwell, is disorder. It's hell there precisely because God is not present in that place. God cannot be considered omnipresent if there are
13:44
which the ancients clearly tell us there are. If God does choose to appear above the Primordial Waters, like we've seen in so many of the myths, it's because he's there to impose order on the chaos, to create a new cosmic kingdom, a new universe or a new world. The creator essentially kicks the dragon out and he creates a realm of order where he can dwell. But as you're gonna see as the podcast continues, the Primordial Waters are never fully eliminated.
14:14
Primordial waters surround every cosmic kingdom. I really like how Egyptologist R.T. Rundle explains it on page 35 of Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt. He describes there God's cosmic kingdom as an air bubble. And this is what he writes, he says, quote, "'The basic principle of Egyptian cosmology is the primeval waters. It's common in all the accounts of the origin of the universe.
14:43
Every creation myth assumes that before the beginning of things, the primordial abyss of waters was everywhere, stretching endlessly in all directions. It was not like a sea for that has a surface. Whereas the original waters extended above as well as below all was dark and formless. The present cosmos, talking about ours, is a vast cavity, rather like an air bubble,
15:12
the limitless expanse. Hence, the waters are still to be met everywhere at the limits of the known. The universe is the abode of light, surrounded by infinite thick darkness, a bubble of clarity and order, enveloped by the eternal night of the primordial ocean. Before creation, darkness was upon the face of the deep.
15:40
and the present world, the dominion of the sun god, Ray is only a partial rolling back of the eternal night or the waters of chaos. In essence, Rundle's telling us that we can envision God's cosmic kingdom, kind of like an air bubble that's been released from a scuba divers tank. Life preserving oxygen is encapsulated in the bubble, but the bubble is completely surrounded by water.
16:10

Likewise, God's life-producing cosmic kingdom, his kingdom, is completely surrounded by the primordial waters of chaos. This analogy is a pretty darn good one and we're going to come back to it in a couple of months when we talk about the wall that surrounds God's cosmic kingdom. And it's worth looking forward to. And keep in mind that there could be an infinite number.
16:36
of these cosmic kingdom air bubbles are universes throughout the cosmos, which was argued in episode number 27, universes beyond universes. The point of this discussion is to illustrate that God is not omnipresent. He is not everywhere. There are large swaths of the cosmos where He is not present. I'd like to emphasize that if God is embodied,
17:03
and resides in a temple in the heart of his cosmic kingdom. That doesn't necessarily have to conflict with the idea that his presence could still be felt throughout his entire kingdom. In fact, that is what the ancient Egyptians imply when they use the sun to symbolize the high god ray. His radiant glory, like the rays of the sun, permeate everything in his kingdom, everything in the air bubble. And like we discussed in episode number 29,
17:32
who is God, a glorious being of ineffable light. God's light seems to have the ability to transmit his immeasurable love to all of the creations within his kingdom, regardless of where he resides in body. Okay, let's return to Pyramid Text 422 and read what else it says. Remember, the High God Ray has just made the deceased King Pepe a heavenly king. The text reads,
18:02
quote, you take up your position Pepe on thighs forwards throne saved provided as a god and equipped with Osiris's form on foremost of Westerners throne. Here the deceased King Pepe is told that he is now a god which signifies that he has been transformed into a divine being just like we saw
18:30
when Enoch was made a heavenly king and Azanath was made a heavenly queen. And that he is now, quote, equipped with Osiris's form. Osiris's form here refers to Osiris's resurrected body. If you remember in episode number 23, the troubling death of Osiris, Osiris was murdered by the awful dragon Set. Set cut Osiris's body into 14 pieces and scattered them across Egypt.
19:00
found Osiris's body parts and with the assistance of the god Thoth, who is the lord of sacred ceremonials and Anubis, the god of embalming and funerary rites, unite and mummify Osiris's body. In Donald McKenzie's summary of this account, we're told on page 23 and 24 of Egyptian myth and legend that Isis, Osiris's wife, after having wrapped his body in linen
19:28
and anointed it with myrrh, quote, hovered over the body and the air from her wings entered the nostrils of Osiris so that he was imbued with life once again. I think it's pretty intriguing in this account that it's Isis, Osiris' wife, who breaks the seal of death.
19:55
and imbues her husband's body with life once again. She's the one who gives new life to Osiris. That is pretty fascinating. We can't overstate the significance of Osiris' resurrection. In ancient Egypt, Osiris was the prototype. All embalming and mummification and funerary rites in ancient

Egypt were patterned after the embalming, mummification, and funerary rites that were used by Thoth,
20:25
to restore Osiris to life. These rites speak to the enormous significance of the physical body in ancient Egypt. Renowned Egyptologist Wallace Budge on page 198 of his seminal book, Egyptian Religion Rites, quote, "'The Egyptians believed that mortal man "'could be raised from the dead "'and attain unto life everlasting.'
20:55
The resurrection was the object with which every prayer was said and every ceremony performed in every text and every amulet and every formula of each and every period was intended to enable the mortal to put on immortality and to live eternally in a transformed glorified body. According to Budge there, every single rite and ceremony the ancient Egyptians performed
21:23
was done with the specific aim of the resurrection of the physical body in mind. I don't know that there's ever been any society in the history of the world which has placed greater emphasis on the importance of the physical body and the reconstitution of that physical body than the ancient Egyptians. The extensive effort the ancient Egyptians made to preserve and to protect the physical body during life and after death
21:53
virtually no question that they expected the actual physical body to rise again. That is the story of Osiris. And what did Osiris go on to do after he was resurrected? He went on to rule as the heavenly king of the Duat, the world of the dead, where he reigns as a god with a scepter in his hand on a heavenly throne in a deified, immortal, physical body.
22:22
which we learned earlier in Pyramid Text 422 was to be the deceased King Pepe's fate too when the text said, quote, take up your position Pepe on thighs forwards thrown, provided as a God and equipped with Osiris's form. And if this weren't clear enough, the text continues, quote, your son, and that's speaking of the deceased King Pepe.
22:49
takes up his position on your throne, equipped with your form, equipped with a deified immortal physical body just like Osiris, and does what you used to do before at the fore of the living. He's talking about reigning as a king by command of the Son who is Rey, the great God.
23:18
which indicates that in the heavens, there is a royal celestial hierarchy. So he's telling us that the deceased King Pepe has the right to reign as a heavenly king because he was given authority to do so by the son, S-U-N, the high God Ray, whom we read earlier in this text, met him at the door of heaven and took him by the arm and led him into the heavenly temple. And note in this text that there is more than one God.
23:48
there's Ray, Osiris, and now Pepe. And note that each of these gods reigns as a heavenly king. They have thrones. And note that each of these gods is a deified human being with an immortal glorified physical body. And also take note that these gods reign from a particular place in the cosmos, on a throne from within a heavenly temple. Now,

24:17
If you're still not convinced, Pyramid Text 422 keeps going, stating it again, making it super, super clear. The text continues, quote, "'Ho, Pepe, what pertains to you is given to you by the Son, S-U-N, who is Ray.'" He's talking about a cosmic kingdom here. "'You claim your body, having received a God's form.' Ho, Pepe."
24:46
Take up your position on your throne. The ancient Egyptians attest that God is a glorious corporeal being, a being of flesh and bone with real eyes and real ears and legs and arms and feet and hair. But his body isn't exactly like ours because as we've already learned on this program, as a Lord of Ma'at or a King of Tzedek, his body is not subject to physical entropy.
25:15
His physical body is perfectly ordered. No sickness, no disease, no bald spots, no wrinkles, no corruption of any kind. His body is perfect and thereby immortal. And because of his adherence to Ma'at, it radiates a glorious ineffable light, which is why the pyramid texts now refer to the deceased King Pepe as an quote imperishable. So one who never dies, star.
25:45
a glorious, radiant being. This is who the ancient Egyptians tell us God is. The entire ancient Egyptian religion attests that God is a caporial being. This is made crystal clear in Pyramid Text 215, which is found in the Pyramid of King Unus. In this pyramid text, King Unus is told that every single aspect of his physical body
26:15
like the other gods, gods whom the text identified by name, who reside in the heavens, and that his body now radiates like an imperishable star. Pyramid Text 215 reads, You, and he's speaking to King Unas here, are distinguished in your identity of a god. You become completed as every god, your head as Horus of the Duat, an imperishable star, your face as eyes forward.
26:45
imperishable star. Your ears, Atum's twins, an imperishable star. Your nose as the jackal, an imperishable star. Your teeth, Saptu, an imperishable star. Your arms, Happy and Duatmatef, those are sons of Horus. Your legs,
27:15
Atum's twins, an imperishable star, you do not perish. That text couldn't be clearer. This text affirms that God has a glorified physical body with a nose and teeth, ears, arms, and legs. In a text about the afterlife titled Amduat, dated to 1426 BC, the deceased states in section one, which is called the first hour,
27:42
it represents the first gate of the underworld. The following and this is the Jakov Rabanovich translation quote I have come here that's to the first gate of the underworld to achieve the mystery of my being to restore the breath of life to mine own dead body so it rises and lives and moves pretty straightforward
28:11
The deceased goes to the first gate of the underworld with the specific objective of gaining a complete restoration of his dead physical body so that he might live and move in the afterlife. Egyptologist Eric Kornung, he's the expert on that particular text, but he's also the expert on the

detailed meaning of the word image in ancient Egyptian texts. And he tells us on page 138 of his book, Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt.
28:41
that in ancient Egypt, human beings were believed to be the image of God, to look like or to resemble God, in particular the high God Ray. According to ancient Egyptians, Hornung writes, human beings are images of God. In the scholarly world, the belief that one is made in the image of God is referred to as theomorphism. Theo or Theos is the Greek word for God.
29:11
and morph is the Greek word for form. So a theomorphic human being is a human being with a body that resembles God's body. If you're a long time listener to the program, you've probably heard me use the word anthropomorphic when talking about God. This is a somewhat similar idea. Anthropos is the Greek word for human and morph again is the Greek word for form. So anthropomorphic means one,
29:38
who has the physical form of a human body. Even though I use the word anthropomorphic to describe God, and I'm probably gonna continue to do that, it's important to note that this description conveys a somewhat incorrect notion of God. And why is that? Well, because anthropomorphic states that God is patterned after human beings, whereas theomorphic states that human beings are patterned after God.
30:09
There are a lot of secularists out there who argue that we humans just created a God after our own image. But that is absolutely not what the ancients taught. The ancients taught that we human beings are created in the image of God. The ancients taught that we are theomorphic, not that God is anthropomorphic. And that's a very, very important distinction to make. Okay, so why do we humans have bodies like God?
30:39
Well, for the answer to that, we need to dive back into the ancient Egyptian texts and see what they tell us. To do that, let's turn to page 138 of Egyptologist Eric Hornong's book, where he summarizes what's written in a couple of important ancient texts. Hornong writes, quote, Human beings are images of God. Rare but unambiguous references show that this is true of all human beings.
31:09
In the stories of Papyrus Westcar, that's a text that's dated to 1650 BC, even a criminal condemned to death is one of the quote, sacred herd of God. In the instruction for Maricare, and that's a text dated to 2060 BC, mankind is said to be, now listen to this, quote, his likeness, who came from his flesh.
31:40
Wow, that certainly is unambiguous. Here the ancient Egyptians tell us that we human beings look like God because we are literally the offspring of God. They tell us that we are literally the children of his flesh. So naturally we would look like him. The theology here is astounding. In the West Car Papyrus that Hornung references,
32:08
Human beings are referred to as the sacred herd of God. And in the instruction for Marikari, mankind is referred to as the herd of God. Line 284 of the instruction of Marikari reads, quote,

well-tended is mankind the cattle of God. To understand what is meant by cattle here, I need to give you a little more background.
32:33
On one of the oldest and most significant artifacts that we have from ancient Egypt is an artifact known as the Narmar palette. On this palette is a depiction of the first King of Egypt standing over his enemies with a mace in his hand. If you'd like to see a picture of the Narmar palette, I've uploaded it to the web page for this episode. For the purposes of today's episode though, it's what King Narmar, who's also known as King Menes, is wearing that interests us here.
33:00
See, King Narmer from his waist is wearing the tail of a bull. And why is he wearing this? Well, because the high God Re'atum was associated with a bull. In fact, there are several pyramid texts that refer to the Sun, Sun, which is a symbol of Re'a's glorious nature as quote, the Bull of Heaven. King Narmer is wearing the tail of a bull.
33:28
to signify that he's the rightful heir of Re, the bull of heaven. See, the ancient Egyptians used animals like the bull, the falcon, the hare, and the ram, and several other animals as a way to emphasize very important characteristics about that particular God. And for Re-Atoom, they chose the bull. And why did they choose the bull to symbolize Re, the supreme God? Well, they chose it precisely because of bulls
33:57
massive muscular frame and formidable horns convey incredible power. And the second reason that they use the bull to symbolize Atum is because bulls are associated with incredible virility. The ability to produce offspring. To give you a real-world example of this according to Scientific American
34:23
99% of the 9 million Holstein dairy cows in the United States, and those are those black and white cows that we commonly think of, can trace their DNA to just two bulls, both of whom were born in the 1960s. That's an astonishing number of offspring from just two bulls. So when the Egyptian texts refer to human beings as the cattle of God or the sacred herd of God,
34:52
This is a direct reference to God as the literal father of the human race. The text instruction for Merakari actually says this, speaking of human beings, quote, his images are they the products of his flesh. The notion that Reatum is the father of the human race is further substantiated in the royal titularity of the Egyptian king.
35:21
When the reigning king took the throne, he was given five new names. And one of these names was known as the Nomen. This was the king's personal name and it was always preceded by the title, son, S-O-N of Ra. Ra here is the same as re or atum. So if we were talking about King Pepe, his Nomen would be son of Ra, Pepe Neferkari. By using the appellation, son of re,
35:49
King Pepe, the earthly king, is declaring that he is the son of the high god, Re, the son of his flesh. He is a son of God. And this concept of sonship is incredibly important in the ancient tradition. And we're going to discuss it much, much, much more in depth down the line. In

pyramid texts 214 and 215, which are found in the pyramid of King Unus, Re-atum is called the father.
36:19
of the king. The text I'm going to read refers to the deceased King Unus. In the text, climbing refers to climbing to heaven. The text reads, climb to the place where your father is and he will give you what is on Horus's brow. Now we already know in this program that what's on Horus's brow refers to the anointing oil. So this is another example of the anointing of a heavenly king. Ho Unus
36:47
Your envoys have gone, your heralds have run to your father, to Atum. Pretty clear references there to Reatum as King Unus's father. And what is the first thing King Unus wants to do when he gets to heaven? Well, if you hadn't seen your father in a lifetime, what would be the first thing that you would want to do when you saw him?
37:14
If you said, give him a hug, then you'd be right in line with King Eunice's greatest desire. In Pyramid Text 215, King Eunice makes this heartfelt appeal. Quote, Atum, bring me up to you. Encircle me inside your arms. Could you even imagine the warmth and the love of that embrace? There would be no words.
37:42
such an embrace it should go without saying would not be possible unless both the father and the son had physical bodies. One cannot hug or embrace an invisible, bodiless, omnipresent God. It's not possible. Hugging is a physical act. To hug one has to be made of matter, exist in a particular
38:12
being able to embrace God. Somehow an invisible body-less God seems remarkably distant and disconnected. Note how the ancient Egyptians attest that not only does God have a physical body, but it's precisely by way of that physical body that he has a relationship, a very, very personal relationship with every single human being on the planet. According to the ancient
38:41
The entire human race is bound to God in a familial bond precisely because, as it says in the instruction for Mary Carey, that we are the products of His flesh, that we are His children. We are the sacred cattle of God. God's physical body then, not only binds the human race to God, but it also binds human beings to each other as brothers and sisters.
39:10
in a grand familial relationship where everyone on the planet is an important member of God's sacred herd. In this light, God's physical body is the powerful force that binds all of us together. An invisible bodyless omnipresent God, precisely because he doesn't have a physical body, would be completely incapable.
39:38
of binding human beings to him in the way that a physical body binds a father to a son or a daughter. Here on planet earth, our most enduring relationships are directly tied to our physical bodies. It's by way of our physical bodies that we are aunts and uncles and sisters and brothers and fathers and mothers and grandmas and grandpas. On planet earth, the physical body is the quintessential binding force.

40:08
that keeps the entire human race from spiraling into oblivion, precisely because our familial bonds, day in and day out, keep us bound to each other and to something greater than ourselves. It's pretty difficult to imagine how one could develop an intimate personal relationship with an invisible, bodyless, omnipresent entity. Before we move away from Egypt, I wanna emphasize one crucial point.
40:38
See, the ancient Egyptians didn't just attest that God had a glorified, immortal physical body and then move on to other things. No, the corporeal nature of God was an absolutely essential component of their entire religious framework, from funerary rites like mummification to kingship rites, where the king was proclaimed a son of God. Richard H. Wilkinson,
41:08
referred to several times on the program, writes, quote, in the pyramid texts, we find the combined Ray Atum called the father of the king. And according to the legend preserved in the Westcar papyrus, the kings of the fifth dynasty were actual sons of Ray, divinely begotten. Already by the fifth dynasty, the son of Ray epitaph of the king's titularity had been introduced, which formalized the relationship
41:37
for the rest of Egyptian history. In this passage, it's pretty clear that the entire ancient Egyptian society and religion rested on and attested to the corporeal nature of God. If we turn to the Judeo-Christian tradition and examine the texts that describe God, we find that the ancient Hebrews and the early Christians describe him in almost identical terms
42:05
as did the ancient Egyptians, as a glorified corporeal being with a face and eyes and ears and lips and hands and feet. And when they describe the resplendent, glorious nature of the different aspects of God's body, the descriptions are nothing short of breathtaking. In fact, in nearly all the Judeo-Christian accounts that we have, those who see God immediately fall to the ground awestruck.
42:34
in fear and trembling due to his overwhelming majesty. So let's start by taking a look at the descriptions of God found in the Bible. Pay special attention to how these texts describe God as having a physical glorified body. Let's start with Moses. Let's start with Moses' description and then we'll make our way towards the New Testament. Let's start in Exodus chapter 33 verses eight, nine and 11.
43:02
In this passage, Moses pitches the tabernacle, which is a portable temple in the Sinai, and he goes there to seek God. This is what the text says. And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, that all the people rose up and stood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle. And it came to pass as Moses entered into the tabernacle.
43:31
descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle. This is pretty fascinating to me because this sounds a lot like pyramid text 422 that we just read where King Pepe ascends to heaven and approaches the door of heaven and when he enters he finds the high God Rey standing there

waiting for him. Here Moses goes to the tabernacle which we haven't discussed on the program yet is
44:01
the temple in heaven and what happens? In the moment that he enters the door of the tabernacle, a cloudy pillar descends and stands at the door of the tabernacle. Now listen to what the text says happens next. Verse nine reads, quote, and the Lord talked with Moses. Some people get caught up here on the cloudy pillar. They argue that this is evidence that God is in Caporio.
44:31
But respectfully, I think they may have glazed over a few things. First, remember the Israelite people were watching this from their tents. And as we learned in episode number four, the Israelite people were not worthy to see God because of their idolatry. It's my contention that God shrouded his glory in a cloudy pillar to shield the Israelites because they were neither worthy nor prepared to witness the full magnitude of his glory.
45:01
Second, the fact that Moses and the Israelite people could see with their very own eyes the cloudy pillar descend indicates that at least some aspect of God is visible. Moses and the Israelites could clearly see it. This is not an invisible God. He may be a hidden God, but he is not an invisible God. There's a difference. Third,
45:30
not only was the cloudy pillar visible, it occupied a particular location, the door of the tabernacle. This is not an omnipresent God. This is a God that moves from location to location. In this case, the text is absolutely clear that God moved from the heavens down to the door of the tabernacle, something that he absolutely would not have had to have done if he were omnipresent.
46:00
And fourth, the text clearly states that, quote, the Lord talked with Moses. Now, if you're wondering whether or not God really talked to Moses like you and I would talk to one another, then we have to take a look at Numbers chapter 12, because God himself has something to say about this. In verses six to eight, God is explaining that Moses is his prophet, and then this is what God himself says in verse eight.
46:31
with him, he's speaking of Moses, shall I speak mouth to mouth? It's right there in the Bible, right there. God himself attests that he has a mouth. This isn't somebody else saying God has a mouth. This is God himself testifying that he has a mouth. All right, let's jump back to Exodus chapter 33 and keep reading.
46:57
Remember, Moses and God are talking with each other at the door of the tabernacle. And then this is what verse 11 says happens next. Quote, and the Lord spake unto Moses face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend. You would have to exercise a lot of mental gymnastics to turn what it says right there in the Bible into an invisible, bodyless,
47:26
omnipresent God. The text clearly states that God spoke to Moses face to face. A bodiless God does not have a face. The God Moses talked to did. And what's more, the text tells us that

Moses and God talked together just like we would talk to one of our closest friends. Exodus chapter 33 and Numbers chapter 12 both attest that God has a mouth
47:55
and a face and speaks. He is a corporeal being. In Daniel chapter 10 verses five and six, Daniel sees the Lord and this is how he describes what he saw. And this comes from the King James Version, quote, "'Then I lifted up mine eyes and looked "'and behold a certain man clothed in linen "'whose loins were girded with fine gold of upahs.'
48:23
Here, Daniel tells us that when he saw God, he saw a man, and that God was dressed in clothes. He was wearing linen, and what I surmise was a golden apron around his waist. The God Daniel witnessed clearly had a body. Daniel even uses the word body itself in the next verse, in verse six. The verse reads, quote, "'His body also was like the barrel.'" Now, barrel's a precious stone.
48:53
and his face was the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. Here Daniel attests that God has a body, face, eyes, ears, and feet. And you can just tell that Daniel is searching for ways to help us grasp the sheer magnitude of his glorified body.
49:21
His face is like lightning, his eyes are like fire, his arms and feet are like polished brass, his body is like barrel. There are no Hebrew words to truly describe God's glorified body, so Daniel has to use symbols. Let's take a look now at Ezekiel's account. In Ezekiel chapter one, Ezekiel describes what he saw as follows. Verse 26 reads, quote,
49:51
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 was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." Here we're getting the same description of God that we saw in ancient Egypt and in Exodus and in Daniel. Here Ezekiel sees God, who's a man seated on a sapphire throne. The God Ezekiel witnesses is clearly visible
50:21
has a body and is seated on a throne in a specific location in the heavens. Ezekiel's witness is the antithesis of an invisible, bodyless, omnipresent God. Let's read the rest of Ezekiel's description where he attempts to describe God's glory. Verse 27 reads,
50:49
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 round about. Ezekiel describes God's glorified body as the color of amber, the appearance of fire and brightness round about. I also wanna point out that this verse attests that God has loins.
51:17
loins are reproductive organs. In other words, this passage attests that God has a glorified body in every sense of the word. Now listen to what Ezekiel did after he witnessed God's glory. Verse 28 reads, quote, this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.
51:46

when I saw it I fell upon my face. I think I would too. Moses, Daniel, and Ezekiel all give us very consistent descriptions of God that attest that he is a glorified corporeal being. Now let's take a look at a couple of descriptions of God in early Christianity starting with Revelation chapter 1. In verses 12 to 17
52:14
John the Revelator describes what God looks like, and this is what he says. Verse one reads, quote, "'In the midst of the seven candlesticks, "'one likened to the Son of Man, "'clothed with a garment down to the foot, "'and gird about the paps with a golden girdle.'" John's description of God here, albeit 650 years after Daniel, sounds very similar to Daniel's. Here, John describes the resurrected Christ as a man.
52:43
The man clothed down to the foot, wearing a golden sash or girdle over his garment. John then attempts like Daniel and Ezekiel to put words to God's glory. The text continues. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like into fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters.
53:13
His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. Here, John attests that the resurrected Christ has a body, a body with hair and eyes and feet. Here, John attests that the resurrected Christ's glory is so incomprehensible that his hair is as wide as snow, his eyes are like fire and his feet are like brass.
53:41
And like the rest of the ancient world, John attests that his countenance shown like the sun in its strength. It's quite difficult after reading these descriptions to reconcile how many Christians have interpreted this to mean that God is invisible, bodyless and omnipresent. It doesn't make sense to me.
54:06
Moses's, Daniel's, Ezekiel's, and John's descriptions of God clearly attest that God has a glorified body. If I had more time, I'd read Enoch's description of God in the book of the holy secrets of Enoch in chapter 22 and Azenith's description of God in chapter 14 of the book of Joseph and Azenith. Since we've already read those descriptions on the program, I'll just point out that both Enoch and Azenith's descriptions of God attest that God has a glorified body.
54:36
If you're interested in listening to a full audio recording of the book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch or the book of Joseph and Azaneth, you can find them on our sister podcast, The Ancient Tradition Audio-Rit. Before I close out this episode, I want to point out that the notion of a resurrected Christ itself attests that God has a glorified body. What need would Christ have for a resurrected body
55:05
if in the heavens he were an invisible, bodiless, omnipresent being. There would be no need. Yet the New Testament is replete with attestations that Christ rose from the dead in the same physical body that he walked the earth, albeit in an immortal glorified form. In the New Testament in John chapter 20, Peter and John the beloved
55:34

Receive word from Mary Magdalene that the stone guarding the entrance to the sepulcher where Christ had been laid had been removed. Peter and John race to the sepulcher and this is what they see. Verses five and seven read, quote, and he this speaks of John the beloved stooping down and looking in saw the linen clothes lying, the napkin that was about his head not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.
56:06
Peter and John find that the napkin has been neatly folded and placed near the linens but not on them. Something that a grave robber would never have done. I personally love the thought of the Christian Jesus upon his resurrection neatly folding his burial clothing. It speaks volumes about the careful, considerate nature of his character. For the purposes of this episode though, it's the fact that
56:33
that the physical body with which Christ walked the earth is the body that's missing. This indicates that Christ's resurrected body wasn't just reassembled from the dust of the earth. Instead, it was the actual body that he used when he lived on the earth. This is the same theology taught by the ancient Egyptians and the precise reason the ancient Egyptians went to great lengths to preserve the physical body after death.
57:03
After this, Peter and John leave and Mary Magdalene stays near the empty sepulcher. It's at this point that Mary sees Jesus. Verse 14 reads, she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus. Note that Mary sees with her mortal eyes the resurrected Christ. He's standing in fully resurrected bodily form before
57:33
She doesn't recognize that it's him. Then Jesus asks her why she's weeping, and it's not until he calls her by name that she realizes it's him, her risen Lord. Mary Magdalene was a close intimate of Christ. In that moment, what do you think Mary wanted to do? Well, the text doesn't tell us, but we infer from the text when Christ says, touch me not, that she wanted to touch him. My guess, like King Eunice,
58:01
in Pyramid text 215, who wanted to embrace Ray at the door of heaven, is that she wanted to embrace Christ, to wrap her arms around her risen Lord. In Luke chapter 24, the risen Christ appears before his disciples with a resurrected body of flesh and bone. Starting in verse 36, the text reads, And as they thus spake, this is the disciples,
58:29
Jesus himself stood in the midst of them and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and frightened and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are you troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? The disciples are clearly frightened by Jesus's appearance. Now listen to what Jesus does next and pay special attention to the anthropomorphic
58:58
Jesus says to them, behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself, handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. I don't know how a Christian scripture on the corporeal nature of God could get more authoritative than this.

59:28
Here Christ himself is declaring in no parsed words that he is a caporial God, a resurrected God of flesh and bone. The disciples must have been skeptical because he invites them to come and handle his flesh for themselves. The Luke account tells us that even after inviting them to do this, the disciples quote, yet believed not and wondered.
59:57
So what did Christ do to really drive home the point that yes, He was in fact truly a resurrected God of flesh and bone? Well, let's read the text and find out. Starting in verse 41, the text reads, and while they yet believed not for joy and wondered, He said unto them, have ye hear any meat? So what does He do? Well, what He does is quite astonishing.
01:00:27
He asks them for something to eat. See, a spirit cannot eat. Only a being of flesh and bone can eat. Like so many in the world today, the disciples wanted to believe that he was a spirit and not a corporeal being. But right then, Christ put that notion to rest and asked for something to eat.
01:00:54
so that he could undeniably demonstrate to them that he was not a spirit, but a God with a real body of flesh and bone. So let's keep reading and see what the disciples brought him to eat. The text reads, and they gave him a piece of broiled fish and of an honeycomb, and he took it and did eat it before them. So what did he eat to demonstrate his corporeal nature?
01:01:23
fish and a honeycomb. The God of heaven ate fish and a honeycomb. I know of no invisible, bodiless, omnipresent God that can do this. Right after this, Christ tells his disciples in verse 48, quote, ye are witnesses of these things. Having seen him eat, they could now go out and testify to others that the God of heaven did in fact have a glorious body of flesh and bone.
01:01:55
An invisible, bodiless God is completely incompatible with Christianity. To believe otherwise would be to reject the words of Christ Himself and the witnesses of the early apostles who held His body and watched Him eat. As you can see in this episode, there is sound textual evidence that the ancient Egyptians,
01:02:25
And the early Christians taught the same thing that God has a glorified body of flesh and bones. One that can eat fish and honeycomb and one who thankfully has the ability to wrap his arms around us and hug us tight.
01:02:46
That's it for me. We'll pick up here in our next episode. Until then, I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare. Knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven. I'm Jack Lowe.
01:03:05
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Episode #45 - Who is God? - A Heavenly King

https://theancienttradition.com/45-who-is-god-a-heavenly-king/

00:00
Music
00:09
You're listening to The Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.
00:25
Welcome to the Ancient Tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. It's great to have all of you listening in, all of you new listeners, and of course you long time listeners. It's great to have you with us. If you're a new listener, I wanna make you aware of a couple of important resources. First, you can find this podcast, along with full audio transcripts and pictures and links for each episode on our companion website, thea Just search.
00:54
by episode under show notes. In addition, you can find full audio recordings of several of the ancient texts that we refer to on this program on our sister podcast, the ancient tradition audio writ, which you can find anywhere you get your podcasts. A couple of weeks ago, I uploaded recordings of two important Native American creation accounts. The first is a audio recording of the native Maidu peoples.
01:22
whose ancestral lands were located in Northern California in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains. And the second is of the native Tertuni Joshua people whose ancestral lands were located in Southern Oregon. Both of these accounts are pretty darn amazing. So if you've got time to give them a listen, I highly recommend it because in these accounts, you'll hear these native peoples attest.
01:48
to the same stubborn bits we've been discussing over and over and over again on the program. The internal consistency between what was taught by the ancient Egyptians, ancient Mesopotamians, Hebrews, Muslims, and Hindu, and now the Native American Maidu and Tittuni Joshua people is remarkable. On Audio Rit, you'll find a full audio recording of each tribe's creation account, along with some important commentary.
02:18
For example, in both of these accounts, the Maidu and Tituni Joshua people indisputably teach that God has a body. They teach that God is a corporeal being. And I highlight these descriptions in the commentary.
02:36
In the ancient world, there are literally piles and piles and piles of textual evidence that attest, without equivocation, that God has a physical body. In the ancient world, the corporeal nature of God is a major stubborn bit. In fact, if you're a long-time listener to the program, it should already be readily apparent that the entire theology of the ancient tradition rests on the corporeal nature of God.
03:06

The theology taught within the ancient tradition makes no sense if God is immaterial and bodyless. Why? Well, if you haven't listened to the catalog of back episodes, you'll really need to start there to get a full understanding of why. But in short measure, it's because the ancient Egyptians, ancient Mesopotamians, ancient Canaanites, and ancient Hebrews, and ancient Greeks, all explicitly taught.
03:36
that those be they gods, heroes or poppers, human beings like you and me, who triumphantly conquer the awful dragon, the rebellious son, who was known in ancient Egypt as Apophis, in ancient Mesopotamia as Tiamat, in ancient Canaan as Yam, among the ancient Hebrews as Rahab, and among the ancient Greeks as Python, are coronated by the high God as heavenly kings.
04:05
Because these individuals have successfully upheld the cosmic law of righteousness and conquered the temptations of the dragon, they are given power and authority by the high god to reign as heavenly kings over a cosmic kingdom. That is the theology of the ancient tradition. In ancient Canaan, we learned that the high god El himself
04:34
won the right to reign as a heavenly king over this earth and over a cosmic kingdom because of his prowess in battle because he successfully conquered the dragon. On page 32 of Mullen's, which I think is an absolutely fantastic book, The Divine Council in Canaanite and early Hebrew literature states, quote, El is a fierce warrior.
05:03
who does indeed gain his kingship through combat. What this means is that all heavenly kings, including God himself, acquired and acquire heavenly kingship in the exact same manner by battling and winning their battle against the awful dragon. Nobody has made a heavenly king without first proving that he'll uphold ma'at or tzedek.
05:33
even when they're tempted by the dragon to do otherwise. God only grants those who perfectly uphold righteousness the right to govern others. Now, this is where things get a little bit sticky because nobody outside of the Christian Jesus has claimed to have done this, to have perfectly upheld the cosmic law of righteousness, which means that none of us
06:01
have met the criteria that we would need to to be worthy of the stewardship of a cosmic kingdom. Each one of us on planet Earth has at one time or another violated the law of righteousness. And because of this, we don't meet the criteria to be a heavenly king or heavenly queen. This is what we saw in episode number 22, the wounded hero. So we've got a problem. What are we to do?
06:31
Well, this is precisely the reason why every earthly king in the ancient world, like we've seen in the modern world too, when Charles III was coronated a king, are first anointed, anointed with the myrrh oil of the sacred tree before he is coronated a king. If you recall in episode number 24, O Christmas Tree, we learned that it's by the oil that…
06:59

bleeds from the sacred tree that all wounds, both physical and spiritual, are healed. Thus, a king like Marduk, who we learned in the Mesopotamian Enuma Elish, who was covered in the dust of combat after his battle with Tiamant, and Azeneth, who was shrouded in sackcloth and ashes after her battle, were first anointed with the oil of the sacred tree, which healed
07:28
their spiritual wounds before they were coronated a heavenly king or Queen. And this is some pretty profound theology which we'll get into in much greater detail down the line. I mentioned all of this to stress the point that the ancient tradition is about the exaltation of human beings you and me people with material bodies of flesh and bone.
07:55
bodies which according to texts like the ancient Egyptian pyramid text and Christ's example in the New Testament will one day be resurrected with an incorruptible glorified body. This theology 100% attests to the corporeal nature of God. In our last episode since we only had time to cover textual evidence found in ancient Egypt the Bible and early Christian writings
08:24
describing the corporeal nature of God. I thought about doing a second episode on this topic because I wanted to demonstrate to you that God is widely described as a corporeal being in the ancient Mesopotamian, Ugaritic, Greek, and Vedic texts too. But I decided that rather than do that, I dedicate this episode to another very, very important characteristic of God.
08:50
A characteristic which we must understand if we're to understand everything else the ancients tell us happened during Zeptepe, the first time, also known as the Garden of Eden when the earth was wrapped in heaven's embrace. So I'm going to do that, but as we go along, I'm going to stop here and there to highlight a few of the texts that attest to God's corporeal nature, kind of a two for one. One of the things that sticks out when we examine the descriptions of God around the
09:19
Another one of those stubborn bits is that God is almost universally described as a king. Now this far into the podcast, this should go without saying, but I'm going to say it anyway. We just shouldn't see this. We just shouldn't see that the ancients from Egypt to Sumer to Canaan,
09:42
to the Indus Valley, to China, to Japan, to Mesoamerica, to the Polynesian Islands, to Native America, describe God as a royal heavenly king. We just shouldn't see this, yet this is exactly what we do see. We should see much, much greater variability in who God is and how God is described, but we just don't until much later. And this, of course,
10:09
speaks to me of an original religious tradition.
10:14
Let's take a minute and walk through some of the textual and mythological evidence, starting with ancient Mesopotamia. In ancient Mesopotamia, entablet one of a Babylonian text titled Atrahasis, dated to 1700 BC. The high god Anu is described as a king who rules over a royal court of his sons, the Anunnaki.
10:43

Line seven of the text describes the high god Anu like this, quote, Anu their father, speaking of the Anunnaki, was king. In old Babylonian, the word for king is lugal, L-U-G-A-L, which denotes a ruler or a sovereign. Take note also in this text how the high god is described as male. He's the father of the Anunnaki. They are his sons.
11:13
sons which we learn in episode number 42, on Ki, the earth and heaven's embrace, he conceived with his wife, the high goddess Ki. This is actually a very, very important point because one can only be male in reference to a material physical body. One's sex is determined by the reproductive organs and chromosomes and androgens
11:40
present in a material physical body. This would mean if God were immaterial or bodiless, God would have no sex. God would not be male or female. God would be sexless. To incaporialize God is to neuter God. If you read Mimonides and what other incaporialists write, you'll find that they argue God.
12:07
by definition must be limitless and without restrictions. They argue that a physical body would impose limitations on God. And this led them to conclude that God did not possess a physical body. There are two problems with this argument. The first is that the ancients never taught that God was without limits or restrictions. In fact, the ancients are super, super clear, like we see in the pyramid texts in ancient Egypt.
12:37
that God is subordinate to a law, the law of righteousness, which the ancient Egyptians tell us is embedded in the very fabric of the cosmos itself. And if God is subordinate to something beyond himself, he is obviously not a God without limitations. In episode number 28, who is God, Lord of Maat, King of Zedek, where we talked about this,
13:04
We learned that it was only by God's submission to this law that he became a God in the first place. The second thing that mamanides and other incorporealists don't seem to realize is that in their attempt to create a limitless God by conceiving of him as immaterial and bodyless have in fact created yet another limited God. See,
13:31
An immaterial and bodiless God, like we learned in our last episode, does not have the ability to physically hug us and hold us tight. One has to have a material body, physical arms to do that. And since Mimonides is God, is immaterial and bodiless and doesn't have physical arms, Mimonides God can never physically hug us or kiss us on the forehead. And if God…
14:00
cannot show physical affection. He of course is a limited God. In this light, you can see Maimonides God is limited precisely because he does not have a physical body. As I've thought this over and I've thought about what the ancients have taught and what theologians like Maimonides have argued, I'm left with the conclusion that the notion of a limitless God is incredibly problematic.
14:29
For starters, I haven't come across or even been able to conceive of a single description of God where God is truly limitless. No matter how God is defined, the description always results in

limitations in a limited God. And if we forgo an actual description, conceding that our feeble minds just can't conceive of what a limitless God might actually look like, yet cling to the conception of God as
14:59
a God that's not bound by anything or anyone, then we're driven into some incredibly problematic theological and philosophical territory because this would mean that God would be bound by nothing, by no law. There would be no constraints on God's actions. There would be…
15:25
absolutely nothing preventing God from reigning in tyranny. And of course this presents some real theological and philosophical problems. Lucky for us, we learn from the ancient Egyptians, ancient Hebrews, ancient Hindu, and ancient Chinese that God is not limitless. We learn that God's actions are constrained. We learn that God is bound
15:55
which these ancient peoples referred to as Ma'at, Tzedek, Rita and the Dao among others. And we learned from the ancients that it's precisely on this cosmic law that God has built his kingdom. And it's upon this law that he reigns as a heavenly king. In fact, in ancient Egypt, all Egyptian kings reign, as we've mentioned on the program, on a throne, which sits on a dais, which represents this
16:24
cosmic law. Ma'at. In other words, the king sits directly atop the cosmic law. It's upon the cosmic law that he rules and has the right to rule as a celestial monarch.
16:40
All right, that was a little bit of a detour, but it's an important detour nonetheless. Let's return to tablet one of Atrahasis and take a look at how the text describes the high god Anu. Farther down in tablet one, the text reads, quote, Enki, now Enki is one of the high god Anu's sons, was fetched into his presence. Anu, king of the sky, was present. Here,
17:10
we see that Anu is described as a king, the king of the sky. Sky here refers to heaven. So this is like saying Anu, king of heaven. And note in this passage how Anu resides in a particular location. And Enki, his son, is quote, fetched into his presence. Enki is brought into a particular place, the place where Anu resides, so that he can meet with his father,
17:40
heaven. The anthropomorphic nature of these descriptions is pretty clear. In another ancient Mesopotamian text called Adapa. Adapa is the name of a very important antediluvian sage who we're going to talk about a lot more down the line. In this text the high god Anu receives some important news from Adapa. Listen in this passage to what the high god Anu does.
18:07
This comes from the Stephanie Dally translation. Quote, when Anu heard this word, he cried, heaven help him. And he, Anu, rose up from his throne. In this passage, the high God is seated in his heavenly temple, in the heavenly throne room. And when he hears news of what Adapah has done, the text tells us that the high God rises from his throne.
18:36
the high god stands up, which is a clear description that the high god has a body. A little bit later, Adapa ascends to heaven and he stands before God, where he's actually made a heavenly

king. But I'm going to save that account for when we talk about the first man Adam. This is what the text reads, quote, when Adapa drew near to the presence of King Anu, Anu
19:05
shouted, Come here Adapa! In this text the high god is referred to as a king. The text says when Adapa drew near to the presence of King Anu. The anthropomorphic nature of God is pretty apparent in this passage too. The high god resides in a particular location so Adapa has to be brought to where he resides. He has to be
19:35
And when God talks to Adapah, he talks to him just like you and I talk to each other. And when the high God sees Adapah, he cries out to him, come here Adapah. In another Mesopotamian text known as Era and Ishum, dated to around the seventh century BC, we're told the following about the high God Anu. Quote, when Anu, king of the gods, impregnated key,
20:04
She bore the seven gods for him and named them Sabidi. When they stood before him, he decreed their destiny. He summoned the first and gave him orders. Okay, there's a lot going on in this text. For the purposes of this episode, note how the high god is referred to here as the, quote, king of the gods. The high god reigns as a king over other gods. God's.
20:31
who we learn are his sons, sons whom the high god conceived with his wife, the high goddess, Ki. The text tells us that Ki bore seven sons. And these seven sons are actually pretty darn important in the ancient tradition, so we'll definitely come back to them and to this text down the line. For the purposes of this episode though, note how these seven sons stand before the high god, I assume in the throne room.
21:01
and the high god quote, decrees their destiny. We'll discuss the decreeing of destinies more when we get into the creation of human beings. So I'm not gonna cover that now. But if you've ever wondered what heavenly kings spend their days doing in the heavens, this text tells us that the decreeing of destinies is part of what they do. Also take note in this text that Anu, the king of the gods, seems to govern the cosmos by making assignments.
21:31
which is clear when the text tells us that quote, he summoned the first of the seven and gave him orders. And don't glaze over how so much of what we read in this passage is pretty dependent on God having a physical body, impregnating his wife, conceiving sons, occupying a specific location, decreeing destinies, giving orders, et cetera. Now, these are just a few of the examples in the Mesopotamian literature.
22:00
where the high god An is explicitly identified as a heavenly king. As I was gathering up these examples, I simultaneously compiled a list directly from the texts themselves of what a heavenly king does, his roles and responsibilities in the cosmos. So here's a brief list of what the ancient Mesopotamian literature tell us a heavenly king does. Number one.
22:29
He presides over a royal court of his children, his offspring, referred to in the ancient Mesopotamian literature as the Anunnaki. King Anu's authority over his children is pretty evident

in a text titled Nergol and Ereshkigal, believed to have been written during the mid 15th century BC. In this text, Namtar, a Sumerian god,
22:57
enters the courtyard of Anu's celestial temple. And this is what he tells us he sees. When I entered the courtyard of Anu, all the gods were kneeling humbly before him. All the gods of the land were kneeling humbly before him. In this text, we see that King Anu's children show him considerable deference.
23:24
respectful and reverent submission they kneel in his presence. A gesture that we usually only see given to those who hold great respect and authority in the eyes of the people. In this case the gods hold tremendous respect for their father Anu, the King of Heaven. Number two, he issues commands by way of divine utterance.
23:52
whether that's to create a world or issue orders like we saw in the era in Isshum text, the elements in the cosmos obey his command and his obedient offspring obey his command. His utterance, because he perfectly upholds Ma'ot or Tzedek and actually in the Mesopotamian world is referred to as the Mes, M-E, the cosmic law is divine law. His utterance is divine law and it's this law
24:21
that establishes order, civil and social order in his kingdom. The high God's divine utterance is the source of all legitimate power in the heavens. Number three, and this is closely connected to number two, he has sole authority to name all that is created in his kingdom. Because remember, naming is part and parcel to creating. When a heavenly king names something,
24:50
He is divinely uttering. He's either causing something with that particular nature to come into existence, or he's perfectly naming the nature of something that already does exist. If you recall, Marduk does this in the Enuma Elish, when the council of the gods challenged Marduk to command a constellation to appear. Marduk speaks the name, and the elements order themselves into a creation that reflects that name, a constellation.
25:19
and the constellation appears. R.T. Rundle Clark on page 63 of Myth and Symbolism in Ancient Egypt says it like this, quote, The real creator was the Word. Now remember the word, word here, refers to the ability of God to divinely utter. The primeval speech which came from God wherein all things got their names.
25:48
Since the name is also the nature of the thing, in the view of ancient man, the naming of manifold creation means the demarcation of individual characteristics. In the Enuma Elish tablet seven, after Marduk successfully slays the awful dragon Tiamat, the king of heaven, Anu, gives Marduk a new name. Listen to the new name the high king Anu gives him.
26:18
The text says this, quote, Ossur Lui is the name which his father Anu gave him. So note that it's Marduk's father, King Anu, who's the one who gives Marduk a new name after he's triumphantly conquered the dragon, after he's won the battle over evil. This suggests that none of us escaped the battle with the dragon unchanged. No matter what,

26:48
our nature will change. If we lose the battle, our nature will change. If we win the battle, our nature will change. We can't escape the battle unchanged. And we learn in this passage that those who win the battle against the dragon will be given a new name, a new name that reflects their spiritually powerful post-battle nature. So what is the name King Anu gives Marduk after conquering Piamat?
27:17
Ossur Lui. Unfortunately, Mesopotamian scholars don't know exactly what this name means, but they think it has something to do with the ability to exercise or cast out evil, which is exactly what Marduk did when he conquered Tiamat. In a Mesopotamian text that we talked about a long long time ago on the program titled The Epic of Ansu, King Anu tells his offspring the Anunnaki that whoever slays the awful dragon
27:46
in this text referred to as Ansu, will receive a new name. This is what it says in tablet two of the old Babylonian version of the text. Quote, the gods of the land assembled for a solution. And they're talking about a solution to get rid of the terrible dragon. Anu made his voice heard, addressed the gods, his sons. Now listen to what King Anu says. Quote.
28:15
whichever God slays Ansu, I shall make his name greatest of all. Your name shall be great among the great gods. Show prowess to the gods and your name shall be powerful. Note that we're being taught the same thing here. The dragon slayers are given new names, new natures. We're being taught that if we slay the dragon, our nature will change. And the king of heaven,
28:45
will give us a new name. In each of the instances I just gave you, it is the high God, the King of heaven, who gifts the dragon slayer a new name. We saw the same thing in the book of Joseph and Azanath. I really love that text for a lot of reasons. But in terms of today's episode, I love it because it's in that text that God explicitly articulates the theology behind the naming right.
29:13
Listen very closely to what God tells Azanith in chapter 15. God says to her, quote, take heart, Azanith. From today, you will be made new and refashioned and given new life. You shall no more be called Azanith, but city of refuge shall be your name. See, in this text,
29:42
God is telling Azanith that because she overcame sin, which we learn in this text, she did by way of the anointing oil, referred to as honeycomb in the text. She is quote, made new. She is refashioned. She's no longer Azanith. Azanith is the person who was in sackcloth and ashes. She's a new person. She has a new nature.
30:09
So she must be given a new name which reflects that nature, a name which only God has the power and authority to bestow upon her. Now, City of Refuge is a pretty interesting new name. God must have known that Azanath was gonna be a little bit perplexed by this. So right after he gives her this new name, he explains why. And God tells Azanath the following, quote,
30:38
and under your wings shall many peoples find shelter. And within your walls, those who give their allegiance to God and penitence will find security." There's a lot packed in that name, and I

don’t have time to break it all down here, but God’s reference to a place of refuge, shelter, walls, and security, all point to one thing, a temple setting. In the ancient world, the place of refuge is always where God dwells.
31:08
And where does God dwell? In a royal temple. So, Azaneth’s new name seems to reflect her role in bringing many people to God’s temple. If you’d like to listen to a full audio recording of the book of Joseph and Azaneth, you can find it on our sister podcast, The Ancient Tradition Audio Rit.
31:30
From these texts, it’s pretty clear that one of the privileges and responsibilities of a heavenly king is to name his creations, be they plants or flowers or animals, or you and me. There’s a lot of powerful theology wrapped around the heavenly naming right. So I hope you’ll give it a little more contemplation. It’s a key doctrine in the ancient tradition.
31:57
What’s really quite amazing is that when we look at the ancient world and even right up to today, we find that this naming theology is attested to in the coronation rites of earthly kings and in Christian rites like baptism. And it’s even attested to in the modern day in films like The Lord of the Rings. For example, in ancient Egypt, when a pharaoh took the throne, he was given five new names known as the royal titulari.
32:26
We’ve talked about this on the program, the King’s throne names. And we see a similar thing in the Christian world where upon baptism, one is given the new name Christian. And when this theology works its way into films, like the Lord of the Rings, we know that number one, J.R.R. Tolkien did his homework. And number two, we learned that the reach of the ancient tradition is far and wide.
32:56
So where does this naming theology show up in the Lord of the Rings? Well, we find it in the first two films, The Fellowship of the Ring and The Two Towers. Before I let you listen to a couple of clips from the film, I want you to pay close attention to how the storyline completely corresponds with the overarching doctrine of heavenly kingship taught within the ancient tradition, where we’ve learned that those who slay the dragon
33:26
are given a new name by the High God. In this clip, the nine members of the Fellowship of the Ring enter a dark, ominous dungeon where Gandalf the Grey, and note Gandalf’s name at this point, the head of the fellowship, senses the presence of a terrible demon Balrog, whom Gandalf calls the, quote, demon of the ancient world.
33:55
Gandalf tells the fellowship to run for their lives. Their lives are in danger. The terrible demon, bellowing fire from his lips, wielding a mighty sword, appears from the shadows and chases after the fellowship. The fellowship race across a narrow bridge where we the audience can see an endless pit of fire and doom beneath them. Gandalf knows that the fierce demon is too great.
34:24
If the demon has the opportunity to cross the bridge, he’ll destroy the fellowship. So Gandalf stands at the entrance to the bridge, wielding his special weapons. With his staff, which is made

from the wood of a tree in one hand, and a mighty sword in the other, he blocks the entrance to the bridge, and he tells the demon that he cannot pass. At this point, the demon threatens destruction.
34:52
And Gandalf the Grey holds his ground, claiming his authority to defend the bridge by saying, I am a servant of the secret fire, wielder of the flame of Anor. Anor here refers to the sun. So Gandalf is warning the demon that he wields the flame of the sun, the holy flame feared by evil. Gandalf then tells the demon,
35:20
The dark fire will not avail you. Flame of Udun. Udun refers to hell. So the flame of Udun is the flame of hell. Gandalf is telling the demon that his flame, his fire is no match for the flame of Anor, the flame of the sun. The terrible demon, of course, doesn't heed Gandalf's warning. And a terrible battle between Gandalf and Balrog ensues.
35:49
In the books, this fight goes on for 10 straight days. It's a terrible battle. Ultimately, Gandalf takes his sword to the demon, striking him again and again and again until he triumphantly drives the sword into Barlog's skull. At this point, the film jumps to an image of the demon tumbling down, down, down into the inky abyss where he ultimately falls into an
36:18
ocean of dark water, which we know represents the primordial waters. The demon has been exiled to the primordial waters. Let's go ahead and listen to the clip. Now, there isn't a lot of dialogue in the clip, so you're just going to have to imagine what this battle looked like. It starts with the demon entering the cavern.
36:47
you
36:54
BOW
37:02
RUN!
38:07
Serpent of the secret fire, Healder of the flame of Arnor. The dark fire will never fail you! Flame of Arnor!
38:25
SHUT UP!
38:35
SHALL NOT!
39:52
Thanks to Gandalf, the Fellowship was able to escape Balrog's destruction. But they didn't stick around for the battle, so they had no idea that Gandalf survived. It's not until the second film, The Two Towers, that the Fellowship learn of Gandalf's fate, when he suddenly appears to them exuding a brilliant, radiant white light. The Gandalf they see is a new man, a new creature.
40:22
clearly changed. Upon witnessing his glory, the Fellowship falls to their knees in humble adoration. Because remember, it was because of Gandalf's sacrifice that they personally were

saved from Balrog. Gandalf tells the Fellowship the following, quote, On the lowest dungeon to the highest peak, I fought with the Balrog of Morgoth until at last
40:52
I threw down my enemy and smote his ruin upon the mountainside.
40:59
The Fellowship now know that Gandalf the Grey won the battle, that he beat Balrog. At this point, the film jumps to an image of Gandalf right after he's won. He's absolutely exhausted from the battle, and he collapses to the ground. His clothes are tattered, ashes cover his face, blood's dripping from his nose. He clearly needs a place to rest, but he has won. He vix-
41:27
notoriously conquered the dragon. But it's what happens next that's so important to this episode. Let's listen to the clip. Again, you're gonna have to imagine a lot of what's taking place. Just keep in mind that the clip starts with Gandalf appearing to the fellowship in a white light and the fellowship is dumbfounded by his appearance.
42:01
I mistook you for Saruman. I am Saruman.
42:07
Rather Saruman as he should have been.
42:13
You will.
42:16
Through fire… ..and water. From the lowest dungeon to the highest peak, I've fought him. The Balrog of Oricos.
42:44
At last I threw down my enemy and smote his ruin upon the mountainside.
42:57
Darkness took me and I strayed out of thought and time. The stars wheeled overhead and every day was as long as a life-age of the earth. But it was not the end. I felt life in me again. I've been sent back until my task is done.
43:29
Stand out.
43:36
That was what they used to call it.
43:41
God of the Grey.
43:44
That was my name. Gandalf.
43:50
I am Gander of the White.
44:00
Did you catch what happened there? After having conquered Balrog, Gandalf's name changed from Gandalf the Grey to Gandalf the White. Pretty much everything in these two clips is 100% in keeping with the theology taught within the ancient tradition. It's quite astonishing. Here we

have a film that was put together just 22 years ago, yet it's spot on in every way with the theology of the ancient tradition.
44:30
In particular, the theology that dragon slayers are given new names and become glorious beings of ineffable light. And I also want to point out that Gandalf appears to the fellowship in full anthropomorphic form. He has a glorified body of flesh and bone. He's not immaterial or bodiless. I, of course, can't make this stuff up. It's all out there.
44:59
for anyone who has eyes to see and ears to hear. I just love how remnants of the ancient tradition are taught right in some of the world's greatest films. Before I leave this section, I have to give a shout out to my husband. He's actually the one who made me aware of this clip of Gandalf getting a new name after having slain Balrog. I hadn't watched the Lord of the Rings trilogy in a long time, so thank you, sweetheart.
45:29
Number four, a heavenly king decrees the destinies of his offspring. A long time ago in the same text I just mentioned, the Epic of Anzu, we read how the terrible dragon, referred to as Anzu, lusts after the tablet of destinies, which is in the sole possession of the heavenly king Enlil. Driven by the lust for power, Anzu steals the tablet of destinies and flees to his mountain
46:00
The ability to decree destinies must be a very important and powerful responsibility of the High King because this is what the text says, quote, Ansoo often gazed at Duranki's god, father of the gods, and fixed his purpose to usurp the Enlil power. Now this is Ansoo, the dragon, speaking, quote, I shall take the god's tablet of destinies for myself.
46:30
and control the orders for all the gods, and I shall possess the throne and be master of rights." What Ansu says here is pretty intriguing because he says that by controlling the destinies, he'll have the power to quote, control the orders for all the gods. Orders here refers to the social hierarchy in the heavens, part of which is who's assigned or appointed to which responsibilities.
47:00
We'll talk about this more down the line. But clearly from this text and other texts like this, one of the chief responsibilities of heavenly kings is to decree destinies. If you're interested in listening to an audio recording of the Epic of the Anzu, you can find it on our sister podcast, the Ancient Tradition Audio Rit. It's not very long. Take note also in this passage that having the tablet of destinies, Anzu believes that this will give him the power
47:29
to be, quote, the master of rites. He's talking about obtaining the power to preside over the ritual system in heaven. You heard that correctly. Rites, R-I-T-E-S, are performed in heaven. This text attests that rituals are not just an earthly system, but that rites are performed in the heavenly sphere too.
47:59
Now don't worry too much about this right now. It'll make a whole, whole lot more sense down the line.
48:05

Number five, a heavenly king gifts special weapons to his offspring to help them win their battle against the dragon. I've already dedicated an entire episode, episode number 20, epic swords, golden bows, and ruby slippers to this topic. So I'm not gonna go over it again here, but I do wanna point out that the gifting of special weapons, as you'll see down the line, is directly connected to religious rights. Again, R-I-T.
48:35
Number six. A heavenly king crowns his dragon-slaying sons and daughters, heavenly kings and queens. We saw this in the Enuma Elish when Marduk was made a heavenly king after he slayed Tiamat. Tablet five reads, speaking of Marduk, who has just come from winning the battle, quote, the whole assembly collected together to prostrate themselves.
49:04
They stood, they bowed. Yes, king, and they're talking about Marduk here, king indeed. With Cyprus, they sprinkled his body. They're anointing him with the oil of the Cypristry here, which is done to heal his wounds from the combat. He put on a princely garment, a royal aura, a splendid crown. They, and this is two of the gods, made their voices heard.
49:34
Previously, Marduk was just our beloved son, but now he is our king. I wanna give you another example of this from the Mesopotamian literature. And this is one I haven't talked about on the podcast yet. It's the heavenly enthronement of King Emaduranki. Do you remember King Emaduranki? We talked about him a long, long time ago in episode number five, the book of the holy secrets of Enoch.
50:04
so I don't expect you to remember him. It's good to keep his name in your back pocket though, because he's a very, very important figure in the ancient tradition. And we'll talk about him a ton when we start talking about ritual. In a text known as Fragment K4364, we read how the earthly king, Emma Duranki, is taken into the assembly of the gods, into the presence of the high god Shamash, where he's made a heavenly king.
50:35
The text reads, Shamash in Ibarah, appointed. Note how Amaduranki's appointment as a heavenly king comes from the high god Shamash himself. It's the high heavenly king Shamash who appoints him. Amaduranki, king of Sippor, the beloved of Anu, Enlil, and Eya. Note that Amaduranki is referred to in this text as a quote.
51:04
beloved son, like we see in so many of the ancient texts, be they in ancient Egypt, ancient Mesopotamia, or in the ancient Ugaritic or Hebrew literature. This is another one of those things you need to tuck in your back pocket. Note in this passage that Emma Duranki is the beloved of Anu. Let's keep reading. Shamash and Adod brought him into their assembly. Shamash and Adod honored him.
51:35
Now listen to what Shamash does. Quote, Shamash and Adod set him, Amiduranki, on a large throne of gold. There it is, right there. The high god Shamash sets Amiduranki on a throne. This is the enthronement of King Amiduranki as a heavenly king. And now listen to what King Shamash gives King Amiduranki.
52:04

The text continues, quote, they gave him the tablet of the gods. They give Emadurankhi a tablet, which we assume is the tablet of destinies. What you're gonna see down the line is that this is essentially the same thing as the book of life in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Now listen to what else Shamash gives Emadurankhi. The text continues, quote, they put in his hand the cedar rod.
52:34
beloved of the great gods." So what does the high god Shamash give Emma Duranki? He gives him a branch of the sacred tree. He gives him what will be known all across the globe and grasped in the hands of every earthly king today as the royal scepter. The branch of the sacred tree is the royal scepter. Don't miss what's going on here. The tree represents the high god Shamash himself.
53:03
So when the high God gives Emma Duranki a branch of the tree, this dramatically conveys to everyone in the ancient world that Emma Duranki is not a self-appointed heavenly king. It unambiguously conveys that the high God himself, the King of heaven, is the one who gave him the power and authority to reign as a heavenly king.
53:31
It conveys that it was the King of Heaven who sanctioned his appointment. And remember, the sacred tree is a symbol. There are layers and layers and layers of meaning going on here. It's not just about the transference of royal sacred power. In the ancient world, the branch also symbolized offspring. This isn't too much of a stretch for most of us in the modern world, because it's common practice today to refer to one's family line.
54:00
as one's family tree. The trunk represents the primary progenitor and the branches represent the progenitor's descendants or offspring. In this symbolic system, the branch of the tree represents not only that the high king sanctioned Emma Duranki's dominion, but it also symbolizes that he is the offspring of God, that he is a quote son, or as the text says it, the beloved.
54:29
Anu and as the king of heaven's son he is the rightful heir to the throne and his father's heavenly kingdom. Note in this symbolism how the tree, offspring, kingship, and sonship are all intimately tied together theologically. All of which is intimately tied to a physical body too. Ultimately a heavenly king
54:58
has the power to exalt and debase. I talked about this quite a bit in episode number 25, the King of Kings. So if you're interested in this topic, you can learn a whole lot more in that episode. Number seven, a heavenly king, a lot's kingdoms. I've already discussed this on the program. So I only wanna briefly illustrate this here with a passage from the Enuma Elish. In this passage, Marduk,
55:27
who's been crowned a heavenly king, divides his kingdom up amongst the Anunnaki. In tablet six, we read the following about Marduk. Quote, when he had directed all the decrees, had divided lots for the Anunnaki, all the gods divided the stations of heaven and earth.
55:51

Here we see that Marduk divided up his kingdom and Vealots divided it amongst the Anunnaki. Heavenly kings allot kingdoms. And finally, number eight, a heavenly king presides over the religious rights, R-I-T-E-S, in heaven and on earth. We'll talk about this more down the line, so I'm not gonna develop it in detail here.
56:21
Suffice it to say that textual evidence for this can be found in the ancient Mesopotamian text, Nidrgal and Ereshkgal that I mentioned earlier. This text says the following, speaking of On, the king of the gods, quote, When he arrived, the gods were kneeling together before him, the great gods, the lords of destiny, for it is he, they're speaking of On, who controls the rights.
56:51
R-I-T-E-S. That's a pretty straightforward statement that religious rights exist in the heavens and that it's the king of heaven who presides over those rights. We see similar statements like this in the Epic of Ansu, the text that I mentioned earlier in today's episode. When Ansu tells us that one of the reasons he covets the tablet of destinies is because it will give him the ability to control the rights. In tablet one
57:21
Ansoo, who's the dragon, says, quote, I shall take the tablet of destinies for myself and shall possess the throne and be master of rites. Again, this indicates that rituals are performed in the heavens, and that it is the king of heaven who is the master of those rites. Later on in the Epic of Ansoo in tablet three, after Ninurta has slain the terrible dragon Ansoo,
57:51
The council of the gods want Nunurta to be given the rights, R-I-T-E-S, which we assume are the rights that one must go through in order to be made a heavenly king, which is the reward that Nunurta is to be given for slaying Ansu. This is what the council says, quote, let Enlil, who is a heavenly king, bestow on him Nunurta the rights.
58:22
A few lines later we learn that Enlil, the king of heaven sends a messenger, and this is another thing heavenly kings do, to Ninurta. Listen to what the text says, especially in terms of rites. In this passage, the messenger Enlil sends is speaking to the dragon-slaying Ninurta.
58:51
The gods have heard that you slew wicked Ansu amid the mountains. You captured Ansu, slew him in his powerfulness. Nunurta, because you were so brave and slew the mountain. Now listen to this. You have one complete dominion, every single right. R-I-T-E.
59:19
I can't overstate how important this ancient Mesopotamian text is because this text unambiguously tells us that the rites that are performed in heaven are rites that grant one, quote, complete dominion. And dominion is kingship. And complete dominion is heavenly kingship. It's dominion over a cosmic kingdom.
59:49
religious rites are performed in heaven. Number two, those rites, and it appears from this passage that there is more than one rite involved here because the text says, quote, every single rite are rites which have the ability to transform one into a heavenly king, a new man. And number three, we learn from earlier in this tablet that it is God as a heavenly king.
01:00:19

who has the sole power and authority to authorize the bestowal of these rights. See, Ansu wanted to steal the tablet of destinies so that he would have the power to bestow those rights, so that he would have the power to determine who could and who couldn't be exalted as a heavenly king or heavenly queen. And of course, this is a futile pursuit because like everything in the heavens, the rights of kingship are dependent on adherence
01:00:48
the cosmic law of righteousness. And since Ansu is the antithesis of righteousness, the rites would be completely inefficacious in his hands. I could do another five full episodes, which I'm not going to do, on just this topic because there's just so, so, so much textual and mythological evidence in the ancient world that attests God is a heavenly king.
01:01:17
I especially love the stuff in the ancient Canaanite Ugaritic literature, as well as the stuff in the Judeo-Christian tradition in the enthronement Psalms and in the New Testament. Not to mention in Hinduism, ancient Greece, Norse mythology, and in China. And hopefully we can cover some of that evidence in our next episode. For the purposes of this episode, it's very important to recognize that across the ancient
01:01:46
King. From what we can glean from the ancient Mesopotamian literature, God reigns as a celestial sovereign, a celestial king, over his children, his offspring. And within that capacity, he has established an order, a set of religious rites, by which his children can become heavenly kings like him.
01:02:13
His is a kingdom of civic and social order. His is a kingdom of celestial order. It's very important that we start with this understanding of who God is. It's a powerful stubborn bit. If we're to understand everything else the ancients tell us happened during Zeptepe, the first time, also known as the Garden of Eden, when the earth was in heaven's embrace. There is so much more to come.
01:02:43
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.
01:02:58
You've been listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production.

Episode #46 - Nswt, Malku & Melek, Part I

https://theancienttradition.com/46-nswt-malku-melek-part-i/

00:00
Music
00:09

You're listening to The Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.
00:25
Welcome to the Ancient Tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. As always, it's great to have you listening in. If you're a first time listener, welcome to the program. If you're wondering what we do on this podcast, we spend each episode combing through the world's oldest texts. And we're doing this with the sole objective of letting the peoples of antiquity teach us who God is and why we are here on this
00:56
And so far this approach has been quite fruitful. If you're a long time listener to the program, you've likely noticed that several of the things that the ancients taught about God completely contradict what is taught about God today. And that makes this program both interesting but also really challenging because each one of us must decide for ourselves who we believe. The ancients or the imams, pastors, rabbis, priests and ministers.
01:26
who teach different things about who God is today. And where each of us come down on this is of course a matter of faith. Nothing on this podcast will change the importance of faith. I do think though that knowledge matters and that knowledge matters quite a bit. In the ancient Judeo-Christian tradition, the apostle Peter in 2 Peter chapter one verse four,
01:53
encouraged the early Christians to diligently seek to be, quote, partakers of the divine nature, which is something that we're going to talk about more today and in part two of this episode. After this, in verse five, Peter shared with the early Christians just how this divine nature is acquired. And this is what he said, quote, and beside this, giving all diligence. Add to your
02:22
and to your virtue, knowledge. He's telling us that we need to add knowledge to our faith. Something that we need to pursue. There is of course, many types of knowledge, but knowledge still the same appears to be an absolutely critical requirement for anyone desiring to obtain the divine nature. Acquiring knowledge is not something that we can abdicate to someone else. It's something that we must do ourselves.
02:52
20 years ago when I decided to do just that, to acquire as much temporal knowledge as I could about God, I started to notice that the farther back I went, the more similar the religious traditions looked to one another. On the surface, they looked really different, but the internal theology that they were teaching was undeniably similar. So similar that one could even argue that they were virtually the same.
03:21
And the evidence for this was literally pouring out of the ancient texts. This suggested to me that these early religious traditions, specifically the religious traditions that were found in ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Canaan, and among the Hittites and the Hebrews, must have sprung from one powerful religious tradition in deep antiquity else. How would one explain those similarities? If you're a first time listener,
03:51

You're probably wondering what the ancients were teaching. What did they teach? You're probably wondering what the main thrust of that theology was. Well, it's a pretty darn amazing theology. And honestly, I haven't seen another theology even come close to the theological, philosophical, and cosmological depth of what the ancients taught. There's way too much to summarize it here, but if you're interested in learning more,
04:18
you can find more than 40 episodes dedicated to laying that out step by step. The theology that was taught by the peoples of the ancient world, which they actually wrote down in an amazing number of texts. And you can find those episodes in this podcast back catalog. The episodes are set up kind of like a college course where each episode builds on the previous episode. So I recommend starting with episode number one and working your way through.
04:47
me personally if what the ancients taught is true it changes everything it's life changing but before anyone can know that they first have to know what the ancients actually taught acquire some knowledge which is exactly why I put this podcast together so that you and anyone else interested could learn about this amazing theology and like I mentioned
05:16
This theology doesn't disappoint. The ancients give us a clear description of who God is. A clear explanation for why we're here on planet Earth and a clear description of our greatest potential. It's pretty great stuff. In a nutshell, the theology of the ancients is a theology of kingship. Kingship. Both heavenly kingship and earthly kingship.
05:46
which is why this episode is titled Nesut, Malku, and Melek, which are the ancient Egyptian Semitic and Hebrew terms for king. To truly comprehend the theology taught by the ancients, we have to start here with this understanding of who God is, that God reigns as a celestial king. This is incredibly important.
06:13
I can't overstate how important it is to understand that God reigns in the heavens as a king, a celestial king, because every single thing in the theology of the ancients centers around God as king. Every thread of thought, every intricate detail, every belief and every ritual practice.
06:37
And it's for that reason that it's important that we take time in the podcast to examine this characteristic of God in greater detail. In our last episode, we examined the descriptions of God as a heavenly king in ancient Mesopotamian texts, along with a list of the roles and responsibilities that the ancient Mesopotamians taught were the prerogative and privilege of God as a celestial king. And it's for that reason that we're going to continue this examination in today's episode.
07:06
focusing on the descriptions of God as a heavenly king in the ancient Egyptian, ancient Canaanite, and ancient Hebrew texts. By doing this, you're gonna see that God was universally identified across the ancient world as a celestial king. And what's even more remarkable, you'll see that the theology centered around God's kingship was strikingly consistent in the ancient world.
07:34

From civilization to civilization, the ancients were teaching the same royal kingship theology. I wanna take a second and point out just how remarkable it is that the entire history of the world seems to testify of this royal kingship theology. Every king who ever lived attests to this theology. Every temple ever built attests to this theology.
08:05
The greatest myths ever recorded, the greatest epic poems ever written, the greatest literature ever put on paper attest to this theology. And we haven't talked about this in the program yet, but the sun, the moon, the stars, the seasons, and even the days of the week attest to this theology. And when you know what you're looking at, it's absolutely mind boggling how much in the world
08:32
sociologically, politically, architecturally, mythologically, and symbolically attests to the veracity of this theology. That's something to think on. With that, let's dive back into our discussion on who is God, a heavenly king, and see what else we can learn.
08:56
When we take a look at ancient Egypt, we see that the high God, Ray. Now I wanna start by pointing out that Ray is the same as Atum and Ra and Amun. Those are all the same names for the same God. So in these texts, when we talk about Ray or Ra, it's the same. Ray is clearly understood to be and depicted in the iconography as a celestial king.
09:24
raised described as a celestial monarch from the very onset of the ancient Egyptian Empire. Descriptions of which we find in ancient Egypt's oldest religious text, the pyramid text, the earliest of which date to 2400 BC. And this persists remarkably unchanged for the next 2400 years until the ultimate decline of the Egyptian Empire in 30 BC.
09:53
Rey's dominion as a heavenly king plays an absolutely central role in the content and purpose of the pyramid texts. In these texts, Rey is described as the Establisher of Cosmic Order, the Defender Against Chaos. These texts vividly recount his nightly battle against the awful
10:23
and his position as the supreme ruler of the gods is particularly important in these texts because he serves as the divine blueprint for earthly pharaohs who desire to take their place among the company of the gods as heavenly kings after their death. That's what these texts are all about. These texts teach the dead pharaoh what he must do to become like Rey.
10:50
They teach him what he must do in order to take his seat in the heavens and reign as a heavenly king. That's the purpose of the pyramid text. Much of this heavenly king making process is described as an ascension or a heavenly journey, which is symbolic of the dead pharaoh's transformation. His transformation from an earthly human being into an eternal divine being.
11:19
which the apostle Peter would call the divine nature as eternal divine beings who have the right and privilege to govern as a celestial monarch. These texts are golden because they give us a lot of clues about how this process works, which will definitely plumb when we get into ritual. All in all in the texts, the high God Ray is identified as the quote,

11:48
the quote, Lord of everything. In Pyramid text 257, the dead king Unus tells us that he's going to take his seat on Reys throne. The text reads, quote, I, and this is King Unus speaking, sit on the seat, the throne of the Lord of all. And the Lord of all here is the celestial monarch, Re, or Reatum.
12:18
In another pyramid text in pyramid text 271, King Eunice tells us that he's going to take his seat on a heavenly throne next to Ray. The text reads, quote, I sit on the great seat, a throne beside the God and the God here refers to Ray. I believe I've mentioned this in the program before, but note how similar this is to the Christian New Testament passages found in Mark chapter 16 verse 19.
12:46
Matthew chapter 26 verse 64 and Acts chapter 2 verse 33 where we read that Christ after his death ascended So note how we're talking about ascension here too and took his seat next to God In Mark chapter 16 verse 19 it says quote So then after the Lord has spoken unto them and it's talking about the Apostle. So this is post-resurrection He being Christ was received up into heaven
13:15
and sat on the right hand of God. I know that the ancient Egyptian religion is often labeled as a pagan religion, but I think the ancient Egyptians in Christ, as crazy as this may sound, were teaching the same theology. They were teaching a theology of heavenly kingship. And it's not just textual parallels like this that have me thinking this. It's also because as you're gonna see down the line,
13:44
that both the ancient Egyptians in Christ described the place and the process, the theology by which heavenly kingship can be acquired in virtually identical ways, like we see with the anointing oil. And let's also note that it's not just the ancient Egyptians in Christ who are teaching this theology.
14:07
We clearly see this theology being taught across the ancient Near East in Mesopotamia, Canaan, and among the Hittites and Hebrews. In another pyramid text, in pyramid text 335, the dead King Unas tells us that the heavenly crown he received in the heavens was given to him from the crown that rested on Ray's head. So you should get the point here of vassal kingships.
14:36
The text reads, quote, how beautiful is the sight of me. And this is King Eunice speaking, with my headband, his crown, from Ray's brow. In this text, the high God is clearly referred to as wearing a royal crown, which of course identifies him as a heavenly king. Note in these passages how King Eunice obtains a crown from Ray's crown
15:05
and takes his seat on a throne next to Ray's throne. In other passages, we learn that he wore the royal garments that Ray wore. And in Pyramid Text 412, we're told that he even smelled of the same scent that Ray smelled, which we assume was the smell of the anointing oil. You can see from passages like this that the high God Ray not only reigned as the supreme King of Heaven,

15:35
but that he also served as the divine model, the divine prototype for earthly kings, kings who were to pattern not only their earthly reign, but their heavenly reign after him too. In ancient Egypt, the word for king was primarily nsut, N-S-W-T, which translates directly to king in English. This term was widely used
16:04
throughout ancient Egyptian history to refer to Egyptian monarchs. According to Egyptologist Sir Alan H. Gardiner, the most common hieroglyph for Nasut was a seated king wearing the cobra crown or a seated king wearing the cobra crown holding a flail. And if you'd like to see pictures of the hieroglyphs used to identify kings, you can find them on the webpage for this episode.
16:33
These hieroglyphs were used in the Papyrus of Annie, also known as the Egyptian Book of the Dead, which is dated to 1250 BC. It's currently housed in the British Museum. The Papyrus of Annie is a great text, and we're gonna talk a lot more about it when we get into ritual. But for this episode, it's important because the papyrus begins with several introductory hymns to Ra or Rae.
17:00
And it's in the first hymn that we find these really beautiful, vivid descriptions of Ray as the reigning celestial king. And I'm going to read a significant portion of the English translation of the first hymn. It's found on plate one, not just because it identifies Ray explicitly as a heavenly king, but because it also identifies Ray as an exalted king in reference to the rest of the theology of heavenly kingship that we've discussed.
17:29
this point on the program. The Hymn to Ra reads, quote, A Hymn of praise to Ra when he riseth in the eastern part of heaven. Behold the Osiris Annie, the scribe of the holy offerings of all the gods, saith, Homage to thee. And he's speaking of
17:59
Thou art seated on thy throne. Thou art seated on thy throne as the king of the gods. This is a description again of Ray. Here we're told that in the heavens, the high God Ray sits on a throne and reigns as the king of the gods. In the royal hierarchy in heaven, he reigns supreme. And note too that he reigns over other gods.
18:27
which indicates that there is more than one God in the heavens. Let's keep reading and read what else the hymn tells us about Ray's kingship. The text continues, quote, the goddess Maat embraceth thee. May Ra give glory and power and truth speaking. In this text, we see that Ray, the king of the gods is embraced by Maat, the cosmic law.
18:56
which infers that his reign is a reign built upon the cosmic law. It's by way of his adherence to this law that order is established in his heavenly kingdom. In other words, his kingship, his rule, is embraced by righteousness, truth, and justice. Let's see what else we can learn. The text continues, quote, "'Hail Tattoon.'" Now, Tattoon's interesting here, because that's a name.
19:26
Tatun is a shortened version of Tatennin, which is derived from the Egyptian word Ta, which means land or earth, and Tenin, which means to give birth or to produce. So Tatennin refers to

the one who gave birth or produced the land or earth. So this is really referring to the primordial mound, the first land to rise out or be given birth from the primordial waters.
19:56
To call Ray Tatun is to call him the creator of the primordial mound, the creator of the world. The text continues, Hail Tatun, thou creator of mortals and of the companies of the gods. Here we see that Ray, the king of heaven, created mortals. And we're gonna talk about that a lot more down the line. And he's also the creator of the company of the gods, the council of the gods.
20:26
Now listen to how this company of gods is described, especially in terms of the sacred center. Quote, the companies of the gods of the south and of the north and of the west and of the east. These gods are described in reference to the four cardinal points, which we know are used symbolically in ancient world to delineate the center, the sacred center, where Ray reigns as the king of the gods
20:55
and where the divine council meets. The text continues, quote, "'The companies of the gods of the south and of the north and of the west and of the east ascribe ye praise to Ra, the Lord of heaven, the King.'" We can see here that Ray is clearly described as the Lord of heaven, the King. It's right in the text. In the Wallace Budge translation, each letter in the word King
21:24
K-I-N-G is actually capitalized. I'm not exactly sure why that is, but it is. Now listen to what the text tells us about where Ra resides. The text reads, quote, give ye thanks unto him, Ray, or Ra, in his beneficent form, which is enthroned in the Atet boat. So according to this text, where does Ray sit enthroned?
21:55
The text tells us that he sits, quote, enthroned in the Atet boat. The Atet boat is the bark of the sun or the bark of Ray. This vessel symbolically, and note that I'm talking about it symbolically here, represents where God dwells in the heavens. The ancient Egyptians didn't believe that God literally dwelt in a boat in the heavens. Okay, so if they knew that,
22:23
then why did they depict Ray as dwelling in a boat or in an ark? Well, the ancient Egyptians taught that God reigned over a cosmic kingdom, a cosmic kingdom that much like a giant air bubble was completely surrounded by a vast expanse of dark, inert, chaotic elements. Elements that the ancients described symbolically as water.
22:53
And what floats on water? A boat. So naturally the ancient Egyptians portrayed God as residing in a boat. A boat that protected God not only from the chaotic waters themselves, but a boat that also protected him from the terrible sea serpent Apophis, who lurked in those waters. The boat represents the boundary, the wall, the shield.
23:20
that forms a protective barrier around God and his kingdom and keeps the awful serpent and the forces of chaos at bay. The boat represents a place of refuge and safety in the cosmos. And what did the ancients call a place of safety and refuge? They called it a temple. So the Atet boat symbolically represents the temple.
23:50

where God dwells, the temple where he reigns on his throne in the sacred center of his kingdom. Interestingly, the symbolic connection between the boat and the temple is beautifully conveyed in the Native American to Tuni Joshua creation account given by Chief Depot Charlie in 1900 AD. So this is way, way, way later, but yet it's completely consistent.
24:20
with this theology. In that account, Chief Depot Charlie tells us that God resided in a sweat lodge on the Primordial Waters, which is just amazing. If you'd like to listen to the Tutuny Joshua Creation account, you can find it on our sister podcast, The Ancient Tradition Audio Rid. When I saw that for the first time, I was just astounded.
24:48
In ancient Egypt, we can find literally hundreds and hundreds of depictions of Ray, the king of the gods, seated on a throne in the center of the Atet boat, the royal bark. One of these depictions can be found in a vignette from the papyrus of Harubin. It's dated to around 1075 BC. If you'd like to see a picture of this vignette along with other depictions of Ray enthroned in the Atet boat, you can find them also on the webpage for this episode.
25:19
In this vignette, Ray is depicted in what is referred to by scholars as semi-anthropomorphic form. From the neck down, he's depicted in human form with arms and legs, seated on a throne, a royal throne in the very center of the boat. But from the neck up, he's depicted as a falcon. Deities whom the ancient Egyptians depicted with animal heads or bodies are referred to as zoomorphic.
25:49
partially zoomorphic because he has a body of a human yet the head of an animal. As we've discussed on this program, the ancient Egyptians used animals symbolically. They used them as a way to emphasize particular aspects of that deity's nature, personal qualities, or divine functions. The symbolic use of the animals not only reflected the cultural importance of those animals in the local environment, but they also served as a way to express complex spiritual concepts.
26:19
in a visually recognizable way. In this vignette and in many others, the ancient Egyptians used a falcon to represent the high god Ray, the king of heaven. And one of the primary reasons that they used the falcon to represent Ray was because the falcon was not only a powerful bird of prey, but it also had the ability to soar to great heights, which perfectly aligned with Ray's role as a celestial deity.
26:49
who resided in the highest of heights. As we've noted previously on the program, it was common in the ancient world to symbolize God or divine beings as birds, to use avian symbolism for precisely this reason. When you take a look at the vignette, you're gonna notice that there's a large disc of the sun resting atop Ray's falcon head. And this sun disc distinguishes Ray from the god Horus.
27:17
who's also depicted as a Falcon. In ancient Egypt, wherever you see images of a semi anthropomorphic Falcon with a sun resting on its head, then you know you're seeing a representation of the high God Ray. And like we've mentioned previously on the program, the

reason Ray is associated with the sun is because the ancient Egyptians knew that a glorious ineffable light radiated from his body.
27:44
And our son was the only thing that was even remotely comparable to the light that his body emitted. So our son became a symbolic representation of Ray and the ineffable light that radiated from him. The ancient Egyptians tell us that Ray's glorious light penetrated every single thing in his kingdom. In fact, this was precisely how the ancient Egyptians defined
28:14
what constituted Ray's kingdom. His kingdom included, quote, "'all the sun encircled' or quote, "'all the sun encompassed' suggesting that his dominion "'extended as far as his light could reach.'" In this vignette, you're gonna also notice that the terrible sea serpent Apophis surrounds Ray's royal bark.
28:43
And this is perfectly in keeping with the theology that Rey's cosmic kingdom exists like a giant air bubble, which is surrounded by primordial waters and the terrible serpent of chaos that lurks in those waters. Note that Rey's servants are taking the battle to Apophis, driving a spear into his throat or slicing him up to pieces with a knife, which clearly symbolizes Rey's power to defeat the serpent.
29:13
the Lord of Evil and Chaos. With that, let's return to the papyrus of Annie, to the hymn of Ray, and pick up where we left off, because in this hymn, we're gonna learn that Ray, the King of Heaven, won his battle against Apophis. The text reads, quote, give ye thanks unto him, Ray, in his beneficent form, which is enthroned in the octet boat.
29:41
beings celestial praise thee, beings terrestrial praise thee. Thine enemy, the serpent, hath been given over to the fire. The serpent fiend hath fallen headlong. His forelegs are bound in chains. The sons of revolt, and note how the text is talking about rebellion here, rebellious sons, shall nevermore rise up.
30:09
The gods rejoice when they see Ra crowned upon his throne. And now listen to this. And his beams flood the world with light. There you go. Beams of Ray's glory flood the world. There are obvious references to Ray's triumph over Apophis in this hymn. What's interesting in the text though, is that right after the author of this hymn,
30:36
makes mention of Ray's triumph over Apophis and the sons of revolt. The text tells us that the gods rejoiced when they saw Ray crowned upon his throne. This is exactly the sequence of events that we see across the ancient world where after the hero slays the serpent he's crowned a king. In this text we're seeing the same sequence of events. Ray slays Apophis and he's crowned a celestial king.
31:05
But take note that the text is talking about Rey here, the High King of Heaven. What this means is that Rey himself acquired his heavenly kingship in the exact same manner that later dragon slayers received their kingdoms. Remember, Rey is the divine prototype for all celestial kings. And this becomes super clear when we keep reading.

31:35
because we don't get very much farther in the text before Annie starts pleading that he too can conquer the serpent, so that he too can be made a heavenly king. Listen to the text, and this is Annie, a human being speaking, quote, "'Let me journey above the earth.'" Okay, so there's that word journey. By journey, Annie is pleading for help to make it through the process
32:05
transforms one into a celestial monarch. Now listen to what Annie says next, quote, let me smite the ass, let me slit asunder the serpent, let me destroy Apep, and Apep is a pofus, at the moment of his greatest power.
32:27
In this passage, we can just hear Annie pleading for the power to conquer the great enemy, especially when the enemy gets really, really tough or like Annie says it, at the moment of his greatest power. Annie here is pleading for the ability to overcome the terrible serpent. See, Annie seems to understand that if he does this, then like Ray, he can become a celestial king.
32:58
This is pretty remarkable because Annie wasn't a major historical figure. He wasn't an Egyptian pharaoh. He was a Theban scribe who lived during the 19th dynasty. Yet he seemed to believe that the theology of heavenly kingship applied to him too. That's remarkable. Now, listen to what Annie pleads for next.
33:26
It's really interesting and it should conjure up in your mind some of the things we discussed in our previous episode. This is what Annie says, quote, let my name be called out. What is Annie asking for here? If you're listening closely in our last episode, you might have a pretty good idea. In that episode, we established that in the ancient world, the names the high God gave his creations perfectly reflected the nature
33:56
that creation. Annie seems to recognize that in order to become a heavenly king, he must first acquire, which is by way of the journey, the same nature that Rey, the king of heaven, has. He must first acquire a divine nature, one which perfectly upholds Ma'at, one where there is no unrighteousness in him.
34:26
which is essentially akin to slaying the dragon. Annie's pleading here that Ray will call out that name, that name that reflects that he has acquired the divine nature. Annie then pleads that his new name will be inscribed in the Egyptian heavenly tablet, which is essentially the same as the Judeo-Christian book of life. This is what Annie says, quote, let my name be called out.
34:56
Let it be found inscribed on the tablet, which recordeth the names. Now, lest you think that Annie doesn't really think he can be made a heavenly king, listen to what he asks for next. Annie pleads, quote, let there be prepared for me a seat, a throne, in the boat of the sun.
35:27
Annie is asking that Ray prepare a throne for him in his heavenly temple. The 19th century BC Theban scribe Annie understood heavenly kingship theology. From these passages we can see that the ancient Egyptians taught that God reigns in the heavens as a celestial king. A celestial king who governs his cosmic kingdom

35:56
according to the dictates of Maat, truth, righteousness, and justice. And as one who conquered Apophis himself, Re stands as the heavenly prototype of celestial kingship for all who desire the same. As we've seen in this and in the last episode, both the ancient Egyptians and the ancient Mesopotamians taught that the high god, be he Re or Anu, reigns in the heavens.
36:25
as a celestial king. Now, if we take a look at some of the ancient Canaanite texts known as the Ugaritic texts found in the ancient city of Rosh Shamra, which is located today in Northwestern Syria, we find the same thing we find in ancient Egypt and ancient Mesopotamia, that God is described and identified as a heavenly king. A heavenly king who is also described
36:55
as having anthropomorphic features. Let's start with a quote by E.T. Mullen, who wrote what is easily one of my favorite books, The Divine Council in Canaanite and early Hebrew literature, which I've mentioned several times on the program. If you love this stuff as much as I do, you definitely need to read this book. On page 10, Mullen tells us that kingship is the main focus of the Ugaritic texts.
37:24
He writes, quote, the central theme is that of kingship. What Mullen's saying here is incredibly important and we shouldn't glaze over it. He's telling us that in the body of ancient texts that constitute ancient Canaanite literature, the Ugaritic texts, kingship is the central theme. This is the same thing that we see in ancient Egypt.
37:52
The ancient Egyptian Pyramid Ticks are definitely all about kingship, as are most of the other ancient Egyptian writings. And this is the same thing we see in the corpus of Mesopotamian literature, like the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Enuma Elish, and the Epic of Anzu. They're all about kingship. The theme of kingship in the ancient world is so ubiquitous, it's so commonplace, that scholars have stopped asking why this is.
38:21
See, kingship is a form of government, is not an inevitability. In Henry Frankfurt's famous book on kingship in the ancient world titled, Kingship and the Gods, Frankfurt notes that kingship in ancient Egypt just seemed to appear out of nowhere. On page 18, Frankfurt writes, quote, "'The rise of the first dynasty marked a turning point in the nation's existence. It can be said that kingship
38:51
as the peculiar concept which remained a living force throughout the country's history did not exist before Menes. And Menes was the first King of Egypt. Note how Frankfurt calls kingship, quote, a peculiar concept, one that didn't exist in Egypt before the enthronement of King Menes. On page 15, Frankfurt notes, quote, if we study the numerous
39:20
pre-dynastic and proto-dynastic monuments, we must admit that the emergence of pharaonic rule coincides with an entirely unprecedented series of phenomena. On page 16, Frankfurt calls the emergence of kingship in ancient Egypt a, quote, total break from the past. On page 20, he writes, quote,
39:50

It is important to realize that the dual monarchy in ancient Egypt had no historical foundation, meaning it seemingly came out of nowhere. Frankfurt goes on to offer up his own explanation for why he thinks kingship suddenly appeared in ancient Egypt, but I'm gonna save that for a future episode. It's statements like Frankfurt's that highlight the notion that kingship…
40:17
as a form of government is not an inevitability. And we know this because nothing of the sort existed in ancient Egypt before King Menes. The point I'm trying to make here is that although we see that the topic of kingship dominates the ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Canaanite literature, this is not an inevitability. We have to ask why this is. Where did the notion of kingship come from?
40:46
Why did kingship become the dominant form of government in the ancient world? And why did the notion of kingship take on such an incredible significance? Frankfurt asks this very question on page 19. He writes, quote, we may well ask how an institution and he's referring to kingship introduced at the beginning of history could acquire transcendent significance for the Egyptians.
41:17
Well, we know why, because the ancient Egyptians, Mesopotamians and Canaanites tell us why. And they all tell us a very similar story. They tell us that the high God of heaven himself reigns as a celestial monarch in the heavens over a cosmic kingdom of his offspring. And they tell us that the king of heaven established a monarchy on earth. Now listen to this, to mirror.
41:48
the celestial monarchy established in heaven. That's what the ancients tell us in their texts. They're telling us that earthly kingship is a reflection of heavenly kingship. They're trying to mirror or replicate the heavens. Now, that's worth thinking about. In ancient Canaan, the Semitic word, Malku, was the word the Canaanites used to designate one as a king.
42:18
In the Ugaritic pantheon, El, like we've seen elsewhere in the ancient world, reigns as the supreme authority, the King of the Gods. On page 22, Mullen notes, quote, The Ugaritic texts designate El as King, Malcu, in addition to noting his role as creator and father of the gods.
42:46
Indeed, his epitaph is directly applied only to the god El in Ugaritic mythology. When applied to El, the epitaph King is found embedded in fixed epitaphs of the god. The most common is Malku Abu Sanima, the King, the Father of Years. The texts leave no doubt that El was called King in the Ugaritic pantheon. A study of El's function as King reveals
43:14
that he alone is the supreme power in the pantheon. He sits enthroned over the gods and rules them from a position of supreme power.
43:27
Let's take a look at a couple of texts. In Ugaritic text 5.2.2.6-8, we read the following description of El. Quote, let Rapiu, and that's referring to El, the eternal king, rule by his might. Let the eternal king judge in his strength. Let him rule his offspring in his grace.
43:57
In this passage, we see that El is given the epitaph, eternal king. So there's the notion that God's kingdom is an eternal kingdom. In this passage, we also see that El, the king of heaven,

rules as a judge. The text said, quote, "'Let the eternal king judge in his strength.'" And we also learned from this text that the king of heaven rules over a kingdom of his offspring. When the text says, quote,
44:25
let him rule his offspring in his grace. In another Ugaritic text, 5.2.1.2-4, we find a very intriguing passage about El's kingship. The text tells us the following about El, the king of the gods. Quote, El is enthroned with a tart.
44:50
This text is important to our discussion because it mentions that the high god El sits on the throne. El is enthroned. The text is pretty intriguing though, because it tells us that El sits enthroned with someone else, with someone named Atart. Well, who is Atart? Well, it turns out that Atart is El's female consort or wife. So in this text, we learn that the king of the gods, El,
45:20
does not reign alone. He reigns in heaven with his wife, Queen Atart. He and his wife both sit on thrones and reign together. That's pretty intriguing, but this makes sense in lieu of what we just read, where we learned that El reigns over a kingdom of his quote, offspring. Offspring that logically must have come from his union with Atart. Like we saw in ancient Mesopotamia,
45:49
when we learn that the Anunnaki, the offspring of An, were the product of An's union with his wife, Ki, thus the Anunnaki. On page 88, Mullen notes, quote, "'The Ugaritic texts emphasize that the power of the divine decree belongs to El alone. He stands as the king of the gods, his offspring.'
46:17
In another Ugaritic text, 5.1.11.14-16, we learn that El reigns as a heavenly king on a throne, which is housed inside a temple. The text reads, quote, "'El sits enthroned in his shrine.'"
46:40
In Cuneiform tablet 21.1.1-3, we read of El summoning some of his offspring to his temple palace. The text reads, quote, "'Come to my house, O Halle ones. "'I summon you to my house, O Halle ones. "'I call you ones of El into my temple.'" From other passages, we learned that the Halle ones mentioned here refers to the council of the gods.
47:10
Here we see that a temple exists in heaven, a temple palace out of which the high God reigns as the eternal king. In other Ugaritic texts, we learn that it's in this celestial temple palace that El convenes and presides over the assembly of the gods, whom Cuneiform tablet 10.11.1 to five refers to as the sons of El. The text reads, quote,
47:38
the assembly of the gods of El, the council of the sons of El, El and Atart. Again, you can see how heavenly kingship here with the emphasis on El's offspring, like we've seen in ancient Egypt and ancient Mesopotamia, is structured entirely around El's family, his wife, his offspring, his holy sons. El reigns as a celestial king,
48:08
patriarch over his family. That's enough to chew on until the next episode drops. We'll pick up right here in part two. Until then, I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare. Knowledge is the wing we're with, fly to heaven. I'm Jack Logan.

48:34
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Episode #47 - Nswt, Malku & Melek, Part II

https://theancienttradition.com/47-nswt-malku-melek-part-ii/

00:00
Music
00:09
You're listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.
00:24
Welcome to the Ancient Tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. For the past two episodes, we've been talking quite a bit about kingship. And that's because kingship is at the very heart of each of the major religious traditions that we see in the ancient world. In episode number 45, Who is God, a heavenly king, we saw that kingship was at the heart of the
00:52
And then in our last episode, episode number 46, we saw that kingship was at the very heart of the ancient Mesopotamian religion. And in today's episode, you're gonna see that kingship is at the very heart of the ancient Canaanite, ancient Hebrew, and early Christian religions too. If you're new to the program, we refer to things like this, the consistency in theology that we see across time and space, like we see here with kingship.
01:22
as a stubborn bit, a theological tenant that stubbornly persists from generation to generation and from continent to continent and from culture to culture. In our next episode, you're going to see that God's understood as a king almost universally across the world among the Hurrians, the Hindu, the Persians and the Greeks, among the Aztecs, the Basques and the Celts, among the Finns and the Hawaiians and the Inca.
01:50
and among the Vietnamese, Japanese, and Chinese people. Each of these groups attest that God reigns in the heavens as a king. It's a very strong, stubborn bit, and this suggests, once again, that the religions that we see in the world today branched out of a common trunk or fount of some kind in deep antiquity. Anthropologist A.M. Hocart.
02:19
I've mentioned him a couple of times on the program. He's also listed on our companion website, thea under Scholars. Was the first scholar that I'm aware of who noticed that all of the major religions in the ancient world centered around kingship and kingship rituals. He wrote this amazing little book titled, fittingly, Kingship. In this amazing little book,

02:47
Not only did the major religions in the ancient Near East center around kingship, he also found that kingship and kingship or chieftainship rituals were prevalent across the world regardless of time or culture. What's even more remarkable is that he found that the conceptualization of kingship across time and culture was remarkably consistent.
03:17
Kingship was not just seen as a political institution, but it was deeply intertwined with religious and cosmological concepts, like we've seen on this program, where the king acted as the mediator between human beings and the divine, and the king played the central role in maintaining social and cosmological order. The king was the embodiment of cosmic order.
03:45
And all of this was done by way of important religious rituals. In the very first paragraph of kingship, Hocourt argues that the world's earliest religion was a religion centered around kings and kingship. On page one, he writes, quote, the earliest known religion is a belief in the divinity of kings. I do not say that it is necessarily the most primitive.
04:13
But in the earliest records known, man appears to us worshiping gods and their earthly representatives, namely kings. We have no right in the present state of our knowledge to assert that the worship of gods preceded that of kings we do not know. Now listen to this. Perhaps there never were any gods without kings or kings without gods.
04:44
What Hocquart's saying here is pretty interesting because he's basically pointing out that from the beginning of history, gods and kings always came together in a tight religious package. One couldn't understand who God was without understanding kingship. And one couldn't understand the concept of kingship without understanding its connection to God. The two notions, God and king, were conceptually inseparable.
05:13
and religiously inextricable. Hocart goes on to say, quote, "'When we have discovered the origin of divine kingship, we shall know. But at present, we only know that when history begins, there are kings, the representatives of the gods.'" Hocart's insight here is very important because it highlights the fact that kings and kingship
05:43
mark the dawn of history and the dawn of historical religion. What this means is that we really can't truly understand the theology taught in the religions of today until we first recognize that these two concepts, religion and kingship, rose together at the dawn of history until we recognize that as far back as we can go in the ancient texts, the key theological thread
06:12
running through the ancient world was a theology of kingship. Kingship is the theological backbone that runs through the religions of the ancient world and which then ran through the theology and cultures of the world. The worldwide consistency in the way kingship was conceptualized and understood along with the remarkable consistency in kingship
06:40
enthronement and coronation rituals across cultures, led Hocourt to hypothesize that the notion of kingship and kingship rituals spread across the world from a common center or source. He

examined a number of coronation rights across the world and after he'd examined them he writes on page 57 of his book kingship the following quote
07:09
I think enough evidence has been set out to justify us in deriving from one common source all the coronation rights we have passed in review and in suggesting provisionally what the parent right must have been like. What Hoare Court found was that there was substantial parity in kingship rights around the world. These rights included a victory and we know why.
07:38
and admonition, clothing, communion, and anointing, and investing, and a procession. This is a little perplexing. So on page 98, Hocourt asks where these kingship rituals came from. Speaking of kingship coronation and enthronement rituals, he asks, quote, where did this first come about?
08:05
from where did the popular form spread throughout the world? Well, that's a great question. On page one, Hocourt freely admits that he doesn't know where kingship or kingship rituals came from. He duly notes that scholars have not discovered the origin. Like we discussed in our last episode, Henry Frankfurt pointed out in his book,
08:35
just sort of suddenly showed up in ancient Egypt in a fully developed, sophisticated form, seemingly out of nowhere. And so even though scholars like Frankfurt and Hocourt weren't able to find the origin of kingship and kingship rituals, we actually do know the origin because the ancients themselves tell us right in their ancient texts. And as you're gonna see in the new year, the establishment of kingship on earth
09:05
is one of the most significant events that took place in the first time. I mention all of this to stress the importance of kingship in the study of religion. If kingship played such a central role in the world's first established religion, and if that first religion was the true, pure, unadulterated religion, then
09:31
kingship would have to play the central role in whichever religion today claimed to be the quote true religion. Any religion that has significantly departed from the central role of kingship and its associated kingship rituals has likely experienced substantial degradation and corruption over time. Because as Hocourt shows, from the dawn of history, the two notions, God,
10:01
and king were conceptually inseparable and religiously inextricable. In the past two episodes, the ancients have taught us that God resides in heaven as a king, a celestial monarch. And this means that the heavens don't operate as a disordered chaotic mess. As crazy as this sounds, the ancients are telling us that there is an actual government in heaven.
10:31
and that that government is not a despotic government. It's not even a democratic government, not even a democratic republic. The ancients are telling us that the government established in heaven is a monarchy, but it isn't any old monarchy. The ancients tell us that the monarch who governs the heavens is a perfect being, one who perfectly upholds the cosmic law of righteousness.

10:59
There is no wickedness in him. He is a God. The angels tell us that the man who reigns as a celestial monarch over the heaven and this earth, so perfectly upholds the cosmic law that his body shines beyond anything comprehensible in this life. He is a glorious being of ineffable light. What this means is that he reigns as a truly
11:28
righteous king. In fact, as we've already learned in this program, he qualifies to govern as a celestial king precisely because he perfectly upholds the cosmic law and there is no wickedness in him. That's what the ancients tell us and as you can probably already guess the kings who were given dominion over the earth, earthly kings, were likewise.
11:56
expected to uphold the cosmic law and pattern their own reigns after the reign of the King in heaven. As above, so below. With that background, let's jump back into where we left off in our last episode. In that episode, we were in the middle of examining the Ugaritic texts that established the ancient Canaanite belief that God reigned as a celestial king.
12:26
When we make a list, like I did two episodes ago, of what the ancient Canaanites tell us a heavenly king spends his day doing, we get a very, very similar list to what we found in ancient Mesopotamia. For example, in the Ugaritic texts, L, the eternal king, like we saw, number one, presides over a council of gods, his offspring. The council of the gods is the royal court.
12:56
L issues decrees. On page 110, Mullen notes, quote, his, and he's talking about the high god L here, position and power are seen most vividly through his decree, which determined the actions of the gods. L's proclamation of his decree is best displayed in his actions in the divine council, the medium through which the decree of the high god was proclaimed.
13:27
According to Mullen, the High King presided over a council of his children. And within those council meetings, El determined what would be done. He issued his decrees. In Cuneiform Tablet 2.5, lines 38 to 39, we read the following about the High King. Quote, your decree, O El, is wise. Your wisdom is eternal.
13:54
a life of fortune you decree. From this text, we see that L's decrees were not seen as tyrannical or subversive. We see that they were understood to be wise, leading one to quote a life of fortune.
14:11
Number three, just like we saw in ancient Mesopotamia, the heavenly king El gifts special weapons to his offspring to help them win their battle against the sea serpent. This is visible in really stark relief when the high god El's master craftsman Kotar fashions two magical clubs and he gifts them to Baal so that he can successfully destroy the sea serpent Am.
14:41
These clubs, we've talked about them on the program before, are named driver and router or expeller. Kineiform tablet 2.4, lines 11 to 13, where we learn of these special weapons, it reads, quote, "'Your name is Yagaris. "'Let him drive out. "'Yagaris, drive out Yam. "'Your name is Iyamari. "'Oh, let him route.'

15:11
ayamari route yam. And these special weapons, these clubs, driver and router, of course, play an absolutely critical role in Baal's ability to defeat yam. In reference to these special weapons, Mullen writes the following on page 58, quote, "'Significantly, Baal is not able to defeat yam alone.'"
15:37
It was necessary for him to procure magical weapons from the craftsman god to ensure his victory. With the help of Kotar's magical clubs Baal destroyed Yam and attained the position of king. As just a quick aside, two episodes ago, I shared a couple of clips from the Lord of the Rings.
16:00
By the way, I've posted links to those clips on the webpage for that episode. So if you'd like to watch those clips instead of just listen to them, you can do that there. Anyway, while I was rewatching the first film, The Fellowship of the Ring, I noticed that Galadriel, the elf, gave several gifts to the fellowship to help them in their quest. She gifts the elf Legolas a bow and arrow. She gifts the hobbits, Merry and Pippin daggers.
16:30
the hobbit Sam, an elven rope, and she gives gifts to the others as well. But to the hero, to the hobbit Frodo, Galadriel gifts a crystal file, which contains the light of Arendelle's star. And Galadriel tells Frodo that it will, quote, shine still brighter when night is about you, and be, quote, a light to you in dark places when all other light go out.
16:59
And later in the story, the phial actually helps Frodo fend off Shelob. Shelob is a giant spider-like creature, which is the offspring of Ungoliant, a primordial being of darkness in the Tolkien mythology. Sam ultimately uses the phial to defeat Shelob after Frodo is poisoned. And the phial, of course, saves Frodo's life.
17:27
I know I've mentioned this before in the program, but JRR Tolkien did his homework. He was very familiar with the legacy left by the ancient tradition. Pretty much all of the gifting of special weapons and special armor that we see in the world's greatest literature comes out of the ancient tradition. If you'd like to see a clip of Galadriel distributing these special gifts among the fellowship, you can find a link on the webpage for this episode.
17:53
And if you're interested in learning more about special weapons, check out episode number 20. And if you're interested in learning more about special armor, check out episode number 21, the Cloak of Invulnerability. Number four, like we also saw in ancient Mesopotamia, the heavenly king, L, granted heavenly kingship to his worthy offspring. On page 140, Mullen notes, quote,
18:22
The decree and sanction for kingship comes forth from El's tent. In Cuneiform Tablet 6.1, lines 43 to 65, the actual choice and enthronement of a king occurs at the dwelling of El. El pronounces his decree using imperatives. To Adiroth, who's his wife, he announces, here, give one of your sons.
18:51

and I will make him king." The god El controls the rulership over the cosmogonic deities through his decree, which comes either from his mountain or his mountain shrine. On page 144 and 145, Mullen continues, quote, "'Only El delivers decrees that affect the rule of the cosmos. He declares kingship, grants palaces,
19:20
and refuses kingship. One is only given dominion by the consent of El. In this text, we see the theology of the ancient tradition in full form. In Canaan form tablet 6.1, lines 45 and 46, where we just read that the heavenly King El tells his wife, quote, "'Give one of your sons and I will make him king.'"
19:45
We're seeing an unmistakable reference to the theology that God grants heavenly kingship to some of his offspring. We learn in these texts that God also refuses kingship to some of his offspring, which we saw when the high god El refused to grant kingship to Yam, who is the Ugaritic rebellious son or dragon, the dragon who was willing to go to war to usurp the throne. Yam's rebellion made him ineligible
20:14
to govern others, so El rejected his appeal for kingship. And as we know, Yam is furious about this and he's living on in his own shouting in the primordial waters where he was exiled.
20:30
It's worth noting that these Canaanite tablets make it absolutely clear that only the high god has the power and authority to appoint his offspring as kings, which he does when he declares, by divine decree, his son Baal, a king. There are absolutely no self-appointed kings among the ancient Canaanites. As Mullen said it, quote, "'One is only given dominion by the consent of El.'"
20:58
Like we saw in ancient Egypt and ancient Mesopotamia, it's always the high God, the father of the gods, who grants his worthy offspring the right to rule as celestial monarchs.
21:11
And number five, just like we also saw in ancient Mesopotamia, the heavenly king, El, grants his newly enthroned offspring a dominion, dominion over a kingdom. El allots his newly coronated offspring in inheritance, which is a cosmic kingdom. Mullen refers to the heavenly king, El, as quote, the dispenser of kingdoms. On page 35, Mullen writes, quote,
21:41
The concept of El, who himself is a king, as the one who dispenses kingship, seems on the surface to be contradictory. We shall see in the following sections, however, that the king of Baal, one of the sons whom El granted heavenly kingship, in no way impinges upon El's reign. And why should it? If the cosmos are infinite, El would lose nothing by granting his worthy offspring a dominion too.
22:10
In fact, it would only increase El's own kingdom, because El would forever reign as the king over his son, Baal, and his kingdom too, in a grand royal celestial hierarchy.
22:23
On page 40, Mullen writes, and I think I've talked about this on the program before, but he says, quote, "'El's function as the God who dispenses kingdom "'is reflected in the sentientiathen. "'In

the Phoenician theogony, "'El divides the land among the various gods "'as their territory.'" I'm not gonna read the text, but in the text we see that God divides up the lands among the gods.
22:50
I don't think I've mentioned this on the program yet, but we actually see this same theology affirmed among the ancient Israelites when Yahweh tells Moses in Numbers chapter 34 that he's gonna give the 12 tribes of Israel the land of Canaan as their inheritance. Numbers chapter 34, verses one and two read, and this is the new international version, quote, and the Lord spake unto Moses, command the Israelites and say unto them, when you enter Canaan,
23:20
the land that will be allotted to you as an inheritance is to have these boundaries. And then the next couple of verses lay out the boundaries. But note in these verses how Yahweh tells Moses that this land, the land of Canaan, has been quote allotted to them as quote an inheritance. The emphasis in the text here on allotting an inheritance is hugely significant.
23:50
because it's meant to signal to the reader that what's about to take place in the land of Canaan is a type or echo of what actually took place in the heavens in God's kingdom, when God divided up his cosmic kingdom amongst the high council of 12. What we have going on here is an example of the Hermetic adage, as above, so below, as in heaven.
24:18
So on earth, see Yahweh by commanding that the land Canaan, which is symbolic of God's kingdom, be divided up as an inheritance among the 12 tribes of Israel, which is symbolic of the council of the gods like we discussed in episode number 18, is teaching the ancient Israelites what happened or happens in the heavens. As astounding as this is, Yahweh is teaching the ancient Israelites that
24:48
and a lot's cosmic kingdoms. Yahweh is teaching royal kingship theology. He's teaching the ancient Israelites the same theology we've been discussing on the program. That's what's happening in these verses. Before Moses dies, Yahweh commands Moses to appoint Joshua as the leader of Israel. And Moses tells Joshua the following in Deuteronomy chapter 31, verse seven.
25:18
and this is the New International Version. Quote, then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of Israel, be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the Lord swore to their ancestors to give to them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. In Joshua chapters 15 to 19, the land of Canaan is divided up by lot.
25:47
amongst the 12 tribes of Israel. Joshua chapter 18 verse 10 reads, and this is the new international version, quote, Joshua then cast lots. Note the casting of lots. We've talked about this before on the program and how in the ancient world, the dispensing of cosmic kingdoms was always associated with lots or with the casting of lots. Let me start the verse again.
26:17
quote, Joshua then cast lots for them in Shiloh in the presence of the Lord. So this casting of lots obviously took place within the temple in the presence of the Lord, which makes sense because in heaven as above this is where it happens. And there he divided the land to the

Israelites according to their tribal divisions. If you would like to see a picture of how the land of Canaan was
26:47
You can find it on the webpage for this episode. Again though, Yahweh patterned the allotment of the land in Canaan amongst the 12 tribes of Israel after the allotment of cosmic kingdoms in heaven, as above, so below. And let's not forget that in the ancient texts, be they in ancient Mesopotamia or ancient Canaan, heavenly kingdoms are always inherited.
27:14
We've talked about this on the program. It is the inheritance that is won by conquering the sea serpent. Something that the ancient Israelites spent 40 years in the desert trying to do before they were allowed into the promised land where they were actually given land. Which again is symbolic of a cosmic kingdom as their inheritance. You know, when you read the Bible,
27:40
in light of the ancient Egyptian Mesopotamian and Canaanite texts, it's actually so much easier to understand what's really going on and the theological purpose behind what's taking place.
27:53
And let's not forget that in the biblical passages that I just mentioned, that it is Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament, not a minor figure who's instructing Moses to divide the land of promise up against Jacob's 12 sons as their inheritance, echoing the pattern in heaven, which means that right here in the Bible, the dispensing of cosmic kingdoms and royal kingship theology.
28:21
is not only being taught in the Bible, it's being taught by Yahweh Himself, the highest authority, the God of the Old Testament. It's remarkable. All right, all five of these roles and responsibilities of a heavenly king I just outlined, presiding over a council, issuing decrees, gifting special weapons and special armor, appointing heavenly kings, and dispensing heavenly
28:51
found among the Canaanites are the same roles and responsibilities of heavenly kings found in our last episode in the ancient Mesopotamian literature. Both of these ancient peoples are teaching the same things about what heavenly kings do, how heavenly kings rule the cosmos, what they rule over, who they rule over, and what they spend their time doing in the heavens.
29:17
The Canaanite text emphasized two additional roles of heavenly kings, which I didn't mention in the last episode, but these can be found in the Mesopotamian literature too. I just didn't mention them. The first is God's role as a heavenly judge. The Ugaritic literature emphasizes that God, as a heavenly king, serves as a judge and issues judgment. On page 146 and 147, Mullen writes, quote,
29:47
patriarchal judge. L's decree is connected explicitly with the Mount, his mountain, and his temple shrine. It is this location that judgment is passed. Second, we see that L has the sole power and authority to sanction temple building. We haven't talked about this on the program yet, but the sanctioning of temple building is essentially synonymous with the sanctioning of kingdom building.
30:17

of sanctioning the right to create, to create a world or a kingdom of worlds. I'll explain this more in a couple of episodes. In what is known in the Ugaritic literatures, the Baal-Yam cycle, one of the major issues in these texts is whether or not the heavenly king will grant Baal or Yam the right to build a temple. Mola notes the following on page 46, quote,
30:46
over the issue of kingship over the cosmos. Crucial to this issue is the theme of a temple for Baal. In the Baal cycle, even though Baal defeated Yam, he was not immediately granted the authority to build a temple. In the text, Baal appeals to Anat, his sister, and he asks her to persuade the high god El to grant him the permission to build a temple. So Anat goes and does this, and El is persuaded by her appeal.
31:16
In Cuneiform tablet 4.4, line 62 to 65, El grants Baal the right to build a temple. The text reads, and this is El's decree. Let a house be built for Baal like the gods and a court like the sons of Adiroth. Adiroth is more commonly known as Asherah, the king of heaven, El's consort or wife. So Adiroth is the
31:46
of heaven. Upon hearing this, Anat, the sister of Baal, journeys to Baal and she declares in Cuneiform Talbot 4.5, lines 87 to 91, quote, a house will be built for you like your brothers. This text indicates that Baal's brothers have temples in heaven, which of course then attests that there are many temples in heaven.
32:14
and we'll talk a lot more about temple building in a couple of episodes, especially the temple building account that's given here in the ball cycle. Suffice it to say, we see that the Canaanites taught nearly the same theology of heavenly kingship that we saw in ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt. Now there's going to be cultural differences and some inevitable corruptions of the theology when we go between civilizations and over time. But when we stick to the stubborn bits,
32:43
we find a perfectly cogent and consistent theology of heavenly kingship. A theology that I've pointed out several times is quite mind blowing in its implications. All right, now let's turn to the Judeo-Christian tradition and see what the ancient Hebrews and early Christians taught about God and who God is. Did they also teach that God reigns as a heavenly king? Well, yes, they absolutely did.
33:12
and they still do. The Hebrew word for king is melek, M-E-L-E-K, which is derived from the root milk, M-L-K-H, which signifies the act of ruling or reigning. This term, melek, is mentioned over a thousand times in the Bible. Most of the time it's just in reference to human kings, but in some very important royal psalms,
33:41
In a couple of other places, it's used to describe God. Jews today actually use the title Melik when they address God in their prayers, when they say, blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe. If you pay close attention to what you're reading in the Judeo-Christian scriptures, you'll soon realize, like elsewhere in the ancient world, kingship constitutes the backbone of the theology.

34:09
In this case, the backbone of the Judeo-Christian biblical canon. The canon speaks of a God who reigns as a celestial monarch over a celestial kingdom, a celestial monarch who establishes and maintains order in the heavens. And like we've already discussed on the podcast, we learned in Psalm 89 that the God of the Old Testament, just like we've seen with the ancient Egyptian God, Ray, where he gained his kingship by conquering Apophis.
34:38
and where the ancient Mesopotamian God Marduk gained his kingship by conquering Tiamat, and where the ancient Canaanite God Baal gained his kingship by conquering Yam. Yahweh obtained his kingship by first conquering the awful sea serpent Rahab. Psalm 89 tells us that Yahweh, quote, "'Broke Rahab in pieces like one that is slain.'" Then a couple of verses later, we're told that Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, is, quote,
35:08
This is in complete keeping with the ancient religious tradition that we find taught over and over and over again in the ancient Near East. That it's by conquering the awful sea monster that one acquires the right to reign as a heavenly king and govern over others. In Psalm 89, after we're told that Yahweh broke Rahab, the very next verse tells us that
35:37
Yahweh created this world. The world that we learn in Isaiah chapter 66 verse 1 serves as his footstool. Isaiah chapter 66 verse 1 reads and this is Yahweh Himself speaking telling us about His royal heavenly throne. This is the King James version quote, thus saith the Lord Yahweh the heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool.
36:06
Where is the house that you build unto me? And where is the place of my rest? What Yahweh says in this verse is pretty interesting. First, he tells us that he has a throne, a throne that's located in the heavens. He's telling us himself that he reigns as a celestial king. And second, he tells us that this earth is his footstool. Now, take a minute and imagine this in your mind
36:36
Yahweh is actually teaching us something very important about himself here. Imagine Yahweh sitting on his heavenly throne in heaven, his feet resting on the earth, his footstool. Note in this image that it is Yahweh himself, his body that joins heaven and earth together. This image becomes incredibly powerful when one thinks of Christ suffering on the cross, sacrificing his body.
37:05
so that the wounds of all heroes, poppers, and scullery maids might be healed, so that they might be able to stand in heaven in God's presence as perfect upholders of the cosmic law. Burn the image of Yahweh seated on his heavenly throne, his feet resting on the earth in your mind, because this is the same image that is being symbolized by the sacred tree.
37:33
If you aren't seeing how the two are connected, give it some thought and maybe even consider how the Maori son Tane Mahuta in episode number 42 did the same thing when he used his body like a tree to connect heaven and earth at their separation. This imagery and the theology that accompanies it is very, very important in the ancient tradition and we'll discuss it in greater detail in an upcoming episode.

38:03
After Yahweh tells us about his heavenly throne, he asks a very interesting question. He asks, where is the house that you build unto me? Where is the place of my rest? Note Yahweh's reference to rest here. We learned quite a bit about the ancient Near Eastern conception of rest in episode number 22. In that episode, we learned that Yahweh's place of rest, the place where he can rest free from Rahab's onslaught, is his sacred palace temple.
38:33
From the way that Yahweh is asking the question here, where is the house that ye built to me? It's clear that Yahweh expects his people to build him a temple on earth so that he can have a place to dwell. As we just saw in the Ugaritic literature, temple building is one of the key privileges of newly coronated heavenly kings. A scholar by the name of A. Cappell Rudd in an article he wrote titled, Temple Building, A Task for Gods and Kings.
39:02
published in volume 32 of the journal orientalia writes, quote, in the ancient middle Eastern world, temple building was the task and the privilege of victorious gods and Kings. Here we see Yahweh right after telling us that he sits enthroned in heaven, asking where the temple is, that his people were to build for him.
39:27
Note how the entire context of temple building in the ancient Near East and here in the biblical canon is directly linked to the notion of kingship. We can't understand the temples that the ancient Hebrews built to Yahweh, like Moses's tabernacle and King Solomon's temple, without first understanding how those temples are directly connected to Yahweh's triumphant victory over
39:57
exaltation as a heavenly king. The connection between the two will become more apparent in in the coming episodes. My point here is that Moses's tabernacle and King Solomon's temple cannot be understood outside of the context of Yahweh's heavenly kingship. The two concepts, temples and kingship, are inseparable.
40:22
Alright, let's look at a couple more verses in the Old Testament that identify Yahweh as a heavenly king. If we turn to Psalm chapter 45, which is considered a royal psalm, we read the following description of Yahweh as a heavenly king. Starting in verse 6, it reads, quote, thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.
40:48
So here we learn that Yahweh reigns in the heavens as an eternal king forever and ever. Quote, the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter. So here we see reference to Yahweh's royal regalia to a scepter, which we know is made from the wood of a tree and represents a branch of the sacred tree, the tree of life.
41:14
In this verse, we also see that Yahweh's dominion is referred to as a kingdom. It says, quote, the scepter of thy kingdom. In this verse, Yahweh's scepter is referred to as a, quote, right scepter. And this has reference to tzedek, to rightness, to righteousness. It tells us that Yahweh governs his kingdom according to righteousness. The next verse, verse seven, tells us the same thing. It says,

41:44
Speaking of the King of Kings, quote, thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness. This text tells us just like we see of kings in ancient Egypt, that Yahweh is a lover of Ma'a or Tzedek. Now listen to what else it says in verse seven, quote, therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.
42:13
This verse is pretty mind-blowing because this verse is telling us that a kingship rite, r-i-t-e, was performed on Yahweh in heaven. That's what this verse is telling us. Right here in the Bible, the Bible is telling us that religious kingship rituals are performed in heaven. In this verse, we're told that in heaven, God anointed Yahweh with the quote,
42:42
oil of gladness. Now you may have already figured this out, but the God of the Old Testament, Yahweh, is the Christ of the New Testament. We've talked about this on the program before, but the title Christ is actually the Greek word Christos, which means anointed one. So the anointing of Yahweh in this verse is referring to an anointing rite that took place in the heavens before Christ was born on earth.
43:10
And this anointing was in preparation for his celestial kingship.
43:17
Now, we just learned from the Ugaritic literature that only the high God, El, had the power and authority to grant one of his sons the right to reign as a heavenly king. And we saw the same thing in our last episode in ancient Mesopotamia, where only the high God, On, had the power and authority to anoint one of his sons as a heavenly king. So when Psalm 45, verse seven, tells us the same thing,
43:47
anointed Yahweh, a heavenly king, in heaven when he anointed him with the oil of gladness, then it's pretty easy to see in this verse that God here refers to Christ's father, the high God, the King of the universe, God the Father. It's Christ's actual father who anoints Christ, a heavenly king, and grants him a
44:18
Several episodes back, I mentioned an Oxford-trained biblical scholar by the name of Margaret Barker, who's written over 20 books on the early beliefs of the ancient Israelites and early Christians. You can find her on our companion website, thea under Scholars. In one of her books, titled King of the Jews, she refers to an article written by Otto Eisfeldt, who was a German Protestant theologian.
44:48
pages 25 to 37 titled El and Yahweh. And Eisfeld points out in this article that there are early texts which clearly indicate that in ancient Israel, El, God the Father, and Yahweh were considered separate deities. On page 69 and 70 of the King of the Jews, Barker writes, quote,
45:13
Eisfeld pointed out many years ago that there is no rivalry in the Hebrew biblical texts between El and Yahweh, and that a group of early texts survive, many in Genesis, where El is clearly a separate deity from Yahweh. In the Exilic period, El and Yahweh coalesced. Now, the Exilic period refers to the time of the Babylonian exile, which was around 600 BC.

45:41
Based off of the textual evidence in Eisfeld's research, Barker is arguing that previous to 600 BC, El and Yahweh were identified as separate gods, but that around the time of the Babylonian exile, the time of Josiah, this doctrine was corrupted, and El and Yahweh were merged into one God, which is what I would also argue too, but not just because of what Eisfeld found.
46:08
but because what I've found across the ancient Near East where the high God and the son are always separate gods, they are literally father and son. Barker continues, quote, "'The religion of Israel in the time of the kings distinguished between El and Yahweh, and this distinction accounts for the two figures in Daniel's vision. This distinction between El and Yahweh is important for understanding John's gospel."
46:38
since it was Yahweh, the son of El Elyon, who became the Davidic priest king and was therefore incarnate as the king of the Jews. In that quote, Barker, like I've been arguing, is pointing out that the distinction between father and son is very important to a correct understanding of Christ's kingship. All right, back to Psalm 45.
47:07
which scholars believe was written around 1000 BC. So note that this is 400 years before the Babylonian exile when Barker argues that the doctrine of El and Yahweh as father and son, as two separate beings was corrupted. In Psalm 45, the end of verse seven and the beginning of verse eight, the distinction between El and Yahweh, father and son is pretty darn unambiguous. Now listen closely to what we learn about Yahweh's heavenly anointing.
47:37
quote, therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh. That's pretty great stuff. Interestingly, these very verses, Psalm 45 verses six and seven, which I just read, are quoted in the New Testament in Hebrews.
48:05
In Hebrews chapter one, you can find them quoted in verses eight and nine. In Hebrews chapter one, we get more information about Christ's anointing, all of which completely corroborates what I just argued. In Hebrews chapter one, verse two, we're explicitly told that it was God the Father who, quote, appointed his son a king. The King James Version actually uses the word appointed.
48:34
This is important because we established in this and the last episode that only the high god has the power, authority, and privilege to appoint heavenly kings. Heavenly kings are always and only appointed by the high god himself. Hebrews chapter 1 verse 2 reads, quote, God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son whom he hath appointed heir.
49:04
There you have it, quote, "'Whom he, God the Father, hath appointed heir.'" In one sentence, we see the high God, God the Father, doing the same thing. We see the high God, the Father of the Gods in ancient Mesopotamia, and the high God, the Father of the Gods in ancient Canaan, doing, appointing their offspring heavenly kings and granting them an inheritance. And
49:32

what has God appointed Christ heir to? Well, let's keep reading. Quote, God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son whom he hath appointed heir of all things. What did he appoint him heir to? He appointed him heir to all things. That's quite a bit. That's quite a large kingdom. The use of the word heir, H-E-I-R in this passage is really important because
50:01
Why is Christ an heir? Why is he inheriting all that his father hath? Well, because as we've seen in the ancient world, this is the reward that's bestowed upon those who conquered the sea serpent, which is something we're told Christ did, like I mentioned in Psalm 89, but which is also reflected in scriptures like Psalm 92 verse 15, which says, quote, the Lord is upright and there is no
50:31
wickedness in him. To have no wickedness in him is a clear statement that he won his battle against Rahab and because of that he was worthy to inherit all things a kingdom. In Hebrews chapter 1 verse 4 Paul links Christ's inheritance, get this to a better name. As we discussed in the last episode
50:59
The theology taught within the ancient tradition teaches that no one can escape the battle against Rahab unchanged. No matter what, our nature will change. And if we come off conqueror, the high God will give us a new name that will reflect our new spiritually powerful nature. In verse four, Paul tells us that this is exactly what happened to Christ. I'm going to start in verse three where Paul describes how Christ's nature.
51:29
now matches that of his father. After which, Paul tells us that Christ sits down, which refers to his enthronement next to his father, the majesty on high, the king on high. So listen closely so you don't miss the reference to Christ's name change. Speaking of Christ, verses three and four read, quote, who, and this is talking about Christ,
51:57
being the brightness of his glory, and his here refers to his father's, his father's glory, and the express image of his person. So in terms of corporeality, note how Paul uses the word person here, the express image of his person. Paul wants us to understand that Christ's nature now exactly matches that of his father's.
52:26
and also that one's nature is reflected in their countenance, in the glory that radiates from their body. Let me read it again. Speaking of how Christ resembles his father in every way, verse 3 reads, quote, who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person. Having conquered Rahab, Christ's nature now matched his father's.
52:57
The verse continues, quote, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. Having conquered Rahab, Christ takes his seat as a heavenly king on a throne next to his fathers. Now listen to what verse four says, quote, being made so much better than the angels,
53:27
as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. Okay, so did you catch the reference to Christ's name change? Yeah, it's not too hard, is it? In this verse, Paul tells us,

quote, he, Christ, hath by inheritance, the inheritance that comes from conquering Rahab, obtained a more excellent name.
53:54
We know from the New Testament that after Christ completed this life, where he clearly conquered Rahab, he ascended to heaven. And we know from the testaments of Matthew, Mark and Luke that three days after his death on the cross, Christ rose from the dead in a resurrected, incorruptible body of flesh and bone. And we talked about this in episode number 44, Who is God, a corporeal being. It was in that body.
54:24
that Christ ascended to his father. In these verses, Paul tells us that Christ's nature had changed. He now matched the nature of his father in every way. Paul also tells us in these verses that Christ was then enthroned as a heavenly king. And then Paul tells us that after he was enthroned, he was given a new name, a quote, more excellent name. A name that
54:51
perfectly reflected his more excellent nature. All of this, everything in here is perfectly in keeping with the kingship theology taught within the ancient tradition. The apostle Paul knew this heavenly kingship theology. In these verses to the Hebrews, Paul doesn't tell us who gave Christ his quote more excellent name.
55:21
But if we had to guess based on what we learned two episodes ago in ancient Mesopotamia, we would have to guess that it was Christ's father, God the father, that gave him his new quote, more excellent name. And that's because we learned in ancient Mesopotamia that only the high god Anu, the father of the gods, had the sole authority to name what had been created by his hand. And we saw this when the high god Anu gave Marduk the new name.
55:51
Osser Louis after he conquered Tiamat. Although Paul doesn't tell us here in this epistle to the Hebrews, who gave Christ his new, more excellent name, he actually does tell us in the epistle that he wrote to the Philippians. In Philippians chapter two, verse nine, Paul tells us the following, quote, "'Wherefore God,' and Paul is talking about God the Father here,
56:20
highly exalted him. Paul's talking about God the Father having exalted Christ and given him a name which is above every name. So right here, Paul explicitly tells us that in heaven it was God, God the Father, who gave Christ his new more excellent name. And we of course are not at all surprised by this because this is
56:50
taught across the ancient Near East, the ancient tradition. In Hebrews chapter two, Paul goes on to tell us that in heaven, God the Father coronated Christ with glory and honor. Verse seven reads, quote, "'Thou,' speaking of God the Father, "'crownedest Him Christ with glory and honor "'and did set Him over the works of thy hands.'"
57:20
Right here in Hebrews, right here in Hebrews in chapter two is an astounding account. It is an account of God, God the Father, coronating his son, Christ, a heavenly King in heaven. That's what we're reading. And note in this verse how God, quote, sets Christ over the works of his hands. This is God the Father giving Christ royal dominion. Verse eight continues, quote,

57:49
thou, speaking of God the Father, has put all things in subjection under his feet." Here we see that God gives Christ supreme authority to rule over all things, but also note in this passage how God puts quote, all things in subjection under Christ's feet. Note the connection between subjection and feet like we've talked about on the program.
58:14
These verses definitely speak of Christ being given power, authority, and dominion by his father to reign as a celestial monarch. Now, let's not miss the larger picture that Paul's painting here. Paul's basically telling us the same thing that the ancient Egyptians, ancient Mesopotamians, and ancient Canaanites have been telling us. That there is some sort of formal kingship enthronement right.
58:44
that takes place in the heavens, and that Christ received those rights before and after His ascension. That's pretty amazing. At this point, I want to stress from what we've seen so far in the Psalms, and there are loads of references in the Psalms, especially in the Royal Psalms that identify Yahweh as a king, and what we've read in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that it's pretty clear that
59:13
is at the very heart of the Christian tradition. And not only that, what the early Christians taught about heavenly kingship did not differ, at least in terms of the stubborn bits from what the ancients taught. I hope you understand how utterly astounding this is and also quite perplexing
59:43
the theology of kingship that runs through Christianity, so similar to the theology of kingship that runs through the ancient Egyptian religion and the ancient Mesopotamian religion and the ancient Canaanite religion. Because when we look at just the stubborn bits, we see that they are all teaching one theology, one. And this is just astounding.
01:00:13
I of course on this program argue that all of these religions originated from a single source, an original pure religious tradition, which we refer to on this program as the ancient tradition. In each one of these traditions, God is described as a regal, glorious king, be he Nasut, Malchoo, or Melek, who reigns in righteousness and truth.
01:00:42
over an everlasting kingdom.
01:00:47
To close out today's episode, I want to leave you with the words of the Old Testament prophet, Isaiah, found in Isaiah chapter 6 verses 1 to 5, who saw God with his own eyes, raining in the highest heaven in majesty and glory. These are the words of Isaiah.
01:01:17
and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims, and one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him. Then said I, woe is me, for mine eyes have seen the king. That's it for me.
01:01:47
I'm Jack Logan.

01:01:53
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Episode #48 - Ahura Mazda

https://theancienttradition.com/48-ahura-mazda/

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. What we have a lot to cover today, so I'm going to jump right in. For the past three episodes, we've been examining the textual and mythological evidence found in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt and among the ancient Canaanites and Hebrews that answer the question, who is God? We found in these episodes and in previous episodes.
00:55
that in each of these ancient civilizations, God is universally described as a corporeal being who sits on a throne in the very center, the sacred center of a celestial kingdom, right where the four quarters of the cosmos meet, where he reigns as a celestial monarch, a celestial king over his cosmic kingdom, which is why some kings in ancient Mesopotamia like Naram-sim, who reigned from
01:22
2245 to 2218 BC was given the prestigious title, King of the Four Quarters or King of the Four Corners of the Universe. See, in the ancient world, one very, very important guiding principle governed everything that the ancients did. And what was this guiding principle? Well, it's summed up in the Hermetic Addage, as above, so below. All right, so what does that mean?
01:53
Well, the ancients tell us that the order that governed the heavens, like the political order of kingship or the religious order of priesthood, was revealed to them and that they were then charged to replicate that heavenly order on earth. It's incredibly important that we wrap our brains around this guiding principle. It's going to illuminate everything else we talk about on the podcast from here on out. See,
02:22
Pretty much everything the ancients did was an attempt to replicate right here on Earth the social, political, and religious order that exists in heaven. The ancients, by establishing earthly kings and by building earthly palace temples, were trying to create a mirror image, a carbon copy, or an exact replica of what they saw in heaven.

02:51
And what did they see in heaven? Well, the ancients, like we've seen in the ancient Egyptian pyramid texts and the ancient Mesopotamian enuma alish and the ancient Canaanite Ugaritic texts. And like we saw in our last episode in the biblical canon in Isaiah chapter six, tell us that they saw God seated on a throne in a celestial palace temple, reigning as a celestial king.
03:19
And we see the same thing in the book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch. In that text, Enoch, who's a human being, is escorted into heaven by two angelic beings. And what does he see? What does he see? In chapter 20, Enoch says, quote, those men, and he's talking about these angelic beings. And notice how he refers to these angelic beings as men. Took me and led me with them.
03:48
and showed me the Lord sitting far away on his highest throne.
03:57
In chapter 21, Enoch describes what else he sees and what does he see? Well, he sees angels circling God's throne, like a circum-punked. This is what he says, quote, the cherubs and seraphs, which are ranks of angels, surrounding about the throne, the seraphs do not leave. The seraphs do not leave.
04:26
but remain before the Lord's face, doing his will and obscure his throne, humming with gentle voices before the Lord's face, Holy, Holy, Holy. This is what the ancient texts are telling us, that God literally reigns in the heavens as a celestial monarch. And like we've discussed on the podcast, we read in the ancient Sumerian king
04:55
dated to at least as early as 2112 BC, that quote, kingship descended from heaven, where it was then established in Eridu. In this text, the ancient Sumerians are telling us that the entire notion of kingship as a form of political government came directly from heaven, where it was then established as a form of government on earth. As above,
05:25
so below. And when we understand this, it makes perfect sense that the ancient Sumerian kings like Naram Sim are given titles like king of the four quarters or king of the four corners of the universe because they were meant in fact to reign as earthly kings who mirrored the reign of God in heaven.
05:49
The earthly king was meant in every way to be a reflection of the high god who reigned as a celestial monarch in heaven. If you're new to the program and you don't know why kings are given the title King of the Four Quarters, then check out episode number seven, The King of the Four Corners. And also check out episode number 39, Symbols of the Sacred Center, The Circumpunked and the Bindu. All right.
06:18
With that background, we're gonna take a look at how God is described among the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Hindu, the Norse, the Celts, the Aztecs, the Maya, the Japanese, the Vietnamese, and the Chinese. The question we're gonna ask is, did these peoples describe

or depict God as a king too? And if they did, did what they teach also correspond with the overarching theology of celestial kingship, the stubborn bits that we've been.
06:48
talking about so far in the program. If so, how so? And if not, how did they describe God then? I wanna start today with the Persians, the religion of Zoroastrianism. To this point in the podcast, we haven't really talked that much about Zoroastrianism, but we should, because as you're gonna see in just a second, so much of Zoroastrianism corresponds with the theology taught.
07:16
within the ancient tradition. If you aren't familiar with Zoroastrianism, Zoroastrianism was the ancient pre-Islamic religion of Persia, which is known today as Iran. The origin of Zoroastrianism is actually pretty interesting. It all started around the 6th century BC when a 30-year-old religious sage by the name of
07:45
fetching water for a sacred ritual. Some actually say he was out taking a ritual bath. And in the middle of doing this, a glorious shining being whom we might refer to today as an angel by the name of Vohumana, which means something along the lines of one of good mind, appeared before him. Just like we saw with Enoch when the two angels came and escorted Enoch to
08:14
Vohumana, an angelic-like figure appearing to Zoroaster. And what did this angelic being do? He escorted him into the heavens, into the presence of God, the creator, the supreme being of the universe, known in Zoroastrianism by the name of Ahura Mazda. And what happened while Zoroaster was in the presence of God? We're told that God
08:44
taught him. We're told that God revealed to Zoroaster the quote, good religion, which would later be known as Zoroastrianism. And this is important because like most of the ancients, Zoroaster claims that it was God who revealed the religious tradition to him. This is similar to what we learned in episode number one, when the Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales, Australia taught that God, Bayami, taught them.
09:12
in the very beginning, in the dream time, the religious doctrines and initiation rights and dances. If what Zoroaster is telling us is true, then this means that God revealed a religious tradition, which we refer to on this program as the ancient tradition, to human beings not only in the very beginning, but also later. In this case around 600 BC.
09:40
And the prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam, who lived a thousand years after Zoroaster, tells us the same thing, that an angel, the angel Gabriel, appeared to him and revealed to him the words of God. Those of you familiar with Islam know that Muhammad also ascended to heaven, known as the Mirage, the night journey, where he spoke with God.
10:11
The notion that God revealed the ancient tradition anew, perhaps several times over the millennia, is actually a really important one, and we're definitely gonna revisit it down the line. One of the things that's interesting about Zoroaster's account, written in Zoroastrian scripture, is that God taught Zoroaster in a question and answer format, where Zoroaster asks God a question, and then God gives him the answer.

10:39
And in these sessions, God speaks to Zoroaster like a man, speaks to another man. For example, Zoroaster asks Ahura Mazda, quote, how is it possible to seek maintenance and prosperity of the body without injury to the soul? To which God, Ahura Mazda, answers, quote, commit no slander, form no covetous desire, indulge in no wrathfulness.
11:07
suffer no anxiety, commit no lustfulness, and practice no sloth. Now before I tell you more about a Hura Mazda, I need to tell you a little bit more about this glorious being who appeared to Zoroaster. See the angelic being who appeared to him, Vohomana, was one of what Zoroastrians refer to as the Amishaspenta, which literally means an immortal who is holy.
11:37
The Amishas Spenta are a group of seven divine beings or holy immortals who are believed to emanate from God. These beings are believed to help God govern the world. They represent the highest spiritual beings in Zoroastrian theology. According to Zoroastrian scripture, these seven beings are associated with divine characteristics and they're each associated with a dimension of the physical creation.
12:06
in 45.1 of the Yasna of the Gathas and these are the Zoroastrian scriptures. Uhura Mazda or God is described as the father of the seven Amishas Penta. I bring this up here to draw your attention to the number seven and seven holy beings who are associated with God in Zoroastrianism. The Yamiyad Yashdha, Yashdha 19, a hymn
12:36
says the following about these seven celestial beings. Section three reads, and this is the James Darmistetter translation, quote, "'The Amishas spentas, the bright ones, whose looks perform their wish, tall, quickly coming to do, strong, lordly, who are undecaying and holy, who are all seven of one thought, who are all seven of one speech, who are all seven of one deed, whose father and commander is the same,
13:05
namely the maker Ahura Mazda, whose ways are shining, who are the makers and governors and shapers and overseers, the keepers and preservers of these creations of Ahura Mazda. The last line there about these seven is pretty intriguing because it tells us that these seven holy immortals are the ones who keep and preserve Ahura Mazda's creations.
13:33
We'll see this aspect of the seven come up again and again. So keep all of this in your back pocket because you'll see down the line that these seven angelic beings are very important and they show up all over in the ancient world, which means that they represent yet another key stubborn bit. And I wanted to flag them for you here while we're talking about it so you can kind of keep it on your radar. The focus in this episode is on Uhura Mazda God.
14:02
the Zoroastrian supreme being. Our question is whether or not Zoroastrians also believe Ahura Mazda, God, reigns as a celestial king. And yes, they do. In the Avista, which is considered the central religious scripture in Zoroastrianism and which contains the teachings of Zoroaster himself.
14:30

we find a description of Ahura Mazda in a section of the Avista called the Cajor de Avista which is a collection of short prayers. While I'm reading take note in this prayer how God is described not only as a king but also as a glorious radiant being. This is the Kenga translation and this is Zoroaster speaking. Quote, in the name of God
14:58
I praise and invoke the creator Ahura Mazda, the radiant, glorious, omniscient, maker, Lord of lords, King over all kings. Watchful, creator of the universe, giver of daily bread, powerful, strong, eternal, forgiver, merciful, loving, mighty, wise, holy, and nourisher.
15:28
who is the Lord and the producer, the creator of the whole world, be on the increase. In this prayer, Ohura Mazda is clearly described as a king. There are actually many, many verses in Zoroastrian scripture that attest to Ohura Mazda's kingly glory, kingly majesty, and his kingdom. The text here calls him the, quote, king over all kings.
15:58
And of course, the text also refers to his majesty, which is a royal, kingly description. Also in the Avista, in the section known as the Yasna, which contains hymns and rituals, the Yasna is actually considered the oldest and most sacred part of the Avista. We read the following in 51.1. Listen to how it speaks of a government in heaven. And also listen to what that government is established on.
16:26
The scripture reads, and this is the DJIrani translation, quote, a righteous government is of all the most to be wished for, bearing of blessing and good fortune in the highest. Guided by the law of truth, supported by dedication and zeal, it blossoms into the best of order, a kingdom of heaven. I actually really love this Zoroastrian scripture.
16:55
because it speaks to so many of the stubborn bits we've seen on the program. Here, Zoroaster tells us that a government exists in the heavens, but that it isn't any old government. No, it's a quote, righteous government, which is guided by a law. And what is this law? The text tells us that the government in heaven is guided by quote, the law.
17:25
truth. I love that the law of truth. Remember that the ancient Egyptian word for the cosmic law ma'at means righteousness, justice, and truth. And the ancient Hebrew cosmic law tzedek also means righteousness, justice, and truth. And the ancient Vedic cosmic law arita means order, rule, and truth. So
17:51
Here when Zoroaster tells us that God's government is a righteous government guided by the law of truth, we're being taught the same thing yet again. That God reigns as a king and his reign is established on a law. In Zoroastrianism, the cosmic law is called the Asha. A-S-H-A.
18:19
Listen to how Wikipedia describes this law. Quote, Asia is a Zoroastrian concept with a complex and highly nuanced range of meaning. Now listen to this. It is commonly summarized in accord with its contextual implications of truth, right, and then Wikipedia actually has written here, or righteousness, order and right working. It.
18:48

meaning Asha, is of cardinal importance in Zoroastrian theology and doctrine. So just like we see with Maat, Tzedek, Rita, and the Tao, here we see that Zoroastrians are teaching the same thing. They tell us a law, a law that conceptually embodies justice, truth, and righteousness is the foundation upon which Ahura Mazda's, quote, righteous government is built.
19:16
Mary Boyce, who's a scholar who's written on Zoroaster and the history of Zoroastrianism, actually refers to Aisha as a quote, cosmic force, which is what we've learned from the other ancient civilizations, a cosmic force imbued with truth and righteousness. And what's even more interesting is that Zoroaster tells us, like the rest of the ancients tell us,
19:44
that it's by abiding by this law that order is established in the heavens. The text tells us that when one commits to the law of truth with quote, zeal, then order blossoms. The text states, quote, a righteous government is all of the most to be wished for, guided by the law of truth.
20:13
which is Asha, supported by dedication and zeal. Dedication and zeal to the law is the same as upholding the law or upholding Ma'at. Among Zoroastrians, this would be upholding Asha. It, referring to the law, blossoms into the best of order.
20:36
This is remarkable. Right here, Zoroaster is telling us, just like we see across the ancient world, that it's only by abiding by Asha, the cosmic law, that order, any kind of order, can be established in the cosmos or on Earth. Order only, quote, blossoms when the law has been upheld. And when order blossoms, what is produced?
21:05
If you're a long time listener to the program, you should know the answer to this. You should know what order produces. But in case you can't remember, Zoroaster tells us in the remainder of this passage, it says, quote, it blossoms into the best of order, a kingdom of heaven. That's right. When one abides by Asia, the cosmic law, one is given the power to produce order.
21:35
right down to the ordering of the natural elements. He's given the power to create. And what does this passage tell us Ahura Mazda creates? The passage tell us Ahura Mazda creates a kingdom, a kingdom of heaven. The Avista 45.1 tells us Ahura Mazda is a creator. He's the great producer, the creator of the world. He creates a kingdom.
22:04
a kingdom over which he has the right to reign as a king. It's the same stuff. Now, what's more, Zoroaster teaches that this cosmic law, Asha, affects the motion of the planets and the cycle of the seasons. In the Yasna 48.6, Zoroaster tells us that it's only by upholding Asha that plants can grow.
22:34
And in the Yasna 44.3, Zoroaster tells us that it's only by upholding Asia that the sun, the moon, and the stars are fixed in their orbits. That's astounding. If you're truly listening to the theology that's being taught here, it's absolutely incredible. Here, Zoroaster is teaching, like we discussed in episode number 28, that a single grand unifying law governs
23:04

every single thing in the cosmos. Asia is the cosmic law of everything. Not a single blade of grass can grow without it. That's what the ancients are teaching us. Here Zoroaster is teaching the same theology that the ancient Egyptians, Hebrews, Hindu, and Chinese Taoists taught. That there is only one way.
23:34
produce life, order, and creation. And what is that? It's only by abiding by Asha, the cosmic law of justice, truth, and righteousness. When we stick to the stubborn bits, we see that Zoroaster is teaching the same theology we see taught across the ancient world. In the rest of the Yasna, in
24:03
everything that he can for the rest of his life to help order blossom. He says quote it he's referring to the cosmic law blossoms into the best of order a kingdom of heaven to affect this I and again this is Zoroaster speaking shall work now and ever more
24:29
As Ahura Mazda's servant, Zoroaster plans to spend the rest of his life working alongside God to establish order. In this text, right after this, Zoroaster does something really interesting. He asks God that he too be granted quote, thy rule of righteousness. Listen to Zoroaster's petition.
24:59
Grant thou to me, O Mazda, thy rule of righteousness, which from the beginning has been thine.
25:11
What Zoroaster asks here is incredibly interesting. The context of the passage is the order established in Uhura Mazda's heavenly kingdom. And Zoroaster says, "'Grant thou me, O Mazda, thy rule of righteousness.' To rule is to govern, to govern others. We've established this on the program. So here Zoroaster is petitioning God that he too be granted the power to quote rule.
25:41
And Zoroaster also seems to understand the theology that this right to rule is directly linked to righteousness. In fact, he calls it the rule of righteousness. In Zoroastrianism, Asha is sometimes referred to as the inexorable law of righteousness. But what's even more interesting to me is that Zoroaster states, quote,
26:09
Grant thou to me, O Mazda, thy rule of righteousness, which from the beginning has been thine." Zoroaster's statement, which from the beginning has been thine, is so intriguing because this is what the ancient Egyptians and ancient Sumerians taught. Remember the Sumerian King list that we just talked about? Well, in there, the Sumerians tell us that kingship came down from heaven.
26:39
that God gave certain men the right to rule as kings. They tell us that from the very beginning, God established kingship in Eridu. So here when Zoroaster petitions God for the right to rule, and he asks for this within the context of God establishing a heavenly kingdom, it sounds very much like Zoroaster understood heavenly and earthly kingship theology.
27:07
He definitely understood that God had the power to grant rulership, to grant the rule of righteousness to others. There's an inscription on a cliff near Persepolis, which is located today in southern Iran. It's near the summer palace of the fourth Persian king of the Achaemenid

Empire, Darius I, also known as Darius the Great, who reigned from 522 to 486 BC. And it states that it was a Hura Mazda
27:36
who made Darius a king. The inscription reads, quote, a great God is a Huramazda who created this earth, who created yonder sky, who created man, who created happiness for man, who made Darius king. Interestingly, Achaemenid kings actually used the title king of kings.
28:06
which we learned earlier in the Avista was a title given to Ahura Mazda. In that text, Ahura Mazda was given the title King over all kings. When the earthly king, like we see here, takes on the same title as the heavenly king, then we have a clear case of as above, so below. Every single one of the 14 kings of the Achaemenid dynasty, which
28:33
spanned from 559 BC to 327 BC used the epitaph, King of Kings. And the very first king of the Achaemenid dynasty, Cyrus the Great, not only used the epitaph, King of Kings, he also used the epitaph, King of the Four Corners of the World. In Persian, the word for King of Kings is Shah and Shah.
29:03
In Persian, the word for king is Shah, the Shah. So Shah and Shah means king of kings. This title was used by the emperor of Iran right up to Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi, who reigned as the last Shah and Shah of Iran between 1941 and 1979 AD, when the Iranian monarchy was abolished after the 1979 Iranian Revolution.
29:32
For our purposes, this royal inscription to Darius the Great, which asserts that Hora Mazda appointed him king, is important because it emphasizes Hora Mazda as the source of kingship on earth and the source of cosmic order in the universe, just as we've seen across the ancient world. I should stop here and take a second and talk about the history of the Persian Empire.
29:59
and this amazing ancient city of Persepolis. The Persians, or more accurately called Indo-Iranians, are part of a larger group of peoples known as Indo-Europeans. This group stretches all the way back to the early beginnings of human history. In fact, archeologists have found evidence of Indo-European peoples, whom they call Proto-Iranians, on the Iranian plateau,
30:27
that date as far back as 4000 BC. The migration of Proto-Iranian peoples into the Iranian plateau laid the groundwork for the development of the Persian civilization, which would go on to shape much of the ancient world. And over time, these early Proto-Iranian peoples evolved culturally and linguistically, eventually giving rise to the distinctive Persian culture and language that we recognize today.
30:56
for thousands of years. The people who lived on the Iranian Plateau lived in these kin-based groups. And then around 1000 BC, there were a lot of environmental and social and political factors that pushed these groups to form tribal alliances. During the seventh century BC, the King, King Syaxares of the Medes, a tribe of Indo-Iranian descent,
31:24

who inhabited the northwestern part of the Iranian plateau consolidated a number of Indo-Iranian tribes into a formidable alliance. The alliance was so formidable in fact that they eventually allied themselves with the Babylonians and other regional powers to challenge the domination of the Assyrian empire, which they successfully did. Around this time, another group of Indo-Iranian peoples
31:54
were living in the southern part of the Iranian plateau, known as the Persians, and they started to form their own alliances. There was a man there by the name of Cyrus, who we know today as Cyrus the Great, who was exceptionally skilled at uniting people, and he united a number of the scattered Persian tribes into a single powerful alliance. His alliance was so powerful that under his direction, the Persians conquered Babylon.
32:21
which ended the Babylonian captivity of the Jews and also under his direction, the Persians defeated the Medes, the proto-Iranian alliance that was to the north. And after they conquered the Medes in 550 BC, Cyrus established the Persian Empire and he founded the Persian dynasty, which is known today as the Achaemenid dynasty, which was named after one of Cyrus's ancestors.
32:52
In terms of size, Cyrus's empire was the largest empire in the world. It was the largest empire that had been created up to that point in history. Today, we call what Cyrus created an empire, but the Persian people themselves didn't, didn't call it that. They actually referred to this intercontinental empire as Kshasa, which literally means in Persian, the kingdom.
33:23
So why did Cyrus establish kingship among the Persians? And why did the Persians refer to their state as a kingdom? Well, scholars don't know the exact answer to this, but they offer up a couple of convincing arguments. The first is that Persia or modern-day Iran, because it was located geographically just east of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, was highly influenced.
33:52
by way of cultural and political ties by its near Eastern neighbors, where kingship and kingship theology was well established, which we've discussed heavily on this program. Margaret Kuhl-Root, Professor Emerita of Near Eastern Art and Archaeology at the University of Michigan, and an expert on the Achaemenid Empire, wrote this transformative book in the field titled, The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art.
34:21
On page 40 and 41 of this book, she writes, quote, the first kings of the Achaemenid empire fell heir to a world which was very conscious of its past. And she's speaking of Egypt and Mesopotamia and civilizations in the ancient Near East. To the vestiges of glorious empires and powerful state religions, in many ways the Persian empire represents a culmination of all that had gone before.
34:51
a final packaging for posterity of the pre-Hellenistic near Eastern historical and cultural experience. The Persians were themselves a product of the East. What Ruth is basically arguing here, and she provides lots and lots of evidence in her book to back this up, is that the Persian Empire was in many ways a conglomeration of ideas cold.

35:20
from across the ancient Near East, from the Egyptians and Mesopotamians and from the Indo-Europeans who established Hinduism. In the book, she shows how so much of the iconography, like bas-reliefs and sculptures and architectural details that are found in the ancient cities, like the royal city of Persepolis, were derivative of iconography that was found in Egypt and ancient Mesopotamia.
35:48
And she convincingly shows that the ancient Near East served up the prototypes, the iconographic prototypes, which the Persians then modified. And then sometimes they even added their own inventions to it. All right, so why am I pointing this out? Well, because this helps explain why we find kingship and kingship theology showing up in Persia. Yet find that the Persians expression of that theology is not always an exact replica of one of its neighbors.
36:18
like say Egypt, but yet it's still very similar. And I'll give you an example of this in just a minute. Other times we find that the Persians do exactly replicate their neighbors. Like when Achaemenid kings use the epitaph, King of Kings or King of the Four Corners of the World, which were exact epitaphs that were used by ancient Mesopotamian kings, like we mentioned, Naram-Sin.
36:45
So whether or not the Persians use an exact ancient Near Eastern prototype or some variation of it, what we see is that like their ancient Near Eastern neighbors, Persians too stressed the importance of kingship, kingship rights, and the relationship between the king, those rights, and God, in this case, Uhura Mazda. And there's a second important reason why we see kingship in Persia.
37:14
which is also intimately tied to the presence of kingship in the ancient Near East, is because Cyrus the Great was actually born into a royal family in Persia. Cyrus was the son of Cambyses I, who reigned as the king of Anshan, an Elamite city located in southwestern Iran between 580 and 559 BC. In other words, Cyrus was the son of a king.
37:44
The Greek historian Herodotus tells us that the king of Anshan, Cyrus's father, King Cambyses, reigned under King Estyagis, who ruled as the king of Medea, the Medes. Anshan wasn't a large or significant city, so this meant that Cyrus's father didn't reign over an empire. He was really more of a vassal king. In 559 BC.
38:10
Cyrus the Great succeeded his father as the king of Anshan when it was still under the control of the Medes. All of this means that Cyrus was intimately familiar with the institution of kingship. So it's no surprise that he instituted kingship as the form of government in the kingdom of Persia. In 559 BC, so this is nine years after Cyrus succeeded his father as the king of Anshan,
38:38
Cyrus consolidated the Southern Persian tribes into a powerful alliance, like I mentioned. And he overthrew the Medes and he established the Persian Empire, over which he reigned as the first Shah on Shaw, or King of Kings. And I mention the dates here because if the ancient record's correct, Zoroaster was born in 624 BC.

39:06
And King Cyrus was believed to have been born sometime between 590 and 580 BC, which would make Zoroaster around 35 or 45 years older than Cyrus. Zoroaster's ascent into the presence of Ahura Mazda would have happened right around the time of Cyrus's birth. This means that Zoroastrianism had around 45 years to take root before the rise of the Persian Empire.
39:35
The two essentially rose together. Now, some scholars don't think 45 years was enough time for Zoroastrianism to take root to the level that it did before the rise of the Persian Empire. So they proposed that Zoroaster lived much earlier, like sometime between 1500 and 1000 BC. Either way, the ancient record confirms that Zoroastrianism was the religion of the Persian Empire. We know, for example,
40:03
As I mentioned earlier that there are royal inscriptions of Darius the first in Persepolis that attest that it was Ahura Mazda who made him king. This is kingship theology. In Persepolis, we also find several iconographic representations of Darius alongside Ahura Mazda, which I'm gonna talk about in just a second. It's inscriptions and descriptions like this that affirm.
40:31
that kingship theology was alive and well in Persia. When we consider all three of these factors, ancient Near Eastern influence, Cyrus's royal lineage, and the tenets of Zoroastrianism, it's easy to see why kingship took hold in Persia. For the purposes of this podcast, it's also really important to note that
40:57
each one of these factors is tied to or rooted in the kingship theology that was taught by the ancients in the ancient tradition. One of the things that's remarkable about Cyrus's reign is that Cyrus wasn't interested in ruling a single territory. He wanted to establish a kingdom. He sought to integrate conquered peoples into a system of governance that actually legitimized
41:26
of kings. If Cyrus truly understood kingship theology, which I argue that he did, given his royal heritage and the prevalence of kingship theology in the ancient Near East and in Zoroastrianism, then it's conceivable that this very theology motivated him to establish an earthly kingdom. In fact, I think that
41:56
so, so much more about kingship theology than any scholar or theologian has ever thought. And why do I think this? Well, I think this because I came across a couple of absolutely jaw-dropping scriptures found in of all places, the Hebrew Bible in the book of Isaiah, verses that I'm still trying to wrap my brain around.
42:26
in terms of kingship theology, these verses are astounding. Now, before I read these verses, I wanna point out that Christ loved the Book of Isaiah. He frequently alluded to or even directly quoted from it, making it, right alongside with the Psalms, one of the Old Testament books that he cited the most. So from this, it's evident that Christ regarded Isaiah's writings as both authoritative and true.
42:55

With that, let's take a look at the astounding things Isaiah wrote about Cyrus the Great in Isaiah chapters 44 and 45. In chapter 44, verse 28, the Lord, and the Lord hears Jehovah, is speaking. He says the following of the Persian King Cyrus, and this is the King James Version. Quote, that saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd,
43:25
and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built and to the temple thy foundation shall be laid." This is remarkable. Here, Jehovah tells us that the Persian King Cyrus is his, quote, shepherd. A shepherd who, quote, shall perform all my pleasure.
43:53
What Jehovah's is telling us here is pretty astounding because he's telling us that the Persian king, the Persian King Cyrus was acting under his Jehovah's direction when he conquered Babylon in 539 BC. And what did King Cyrus do after Babylon fell? Well, he issued an edict that permitted the Jews to return to their homeland. And what's more,
44:22
Cyrus provided financial and material support so that the temple in Jerusalem, which the Babylonians destroyed in 586 BC, could be rebuilt. In fact, in Ezra chapter 1 verse 2, Cyrus tells us that Jehovah actually charged him to rebuild the temple. Verse 2 reads, quote, Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, the Lord God of heaven,
44:51
hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him a house out Jerusalem." That's a remarkable statement. But what's even more remarkable is what it says in Isaiah chapter 45. Listen very closely to what the Lord Jehovah says in verse one. It's amazing. Verse one reads,
45:21
quote, thus saith the Lord to his anointed to Cyrus whose right hand I have holden. Whoa! What? What did the God of the Old Testament, Jehovah, just say? Did he just say that Cyrus, the king of Persia, was one of his anointed? Let's read that again. Verse 1 says, quote,
45:49
Thus saith the LORD to his anointed to Cyrus. Yes, that is exactly what Jehovah just said. He just said that Cyrus, the king of Persia, was one of his quote, anointed. Wow, a foreigner. The king of Persia was anointed by Jehovah?
46:16
The idea of this is so out there that of course there are a number of biblical commentators who try and walk back what Jehovah himself actually says here, arguing that Jehovah didn't really mean what he said, that Jehovah didn't actually anoint Cyrus. That anoint is just used here to express that Cyrus was working at Jehovah's behest to bring about the restoration of the Jews.
46:44
I strongly disagree with these commentators' assertions. I think these Bible commentators just don't understand kingship theology well enough to really see what's going on here. Because when we examine the verse closely, we clearly see that Jehovah is talking about the performance of an actual ritual here. Listen to the verse again.
47:11

Isaiah chapter 45 verse 1 reads, quote, Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus whose right hand I have holden. What Jehovah says here is absolutely breathtaking. He tells us that Cyrus is his anointed, which we've clearly established on this program
47:41
was a literal kingship ritual that was performed on human beings. The likes of ancient Egyptian pharaohs, the likes of Emma Duranki in ancient Mesopotamia, the likes of Enoch among the Hebrews and Azaneth an Egyptian who converted to Jehovah. And let's not forget that in Christianity,
48:11
Christ with the quote, oil of gladness as above so below. What really seals the deal that we're talking about an actual ritual in Isaiah chapter 45 verse 1 is Jehovah's astounding statement that he has held Cyrus's right hand. I actually double-checked the Hebrew to make sure that that's what the Hebrew actually said and yes.
48:40
That is what the Hebrew actually says. The literal translation given on Bible Hub is, quote, thus says Yahweh to his anointed, to Cyrus, who I have held right hand. In English, we would say, whose right hand I have held. This is astonishing. Number one, because for this to have taken place,
49:07
Jehovah had to have appeared to Cyrus, much like he did to Moses. That's an amazing thought. And number two, it's astonishing because Jehovah is telling us that when he appeared to Cyrus, he actually shook or held Cyrus' right hand. If we were talking about the corporeal nature of God here, I'd definitely point out that this verse indicates, once again, that God has an arm and a hand with which to shake.
49:37
But what I want to emphasize here is that what's taking place when Jehovah tells us that he held Cyrus's right hand is a religious ritual. We haven't talked about this on the podcast yet. We're going to in much greater detail when we get into ritual. But what's important for you to know is that in the ancient world the right hand was the hand that was used when one made an oath.
50:07
We actually see this still practiced today. When the president of the United States on inauguration day is asked to raise his right hand and swear an oath to uphold the constitution of the United States, that has a long ancient origin. So when Jehovah tells us that he has held Cyrus's right hand, this is a clear reference to a ritual gesture where
50:34
as astonishing as it may sound to our ears, the King of Persia, the King of Persia, Cyrus the Great, made an oath with Jehovah. All right, but what kind of oath? Well, based off of what we've discovered to this point on the program, we'd have to guess that it was an oath to uphold Asha, the cosmic law. Because remember,
51:03
one absolutely cannot rule as a heavenly king or an earthly king, which is patterned after the heavenly king, unless one perfectly upholds the cosmic law. It all goes together.
51:23

Again, from what we've seen in the ancient world, it's pretty darn clear that what's taking place in this verse is a ritual, a kingship ritual. Jehovah knows Cyrus by name. Jehovah anoints Cyrus, a king, one of his vassal kings, and Jehovah establishes an oath with him. These verses attest that the God of the Old Testament, Jehovah,
51:52
had a strong personal relationship with the King of Persia, Cyrus the Great, a relationship that was consummated by a kingship ritual.
52:06
astonishing. So what are we to do with this information? Either what the Bible says here is true or it's not. If it's not true then there's a problem with the veracity or at least the veracity of some parts of the Bible. If it is true then this indicates that Cyrus the Great knew a whole heck of a lot more.
52:35
about kingship theology and its deeply religious underpinnings than any of us ever knew. And why? Because he'd experienced the realization of that theology himself. You know, my question is, okay, so how did this inform Cyrus's reign and the establishment of the Persian Empire?
53:01
all of the theology that we have found in Zoroastrianism? Well, we'll probably never know, but we find quite a bit of archaeological evidence in Iran that indicates that kingship theology was alive and well in Zoroastrian thought. So let's take a look at some of that archaeological evidence. For that, we need to turn to the ancient Persian city of Persepolis.
53:29
which is located today in southern Iran. Back in the sixth century BC, Persepolis was founded by Darius the Great. He was the fourth king of the Achaemenid dynasty, who we talked about earlier. And it served as the ceremonial center of the Achaemenid Empire. It's actually a UNESCO site. UNESCO calls Persepolis, quote,
53:57
standing universal value. Among the world's greatest archaeological sites renowned as the gem of Persian ensembles in the fields of architecture, urban planning, and art, the royal city of Persepolis ranks among the archaeological sites which have no equivalent. That description right there just makes me wish I could travel to Iran and check it out in person. Maybe one day.
54:27
There is so, so much in this ancient city that's worth talking about. But for today's program, we're going to talk about it because it's a royal city. It's a city that's all about kingship. The name itself, Persepolis is a composite of the Greek word, persis, which refers to Persians and polis, which means city. So together Persepolis is the Greek word for the city of the Persians. King Darius.
54:56
built Persepolis in a really remote mountainous region of Persia so that it was inaccessible and it was also defensible. And because of that, that's probably why the site is so well preserved today. To give you kind of an idea of the size, the site covers roughly 125 acres, but only about 30 to 35 of those acres make up a platform or this platform terrace, which all of the royal buildings were built on.
55:26

It's not a very big city. In fact, Persepolis didn't really even operate like a traditional city at all. It was really just a grand ceremonial complex. It was just used to showcase the royal grandeur of the Persian Empire. On top of that platform terrace, there were a number of royal buildings. You had the Apadana, which was a grand audience hall that had 72 columns. And this was used for royal receptions and ceremonies.
55:56
And then you have the Palace of Darius, which served as the king's residence. Then you have the Hall of 100 Columns, also known as the Throne Hall, which was used for royal ceremonies. You have the Gate of All Nations, and it had these really high walls and four tall pillars. Now remember that, I'm gonna talk about four pillars in a couple of episodes, which served as this kind of impressive entrance for anybody who was visiting.
56:26
And you have, among other buildings, the council hall and the royal treasury that housed all the tributes and the valuables from across the empire. It's on these structures that we're gonna find a couple of really important iconographic images. The first image is found in the triplon, which means triple gate, and it's sometimes referred to as the council hall. It's this massive, magnificent bas-relief of the king.
56:54
and he's trailed by two attendants who are protecting him from the sun with an umbrella. And directly above the king is the umbrella and directly above the umbrella is a depiction of Ahura Mazda. Persian scholars tell us that this image of Ahura Mazda above the king is really important because it emphasizes that the king's power is derived from Ahura Mazda himself.
57:22
It's an image of divine sanction. On page 170 of the King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art, Root writes, quote, by the favor of Ahura Mazda, Darius became king. Ahura Mazda is the spirit whose very existence is the seal of approval on all of the king's sanctions.
57:48
In a similar image, this one's located in the Hall of 100 Columns. It's a bas-relief of the Persian king seated beneath this really ornate canopy. And he's seated on a royal throne. He's got a scepter in his hand. Above him, above the beautifully ornate canopy, is a depiction of Ehudah Mazda. And it sends the same message that the Persian king's reign is sanctioned by God.
58:15
It symbolizes a profound relationship between the earthly and the divine realms, between the celestial king and his earthly emissary. It's a representation of royal theology. I could give you a lot more examples. There are actually several reliefs at Persepolis, where Ahura Mazda appears to be granting kingship, giving divine favor to the king.
58:43
At this point, we need to talk about how Uhura Mazda himself is depicted. In Persepolis, Uhura Mazda is universally depicted in human form as a bearded man emerging from the center of a winged solar disk. Atop his head rests a cylindrical headdress, a crown.
59:10
which symbolizes his royal status as a celestial king, the king of all kings. In his left hand, he holds a circle. If you look at it, you'll see it looks like a circle or a ring. And his right hand is

extended as if to shake someone's hand. Persian scholars believe that this standard image of Ahura Mazda was actually adopted from the Egyptian prototype of Ray.
59:39
were rays depicted as a winged solar disc, which was then adopted by Neo-Assyrians to depict Asura or Anshar, who's modeled after the Sumerian high god Anu. You know, this is a really good example of how Root argues that Persians used iconographic prototypes from their neighbors. After the Christmas break, you'll be able to find pictures of each of these images on the webpage for this episode. So,
01:00:08
Why does Ahura Mazda hold a ring in his left hand? That's a really interesting question. On page 173, Root explains the ancient meaning behind the ring. And this is what she writes, quote, "'The ring is an ancient Mesopotamian symbol, "'which until the Neo-Assyrian period "'is always held by deities in conjunction with the rod. "'These two emblems together,
01:00:36
perhaps originally having been derived from the ideas of a measuring rod and line, the latter coiled into a ring, which the god would have to pass on to the king before the king could build a temple.
01:00:57
Did you catch that? The ring that Ahura Mazda holds in his left hand represents a loop of rope that he planned to give to the earthly king so that he could measure out a foundation for Ahura Mazda's earthly temple. If you'll recall, as we've discussed in past episodes, the first thing a heavenly king does after he's coronated a king is build a palace temple.
01:01:26
where he can rest. So here Ahura Mazda is holding in his hand the rope the earthly king will need to build Ahura Mazda a place to rest on earth.
01:01:40
Over time, Root tells us that the circle of rope came to stand for the idea of kingship itself. On page 173, she writes, quote, In the Neo-Assyrian period, on seals and reliefs, Ossur holds only the ring. It appears likely that the significance of the ring alone has been further generalized to stand for the idea of power and kingship.
01:02:10
There's a rock relief, it's magnificent, in southwestern Iran. And on this rock, it depicts God, Uhura Mazda, the king of all kings, decked out in royal regalia. He's actually holding a bundle of sacred sticks, twigs of a tree called a barsam in his hand. If I had more time, I'd talk about this. And he's handing the Persian king, Ardashir I,
01:02:39
who reigned from 224 to 241 AD, the circle of rope, the ring of kingly power with his other hand, making Ardashir the earthly king of kings. If you've ever wondered where Tolkien got the idea of the rings of power, well, he got it from others who got it from others and it's traced all the way back to ancient Mesopotamians and Egyptians, and it represents the rope.
01:03:09
used to lay out the foundation for the king's temple palace. I mean the king, the high god, is giving the ring to build a temple, sanctioning his temple building, sanctioning his kingship to

another. And so no wonder in the Lord of the Rings people want that ring. All of the things we've discussed in this episode, from the seven holy immortals to how
01:03:38
cosmic order is established to Asia, the cosmic law, to God's reign as a righteous celestial monarch, to the establishing of a heavenly kingdom, to the granting of righteous rulers, to others, is in complete conformity with the theology taught within the ancient tradition. And there's even more, which I'll talk about as the podcast progresses, but for this episode we're talking about God as a heavenly king. If you're a longtime listener to the
01:04:08
By now, you are very, very familiar with what the ancient myths, legends, epic poems, and the world's greatest literature teach that one must do before they can be made a celestial king. And what is that? Well, they must first slay the terrible dragon. And no surprise, we find this same stubborn bit in Zoroastrianism.
01:04:37
In Zoroastrian tradition in the Yasna 30.3 of the Avista, we read of the cosmic event known as the birth of the twin spirits. In this account, in the heavens, the god Zervon conceived a pair of twin boys, the pious Ahura Mazda, along with his wicked brother, Ariman. The Yasna 30.3 reads, quote, in the beginning, there were two
01:05:06
primal spirits, twins, spontaneously active. These are the good and the evil in thought and in word and indeed. Between these two, let the wise choose a right. Be good, not base. And in 30.5, of these twin spirits, the evil one chooses doing the worst, while the most bountiful Holy Spirit of goodness
01:05:34
itself in the imperishable heavens chooses truth and righteousness. In this account we learned that God in the heavens conceived two sons, one who upheld the cosmic law, Asha, truth and righteousness, and one who chose not to who chose evil. Then in 30.6 it states that in the heavens, similar to what we saw in Mesopotamia in the Numa Elish with Tiamat,
01:06:03
the awful monsters that align themselves with her. Here we see that in heaven a group of spirits were deceived by the evil Ariman and they chose to align themselves with him. The text reads, quote, between these two spirits the demon worshippers could not discern a right. To them deception came at the time of decision and they chose the worst mind.
01:06:32
And then the text tells us that like a terrible malicious demon army, these spirits combined, they combined forces and they sought to destroy the world. The text reads, quote, with violence then they rushed together life in the world to destroy. In Zoroastrian hymn, Yashdhah 14, we read of a key figure named Vera Thragna.
01:07:02
who's appointed to lead the forces of Ahura Mazda in battle against the demonic forces of Ariman. In this hymn, Zoroaster asks Ahura Mazda who the best armed God is in the heavens. And of course, we're talking about a spiritual battle here. Zoroaster is asking him who is best spiritually armed to take on Ariman. The text reads, and this is the James Darmistetter translation, quote.

01:07:33
Zoroaster asked Ahura Mazda, Ahura Mazda most beneficent spirit, maker of the material world, thou holy one, who is the best armed of the heavenly gods? Ahura Mazda answered, it is Varathragna. Varathragna made by Ahura came to him, Zoroaster first, running in the shape of a
01:08:03
made by Mazda, the glory quote, I am the strongest in strength and I shall destroy the malice of all the malicious, the malice of Devas. Devas are the evil spirits that aligned themselves with Arihman and men. Verathragna leads an army of the righteous and you can imagine a cosmic battle ensues.
01:08:29
Zoroaster is concerned about the outcome of this battle and he asks Ahura Mazda the following. Quote, when armies meet together in full array, which of the two is the party that conquers and is not crushed, that smites and is not smitten? Zoroaster wants to know which side is going to win the battle. Ahura Mazda assures Zoroaster that those who side with the divine warrior
01:08:59
victorious. He tells them quote, on his side, speaking of verathragna, victory will stand. Although originally a battle between Ahura Mazda, the one who upheld Asha, truth and righteousness, and Adi-mun, the one who rebelled against it, these Persian texts attest that this battle quickly developed into a full scale spiritual war between those who aligned
01:09:29
with Ahura Mazda and those who were deceived by Ariman. Interestingly, in a late Armenian polemic text titled Against the Sex by Esnik of Kolb, written sometime during the fifth century AD, which was about a thousand years after Zoroaster, we're told that this battle, like we see elsewhere in the ancient world, was initially a battle over kingship. Yep, kingship.
01:09:57
just like we see all over in the ancient world. I'm gonna read this account directly from the text. This comes from book two, chapter one of Esnick's quote, "'Against the Sexed Book'." And this is the Thomas Samyellian translation. In this account, the god Zervin and his wife conceive twin boys. The text reads, quote,
01:10:25
were conceived in their mother's womb. When Zerubin found out, he said, "'There are two sons in the womb. "'Whichever comes to me first, I shall make him king.' And Ahura Mazda, having learned of his father's intention, told Ariman that their father Zerubin would make king whichever of them reached him first. When Ariman heard this, he pierced the womb and went…
01:10:55
before his father. This is interesting. Zerven's wife, whom I'll call goddess Zerven, has two sons in her womb and the god Zerven declares that the firstborn son will be king. Uhura Mazda shares this information with Adi-Man and what does Adi-Man do? The text says he pierces the womb. Adi-Man wants to be king so badly that he cuts himself out of his mother's womb.
01:11:23
so that he can beat Ahura Mazda to the punch. I hope you can see here that this is just another version of one of God's sons trying to usurp the throne. So what happens? Well, let's keep reading. The text reads, when Zerven saw Ariman, he didn't know who he was. So he asked him, who are you? And Ariman replied, I am your son. Then…

01:11:52
Zerven said to him, my son is supposed to be sweet smelling and radiant. There's sweet smelling is interesting and when you think about that in terms of the anointing oil. But you are dark and foul. So see already Ariman's choice to usurp the throne has sullied his nature. He's already morphing into the awful sea serpent. The text continues. And while they were speaking,
01:12:22
Uhura Mazda was born in his hour radiant and sweet smelling. And he came before Zerven. When Zerven saw him, he knew that this was his son, Uhura Mazda, for whom he had made sacrifices for so long. He took the bundle of ritual sticks, that was the sticks I was talking about earlier that are twigs of a tree, which were in his hand and gave them to Uhura Mazda. So he's giving the scepter. You see what's happening here?
01:12:49
saying, until now I have made sacrifices for you. From now on, you will make them for me. Then Zervin gave Ahura Mazda the sticks and blessed him.
01:13:03
At this point, Adiman is having none of this. So he approaches Zirvan and the text reads, quote, Adiman approached Zirvan and said, "'Didn't you make a vow that whichever of your two sons reached you first, you would make him king?' Then Zirvan, so as not to break his vow, said to Adiman, "'Why, you false evil doer, may the kingship be given to you for 9,000 years.'"
01:13:34
under Ahura Mazda's supervision. And after that, Ahura Mazda will be sole king. This account's interesting because like most of the other accounts we've discussed on the program, this account attests that the battle between the beloved son and the rebel son was a battle over kingship. It was a battle over the right to rule as a heavenly king.
01:14:04
by cutting himself out of his mother's womb. Needless to say, cutting oneself out of the womb here is symbolic of Adi Man's evil intention to usurp it. The fact that Adi Man even thinks that it's possible to usurp the throne from Ahura Mazda indicates that Adi Man himself doesn't really understand or grasp the power of Asha, the cosmic law, or else he would have understood that from the very start.
01:14:33
that it's impossible for one to usurp heavenly kingship. It can only be won by perfectly upholding righteousness and truth. The ancients attest again and again that this is the only way that order can be established in the cosmos, period. There's no way to usurp or circumvent the law, which is why the awful dragon lives on.
01:15:03
in his own shouting. As you can see the link between Ohura Mazda and kingship, especially in regards to the stubborn bits that we've covered on the program, is really strong. But what about slaying the dragon? In the ancient world we wouldn't expect Ohura Mazda to be crowned a king until after he slays Arima. In the Zoroastrian tradition this is where things get interesting.
01:15:32
In the text that I just read, we see that the god Zirvan tells Adiman that he can reign as a king, but only for a limited time. Zirvan says to Adiman, why you false evildoer, may the kingship be

given to you for 9,000 years. So he gives him this finite period that he can reign. But then Zirvan tells him that he can be king only under Ahura Mazda's supervision, which is.
01:15:59
almost like saying, yes, Ahriman, you can play king. You can believe that you are king, but really your reign will be checked in every moment by Ahura Mazda. To be under Ahura Mazda's, quote, supervision is almost like saying that both sons would sort of reign simultaneously. If Ahriman ever went too far, Ahura Mazda would be there to reign him back in. Theologically, the notion that there are two equally opposing forces
01:16:29
be it a power or divine beings in the world, one that entices us to keep the cosmic law and one that entices us not to keep the cosmic law is referred to as dualism. As Ahura Mazda explained to Zoroaster earlier, the two forces are not truly inherently equal. In the end, righteousness and truth will conquer unrighteousness and deceit. In the end,
01:16:58
righteousness is more powerful than unrighteousness. According to Ezenik's account, after Arihman reigns for 9,000 years, after which, quote, Ahura Mazda will be made sole king, what this text doesn't tell us, but several other Zoroastrian texts do, is that after 9,000 years, Arihman will be defeated. One source says that he'll be slain on Mount
01:17:28
Another source tells us that he'll be imprisoned for eternity. And another source, my favorite, a source known as the Bundishin says he'll be quote, led back to the hole through which he entered the world. The notion that there are holes between worlds is pretty darn intriguing. And believe it or not, it shows up so much that I'm gonna even consider it another stubborn bit.
01:17:58
and we're gonna talk about it a lot more down the line. For our discussion here though, I wanna stress the larger point that it's only after Adi Man's full defeat, whether that's exile or imprisonment or full annihilation, that Ahura Mazda is crowned sole king. And that theology, my friends, is
01:18:26
100% consistent with the theology taught within the ancient tradition. All in all, just as we've seen across the ancient world, the Zoroastrians of Persia proclaim that God is a celestial king, a king who is destined to claim his rightful crown once
01:18:55
Since the Christmas season is upon us, I'd like to end by reading an interesting portion of the Apostle Matthew's account of Christ's birth in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 2. Starting in verse 1 it reads, quote, Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King, behold there came wise men from the east of Jerusalem, saying, where is he that is born
01:19:23
King of the Jews, for we have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him." In this account, Matthew tells us that wise men, wise men from the east, were searching for the Christ child whom they called the quote, King of the Jews. As many of you are probably familiar, the New Testament was originally written in Greek.
01:19:51

And when we take a look at the Greek word, the translators translated into English as wisemen, we find that it is magi. So exactly who were the magi? Well, this is where it gets interesting because magi was the name used to refer to Zoroastrian priests. From Matthew's account, a group of Zoroastrian priests followed a star.
01:20:21
from their home in Persia, all the way to Jerusalem, where they hope to find and worship the Christ child. Herod sends the Magi to Bethlehem, and in verse nine it continues, quote, when they, speaking of the Magi, heard the king, they departed and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star,
01:20:50
they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. You know, as we all know, these Magi brought the Christ child gifts. Verse 11 reads, quote, and when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother and fell down and worshiped him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.
01:21:21
The gifts these Persian magi brought the Christ child are astonishing because they symbolized key aspects of the Jerusalem temple and kingship theology. The gold, as we've discussed on this program, was used to symbolize the glorious nature of God himself and the temple where he dwelt in the heavens. All of the vessels and furnishings in the Jerusalem temple were made of gold to symbolize this.
01:21:50
Frankincense was the key ingredient in the special incense blend used in the Holy of Holies. And we've discussed many times on the program, myrrh was the primary component in the holy anointing oil used in the temple. How the Persian Magi knew of the sacred significance of myrrh? I have no idea.
01:22:20
but it's astounding that they did. Then again, Jehovah said in Isaiah chapter 45 verse one, that Cyrus was one of his, his anointed, which the sacred myrrh represented. So obviously there were truly wise men in Persia who knew a whole, whole lot more about the king.
01:22:49
the beloved son and kingship theology than we ever thought.
01:22:57
I wish you all the merriest of Christmases or happiest of holidays. That's it for me. I'll leave you with the words of the Persian Magi. Quote, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and we are come to worship him.
01:23:22
I'm Jack Logan.
01:23:28
You've been listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production.

Episode #49 - The Jade Emperor & Indra(s)

https://theancienttradition.com/49-the-jade-emperor-indras/

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
to the ancient tradition. I'm your host Jack Logan. It's great to be with all of you today. If this is your first time listening in we welcome you to the program. For the past couple of episodes we've been looking at who the ancient Egyptians and Mesopotamians and Canaanites and Hebrews and Zoroastrians tell us that God is. And we found that they universally tell us that
00:57
God reigns as a celestial king over a celestial kingdom. And we just shouldn't see this. Considering we're talking about different civilizations, I mean we're talking about the Egyptians and the Persians and the Canaanites, we should expect to see much, much greater variability in how God is described. But we just don't. They all tell us the same thing, that the God in heaven
01:25
reigns as a king. It's an incredibly important stubborn bit that we can trace all the way back to the very onset of human civilization where we find it talked about in the world's earliest written documents. When we can do this, when we can trace something like God's royal nature as a king all the way back to the dawn of time, I argue that it constitutes an original, pure, or dare I
01:55
of the original religious tradition, which we call on this program the ancient tradition, that the ancient Talos was imparted to them in the very beginning. Here's the thing. Scholars have no idea where the notion of kingship as a form of government and kingship rights came from. They just suddenly show up at the same time that writing and written records show up around 3000 BC.
02:26
Today, we take kingship as a form of government for granted. We are familiar with it. We know what it looks like. We know how it works. And whenever we get familiar with something, we tend to stop thinking critically about it. We stop asking questions. And here, like questions like, where did kingship come from? Why didn't other forms of government take hold like kingship did?
02:55
In other words, why was the ancient world dominated by kingship? And a very, very important question for the purposes of this program, why was kingship so intimately connected to religion? So much so to be virtually one in the same concept. See, in the ancient world, there was no such thing as secular kingship. Kingship was

03:22
always associated with a very sophisticated and rich religious theology. Why? We need to think more critically about this. We can't take it for granted that kingship was inevitable nor that it was inevitably associated with religion because neither of those two things are inevitabilities. You know the notion of government arose from someone and somewhere.
03:51
Modern scholars don't know where or from whom kingship arose. They don't know the origin of kingship. But the ancients did. And I'll talk more about this in a couple of episodes when I talk about the period of time known among the ancient Egyptians as the reign of Re. It's pretty interesting stuff. When we become so familiar with an idea, in this case kingship,
04:21
we start to assume that it's the normal or intuitively natural way of doing things. In this case of governing, but I want to challenge that assumption. There's nothing normal about kingship as a form of government and even less so of it being the dominant form of government in the ancient world. This is particularly evident when we take a look at kingship rituals. See,
04:48
In the ancient world, kingship was inseparably connected to ritual. There was a ritual bath, an investiture, an anointing, an oath, and naming rights. Why? Why was any of this necessary? It makes no sense. Why would the ancient Egyptian, Sumerian, Hittite, and Hebrew kings need to be anointed?
05:14
I mean, we don't anoint the president of the United States. We don't anoint prime ministers or chancellors or governors. We don't anoint legislative bodies. So why do we anoint kings? Why do we have this right? And where did this right come from? These are great questions. These are questions that we should be asking because rituals are used in part
05:44
teaching tools. They're used to teach us profound theological principles and doctrines. And I'm convinced that the anointing is the key to unlocking the entire theology of the ancient tradition. It's the key that ties all of the religious traditions we see today, these religious traditions that look markedly different on the outside, together into one grand cohesive
06:14
consistent theology. A theology which has of course over time been lost and degraded and even corrupted but which we are trying to reassemble by tracing the stubborn bits which have persisted across continents and across centuries. One of these stubborn bits is the anointing ritual and we're going to continue to develop this as the podcast progresses.
06:42
If you're new to the program and you're interested in learning more about the anointing ritual and the sacred anointing oil, be sure and give the back catalog a listen. The podcast is set up kind of like a college course where each episode builds on the previous episode. So if you'd like a much more comprehensive view of the theology taught by the ancients, then you kind of need to start with episode number one and work your way forward.
07:09
I know there's a lot of content in the back catalog, but it's got some really interesting stuff in there and I think it'll be very much worth your time. The ancients tell us that this theology was

given to them in the very beginning in its pure unadulterated form. If this is the case, and I personally believe it is, then this is the theology that every
07:39
needs to know about. And is a pretty mind-blowing theology at that. If what the ancients are teaching us here is true, then nothing could be more worth our time.
07:53
Alright, so in the past couple of episodes, we've established that the ancient Egyptians and Mesopotamians and Canaanites and Hebrews and Zoroastrians universally attested that God reigns in the heavens as a celestial monarch. Now, theologically, this characteristic of God is incredibly important. Among the theologians that I've read, I haven't come across very many who
08:22
truly wrangle with the theological implications of this doctrine. They tend to speak in general terms about God's supreme authority, his sweeping sovereignty in his vast kingdom, but they tend to avoid several other important implications, two of which I want to mention just briefly here.
08:52
exists in heaven. Yes, a government. When I hear people talk about heaven and what heaven's going to be like, I don't think I've ever heard anyone mention that there is a government there. In the modern day, heaven is conceptualized as a as this transcendent realm where one can spend one's day in complete peace and tranquility and free of labor and toil, free to pass away one's days,
09:21
eating bonbons in this state of ultimate freedom. Now the ancients may not disagree with some aspects of this description, but they didn't teach this. They taught that a civil government exists in heaven and that it's a monarchy built upon the cosmic law. This means that even in heaven, we're not free to do whatever we please, whenever we please. We're bound by a celestial civil law.
09:49
which of course is the cosmic law, which is why God's throne sits on a dais that represents the cosmic law. Number two, this means that heaven is socially stratified. To be socially stratified means that individuals in that particular society, in this case in heaven, are hierarchically arranged according to rank. It's one thing to believe that God as a king is naturally
10:18
higher rank than we are. That seems to make sense. But it's another thing altogether to conceive of the people in heaven as also ordered according to rank. Now we might interpret this to mean that the people in heaven are unequal, but that would depend on how the rank in heaven is established. And since everything else in heaven seems to be tied to the cosmic law, my guess is that heavenly rank is established by
10:47
one's compliance to the cosmic law. The more one complies, the more power and authority one's given. So it's not about unequalness or unfairness. It's about the level to which one complies with the cosmic law. We'll talk about this more, but virtually all of the major civilizations taught that heaven was stratified. They taught that God reigned as a king and that beneath him

11:16
reigned vassal kings and visors and judges and angels. Remember in ancient Mesopotamia, the high god Anu reigned over a court or a council of lower ranked gods, his sons. And we found the same thing in ancient Canaan. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, we find varying ranks of angels. And as you'll see today among the ancient Chinese and Hindu,
11:44
that we find this same stubborn bit that there's a social hierarchy in heaven, which is directly tied to heaven's civil and religious orders. The ancient record gives us a lot of details about how heaven is rank ordered, which we're gonna get into down the line. But suffice it to note here that the ancients tell us that the social hierarchy in heaven is built entirely in reference to God as a king, where God appoints or decrees
12:13
particular individuals to fulfill important positions in his kingdom. In the ancient world, the theology of God as a heavenly king is absolutely central, and the implications of this doctrine, many of which we've discussed on the program, are quite breathtaking. Today, we're going to take a look at whether or not this conception of God as a celestial king shows up amongst the Chinese and the Hindus.
12:44
Let's start with the Chinese. Now, Chinese mythology is kind of difficult. On the program, I like to read directly from the primary sources and then couple that with experts in the field as much as I possibly can. I like to read directly from the ancient texts themselves. And this is a little bit harder to do in China. Much of Chinese mythology was passed down orally and it changed from century to century. And not only that, there were a lot of alterations
13:14
place when the Buddhists and the Taoists got their hands on the myths. And what is actually written down in ancient texts like the Shang oracle bones, which are quote the earliest written records of Chinese civilization dated to 1200 BC, contain really little more than hints and references to the myths. They don't contain a full account of a particular myth. And then we got later texts like
13:43
which in English means classic of the mountains and seas. It's considered China's oldest surviving book of mythologies dated to the fourth century BC. Has a lot of myths in there, but they're very, very short. They're not much longer than about a single paragraph. But despite all of this, despite the hints and the short stories and the passing of the centuries and all of the alterations, we still find several stubborn bits persisting in Chinese mythology.
14:13
which is precisely why I call these bits stubborn. They persist from generation to generation and they can be traced all the way back to the dawn of the historical record, to a single fount from which scholars like Rene Gunon and Marcea Eliade argue sprung the religious traditions we see today. Chinese scholars believe that
14:40
Chinese mythology was established around the same time as the Shang dynasty, China's first historical dynasty, which is the time of the Shang oracle bones, which I just mentioned, around

1200 BC, which in terms of world history is a little bit late, but if these scholars are correct, it still makes Chinese mythology at least 3,200 years old. Dr. Anne Beryl.
15:06
She's an expert in Chinese mythology who taught at Cambridge University and wrote a book titled Chinese Myth and Culture. She argues on page 26 that Chinese cosmogonic or origin myths were likely derived from the ancient Near East. She writes, speaking of Chinese mythology, quote, I call attention to parallels with Egyptian and Akkadian cosmogony.
15:37
My reason for doing so is to point toward the possibility of a cultural transference of cosmogonic myth from the ancient Near East to China in antiquity. What Dr. Burrell's arguing here is kind of important because she's doing the same thing that we're doing on this program, tracing the stubborn bits in the myths back to the ancient Near East.
16:04
where scholars like Lord Raglan argue, quote, a complex religious system came into existence. Before I move on to the stubborn bits relevant to today's topic, I wanna point out one other important statement Dr. Burrell makes. It's unrelated to today's topic, but it's important in terms of points that we've made in the previous episodes. On page 27, speaking of Chinese beliefs about how the universe was created,
16:34
She writes, quote, Chinese ideological. Now, ideological refers to the study of the cause of, okay. Chinese ideological myths of cosmogony, which explain the origin of the universe, describe how the world came to be ordered out of chaos. These myths are ways of conceptualizing the universe at the moment when it was created in illotempore, or,
17:03
in the beginning of mythological time. Chinese cosmogonic myths fit the general patterns of myths worldwide in the sense that they do not describe creation ex nihilo, which means creation out of nothing. In Chinese mythology, the cosmos is created from some already existing matter. So.
17:33
There you go. Chinese myths too. Like we see all over the rest of the ancient world a test that the universe was made out of preexisting matter, not out of nothing. All right, let's get to the gist of today's episode. The question is, do the ancient Chinese also attest that God reigns in the heavens as a king? And the short answer to this is yes. They…
18:01
They absolutely do. Today, the supreme god of the Chinese pantheon is Hu Wang, also known as Hu Di, the Jade Emperor. I say in short because Chinese mythology has a long history and previous to the Jade Emperor, at least two other supreme deities ruled, Shang Di and Uwen Shi Tien Tzu.
18:31
Yuan Shi Tiansu is important because in Taoist theology, three gods, three gods constitute the upper echelon of the Taoist pantheon. They're known as the three pure ones or the three pristine ones. Each of these gods is considered to be a pure emanation of the Tao, which we've learned in this program is the Chinese conception of the cosmic law. The foremost,
19:00

of these three pure ones is the aforementioned Uenshi Tien Tzu. Each member of the Taoist Trinity who are Uenshi Tien Tzu, Lingba Tien Tzu, and Daoda Tien Tzu are believed to be primordial gods, and each one is believed to rule over a particular heaven. In fact, the Appalachian Tien Tzu actually means Lord of Heaven.
19:30
Yuanchi Tiansu actually means Yuanchi, Lord of Heaven. Yuanchi Tiansu rules over the first and highest heaven known as Yuching. And just guess where the highest heaven is located. In the top of a mountain, a mountain known as Jade Mountain. As we've seen on this program, and as you're gonna see in coming weeks, across the ancient world,
19:59
The heavenly or divine realm of the gods is almost uniformly described as existing in the top of a sacred mountain. Now, there's some very, very important theological reasons why the ancients used a mountain to symbolize where God resides, and we'll take a deep dive into that in the coming months. Just note that here in China, the supreme God, Yuan Shi Tietzu, also resides in the top of a mountain, a mountain called the Jade Mountain.
20:29
Okay, why jade? For the answer to this, we need to turn to the Minneapolis Institute of Art. They have a large collection and one of their prized pieces in this collection is a magnificent 200 year old carving of Jade Mountain. And it's actually a carving that's made entirely out of jade. It weighs like over 600 pounds or something. It's considered the largest piece of carved jade in the Western Hemisphere.
20:58
The carving was commissioned by Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty and it was completed sometime around 1784 AD. You can find a picture of it on the webpage for this episode. This is what the Minneapolis Institute of Art says about the significance of jade in China. Quote, the Chinese considered jade to be the most sacred and treasured of all precious stones.
21:26
Their word for jade is yu, which is Y-U, meaning pure, precious, noble, and right, R-I-G-H-T. So take note that one of the meanings of jade in China is right, R-I-G-H-T. The Institute continues, quote, its physical characteristics were believed to express the greatest virtues of mankind, soft, smooth, and glossy like benevolence.
21:56
fine, compact, and strong, like intelligence, angular, though not sharp or cutting, like righteousness, internally radiant, like faith, pure of sound when struck, like wisdom. I like how the Chinese use this precious stone to symbolize all that's noble and good. Okay, but again, why
22:26
I mean, there's a lot of different precious stones out there that they could have used. So why jade? Well, guess where jade is normally found. Let's take a guess. Yep, in high mountains, in high mountains. Now you're starting to see how it's all tied together. If the Supreme Being abides in the top of a high mountain and the precious stone that's found in high mountains is jade,
22:54

then jade becomes a symbol for that realm, for God, for the spiritual essence of those who dwell there, for the place itself. The Chinese actually believed that the spiritual essence of the divine realm was manifest in jade itself, which is why they used it in a lot of their rituals, and they made pendants and beads and even funerary masks out of it. During the Han dynasty, which was
23:23
between 202 BC and 220 AD. The emperors weren't just buried with a jade mask, they were actually completely covered in a jade suit. They took one to two inch square plates of jade, hundreds and hundreds of them, and they sewed them together with gold thread and covered the entire deceased emperor. You can find a picture of this on the webpage for this episode. When we understand jade's connection to the mountain,
23:50
where the supreme deity Yuan Shi Tiansu dwells, then we can understand why emperors during the Han dynasty were buried in jade. To be buried in jade meant the emperor had or could become immortal like the gods who dwelt on Jade Mountain. The jade suit they wore was believed to ensure their immortality in the afterlife. It was believed to prevent mortal decay and to preserve the physical body after death.
24:21
couple of theological points are worth making here. First, note that the ancient Chinese believed, just like the ancient Egyptians and Mesopotamians, that the terrestrial king could become immortal and join the celestial king, Yuan Shi Tietzu, in the abode of the gods. And second, note that the ancient Chinese, especially during the Han Dynasty, went
24:49
to great lengths to preserve the physical body of the deceased king, just like the ancient Egyptians did, because they believed that by doing so, that this was an important part of the king gaining immortality. All right, so now you know why the mountain where Tietzu resides is called Jade Mountain, and why Jade took on such extraordinary spiritual significance amongst the Chinese.
25:14
significance that's directly linked to the ancient tradition which you'll see down the line, the mountain. Okay, let's return to the supreme deity, Yuanshi Tiansu. As I mentioned earlier, in Taoist theology, Yuanshi Tiansu reigns in the heavens with two other gods, Lingba Tiansu and Daodei Tiansu.
25:41
teach a really interesting theology. They teach that each of these gods reigns over a particular level of heaven. Yuan Shi Tietzu rules over the first and the highest heaven, which is known as Yuqing. Ling Ba Tietzu rules over the second heaven, known as Shangqing, which is located below the first heaven. And Daode
26:10
rules over the third heaven known as Tai Ching which is located below the first and second heavens. Keep this information about the Chinese three pure ones and the levels of heaven in your back pocket because we're going to revisit this again when we examine the notion of multiple heavens and Mesopotamian cosmic geography down the line. You're going to see that the Mesopotamians taught the exact same thing.
26:41

Now when we look at the iconographic depictions of these three gods, they're almost always depicted enthroned on diocese, reigning as celestial kings. You can find pictures of this on the webpage for this episode. All of this brings me to Hu Huang, also known as Hu Di.
27:10
August Jade Emperor or Hu Huang Da Di, August Personage of Jade. Note how Yu, which is the word for Jade, is mentioned in his name, Hu Huang or Hu Di. Di is actually the Chinese word for Emperor or King. So Yu Di means the Emperor of Jade or the Jade Emperor. Today in China, he's the most important god in the world.
27:39
Taoism and the Chinese folk religion. He's regarded as the supreme ruler of heaven. Okay, so how is he linked to the head of the Taoist Trinity Yuan Shi Tiansu? And note that he's got you in his name too, Yuan Shi. Well, according to Taoist beliefs Yuan Shi personally chose the Jade Emperor as his successor.
28:06
and today he's worshiped as the Chinese high god. According to Chinese writer Wu Mingren, in Chinese folk religion, quote, the Jade Emperor is regarded as the celestial equivalent of the Chinese Emperor. Now that's really interesting because this belief reflects the cosmological principle as above, so below. Chinese folk religion adherents
28:36
the Jade Emperor as the celestial equivalent of the terrestrial Chinese Emperor. Now I love Chinese imperialist theology and I love the architecture of Chinese Imperial palaces and temples precisely because they so explicitly and deliberately seek to mirror on earth the pattern of kingship in heaven. I'll hit on this a bit here but this will become a lot more apparent down the line. There's some fascinating stuff yet to come. All right.
29:05
So one of the objectives of this episode is to find out who the Chinese tell us God is. Do the Chinese also attest that God reigns as a celestial king? And then as we pointed out earlier, yes, they absolutely do. In fact, I don't know that there is any civilization or religious group in the world that more overtly attests that God reigns as a heavenly king than the Chinese. I mean, all we have to do is look at the name the Chinese give God.
29:35
and the archinography that they used to depict God to see that the characteristic the Chinese want to stress more than any other about God is that God reigns in the heavens as a king, an emperor. That's the central message the Chinese convey in every single drawing and painting and sculpture of him. When we look at how the Chinese refer to God, we don't see that the Chinese refer to him in general terms as God or Lord, like we see other places around the world. Instead,
30:05
The Chinese in formal settings always refer to God by the title emperor or king. God is the Jade Emperor or the pure August Jade Emperor or when they get really fancy, the highest author of heaven of the whole universe of human destinies of property of rights, R-I-T-E-S, and of the way, which is the Tao.
30:34

cosmic law. Very August 1, Grand Sovereign of the Heavens. So in each one of these, emperor or sovereign is right in the name. In other words, whenever the Chinese formally refer to God, they always do so in direct relationship to his role as king. And I really like that last fancy title because it refers to so many things we've discussed on the program. The title connects God
31:04
not only to kingship but to the decreeing of human destinies, the ritual system, and the Dao, the cosmic law, the same things that we've seen across the ancient world. But how did the Chinese refer to God? Informally, how was God the Jade Emperor referred to? And I really like this one. Informally, he's referred to as Tiāngōng, which means heavenly grandfather.
31:34
So whenever the Chinese refer to God, they stress two characteristics, that God reigns as a king and a father. Iconographically, God, the Jade Emperor, is always portrayed anthropomorphically as a man. He's got arms and legs and hands and feet. He's usually depicted as a middle-aged man with a thin mustache and this long, sagely goatee.
32:04
Nearly always he's seated on a royal throne, which is usually raised on a dais. And he's usually decked out in full imperial costume in this long, beautifully embroidered robe. And he's always depicted wearing a mian, which is the Chinese word for crown. It's a really nice imperial headdress of some sort. And they vary.
32:31
but often he's portrayed wearing the sheer leomian, which is the 12 tasseled crown, which was worn exclusively by emperors. Sometimes the crown was referred to as the emperor's 12 chained crown. And if you haven't seen this type of crown before, it's pretty unique. Basically, it starts with a cylindrical shaped hat, which raises about six to eight inches above the head. And then,
33:00
they place a flat board. It's about seven inches wide and 12 inches long across the top of the hat. And the longer ends of the board protrude out the front and the back. And across the front and the back of the board are hung 12 rows of colored beads. 12, you ask, why 12? Well, that's a great question. Scholars think that the 12 rows hold
33:28
cosmological significance, linking the emperor to the 12 months of the year and the 12 divisions of heaven, which is the zodiac and cosmic order. If you'd like to see what this looks like you can find a picture of the jade emperor wearing the sheer loomian on the webpage for this episode.
33:51
You may not know this, but the Jade Emperor was also accredited with creating the Chinese zodiac. The myth tells that the Jade Emperor was working on ordering the cosmos and he wanted to create a calendar. So he invited all of the creatures on earth to participate in a race and he told the creatures that the first 12 animals to cross over a particular river, which I'm sure has cosmic significance, would be the first to appear in the calendar.
34:19
and he promised to name a year after each animal in the order that they crossed the river. And I bring that up because the zodiac actually plays an important symbolic role in the ancient tradition, which you're gonna see down the line. All in all though, the iconography of the Taoist

and Chinese folk religion high god, the Jade Emperor, unequivocally attests that God reigns as a king.
34:49
in this case a celestial king who's depicted in cultural terms as a Chinese emperor. Like we see elsewhere in the ancient world, Chinese Taoists also tell us that the Jade Emperor resides in the highest heaven in a grand majestic palace. And he lives there with his wife, Tianxiang Shengmu, the Jade Empress. And they have lots and lots of children along with a court.
35:18
of ranked gods and royal administrators and officials. Just like we've seen elsewhere in the ancient world, the Jade Emperor's palace serves as the cosmic seat of power, the administrative center of the cosmos. And it's from there that he manages a vast bureaucracy composed of various deities who oversee different aspects of the cosmos, ensuring that cosmic order is maintained.
35:48
that the Jade Emperor's celestial palace is guarded. It's guarded by a celestial official named Ling Kuan. He's the protector of sacred space. He's the guardian of the palace temple. Whenever we see depictions of him, he's always decked out in armor or military attire, and he's wielding a sword, which according to Chinese scholar, Chao Kuan Hu,
36:17
befits his status as quote a celebrated general of the celestial realm. Lin Kuan is actually a pretty significant figure in Taoism and we'll talk about him more down the line when we talk about the guardians who protect sacred celestial space. These guardians are another prolific and very important stubborn bit. If you would like to see pictures of Lin Kuan you can find him on the web page for this episode.
36:46
One of the things that's really important to note here is that the Chinese imperial system on earth looked a whole, whole, whole lot like the Jade Emperor's imperial system in the heavens. And this was on purpose. The terrestrial Chinese emperors were consciously trying to replicate the Jade Emperor's celestial government on earth as above, so below.
37:16
Just as the Jade Emperor ruled as a monarch, so too the Earthly Emperor ruled as a monarch. Just as the Jade Emperor oversaw various gods who managed different aspects of the cosmos, so too the Earthly Emperor oversaw a network of officials and ministers who administered provincial and local governance. The Earthly Emperor was modeling his court after the Celestial Court.
37:44
The earthly emperor's primary objective was to replicate the structure of heaven on earth. If the Jade Emperor brought about order and prosperity in the cosmos by upholding the Tao and by ruling as a king according to the Tao, then it followed that order and prosperity could best be brought about on earth by doing the same thing, by upholding the Tao, ruling according to the Tao,
38:11
and by instituting the same form of government, a monarchy as it was done in heaven. Again, as above, so below. And not only that, this is exactly what the Jade emperor demands that the

earthly emperor do, to pattern his rule after the Jade emperor's celestial rule. In ancient China, the earthly emperor's right to rule, like we've seen elsewhere in the ancient world, was divinely granted.
38:40
The ancient Chinese referred to it as the Mandate of Heaven. During the Zhou dynasty, which dated from 1046 BC to 256 BC, the earthly emperor was known as the son of Tian Di. Remember, Tian in Chinese means heaven, and Di means king. So the son of Tian Di, the earthly emperor,
39:09
was the son of the king of heaven. In other words, the earthly emperor was the son of God. So there's that sonship stubborn bit again, and we'll get into that in greater detail down the line. The emperor as the son of heaven was expected to follow the laws of heaven and maintain order in the world just like the heavenly king did. If the emperor failed to govern justly, he risked losing
39:39
like we've seen elsewhere in the ancient world. Most recently in Persia, where Hurmazda was the one who granted the earthly Shah and Shah the right to rule by granting him the ring of power. Here, the earthly emperor was the one who granted the earthly emperor the authority to rule, the heavenly mandate. This point that God serves as the prototype for the monarchy, for this type of rule.
40:08
this point that it's God who serves as the prototype for the monarchy, that it's God who instituted the monarchy, and that it's God who sanctions this type of rule is a really important one, especially in terms of our discussion of what the ancients tell us happened in the first time, in the beginning, when earth was in heaven's embrace, which I hope to return to you very soon on the podcast. It's clear from all of this that when we ask the question of
40:39
They give us the same answer as the rest of the ancient world. They clearly tell us that God reigns as a celestial king in a celestial palace in the highest heaven. Now before I leave this section, I have to ask one more question. How did UD become a heavenly king? The pure August Jade Emperor. Did he become a heavenly king in the same way that Ray, Osiris, Marduk, Baal?
41:07
Jesus and Ahura Mazda became heavenly kings? Well, that depends on who and when you ask. The Chinese offer up a couple of accounts on how UD became the king of heaven. Some accounts tell how he was initially a mortal man who successfully passed through hundreds of trials until he fully cultivated the Tao, upon which he was granted the status of golden
41:37
deity, the status of jade emperor. Others tell of how he battled and vanquished a terrible monster after which he was crowned king. Now these two accounts sound incongruent, but if you're a long time listener to the program you know that both accounts are telling us the exact same thing. To fully cultivate the Tao is the same thing as slaying the awful monster.
42:07
So regardless of how it's described, the ancient Chinese are telling us that the Jade Emperor achieved his status as a heavenly king in the exact same manner that all of the other ancients

did by slaying the awful dragon. It's the same theology. Listen to the creators of mythical arcana describe the battle between the Jade Emperor and the great demon.
42:37
The Jade Emperor's reign is rich with stories that highlight his virtues and the challenges he faces in maintaining celestial order. From vanquishing evil to overseeing the creation of the world, these tales reveal the depth of his character and his unwavering dedication to the well-being of all beings.
42:57
In the distant past, a time when the realms of Heaven and Earth were still finding their balance, a terrible threat arose. The Great Demon, a being of immense malevolence and ambition, sought to overthrow the Celestial Order and cast the universe into chaos. This Demon thrived on discord and darkness, and its power grew as it spread fear and destruction. The Jade Emperor, ruler of Heaven and Earth, could not stand idly by as the Demon wreaked havoc.
43:25
From his celestial palace, he summoned his divine army, a legion of celestial beings known for their bravery and strength. Leading them were the four heavenly kings, each a master of the four cardinal directions, and the powerful deity Erlang Shen with his piercing third eye. As the demons' forces amassed at the gates of heaven, the Jade Emperor prepared for the battle. His presence inspired his troops, instilling in them a sense of purpose and unwavering resolve.
43:55
The skies darkened as the two great armies clashed, their battle cries echoing through the heavens. The demon, wielding dark magic and immense strength, was a formidable foe. It summoned storms and earthquakes, trying to unseat the celestial order. But the Jade Emperor, with his divine wisdom and unmatched power, orchestrated a strategy that would turn the tide. He instructed Erlang Shen to use his third eye to find the demon's weakness.
44:24
while the four heavenly kings coordinated the defense and counterattacks. After a fierce and prolonged battle, Erlang Shen discovered the demon's vulnerability. With precise coordination, the Jade Emperor directed his forces to exploit this weakness. The Celestial Army's might, combined with the Jade Emperor's strategic brilliance, overwhelmed the Great Demon. In a final, decisive confrontation, the Jade Emperor himself faced the demon,
44:53
using his scepter to channel his divine power and deliver a fatal blow. With the demon defeated, its dark influence dissipated and peace was restored to the universe. The skies cleared and the natural order was reestablished. The Jade Emperor's victory was celebrated across the realms and his leadership was revered by gods and mortals alike. This triumph solidified his position as the protector of the universe, a guardian against all forces of evil.
45:27
Pretty interesting, huh? Keep the four kings, the four heavenly kings of the cardinal points mentioned in that account in your back pocket, because they'll be important down the line too. Because of the Jade Emperor's great benevolent deed, because he vanquished evil, he was proclaimed the supreme sovereign, the emperor, the king of heaven.
45:55

If you're a long time listener, I hope you aren't beginning to take these consistencies for granted. We just shouldn't see that the ancient Chinese taught the same thing about who God is and how God became a heavenly king as we do elsewhere in the world. But we do, and that's remarkable. Now, let's turn to the Vedic tradition. As many of you may know, there are several important gods in Hinduism.
46:24
theology evolved over time. However, one Vedic god sticks out, the god Indra. In the Rig Veda, which is the oldest known Vedic scripture, scholars date it to between 1500 and 1000 BC. Indra is the most respected and revered god. If you're not familiar with the Rig Veda, it's essentially a collection of hymns, and each hymn is addressed to a particular god.
46:53
And in the Rig Veda, more than 250 of the hems, which is about 25% of them, are addressed to Indra, which is way more than any other god. So for comparison, only 10 hems in the Rig Veda are addressed to the god Varuna. So Indra is by far the most significant god in the Rig Veda. For today's episode, we wanna know whether or not the Vedic Indra,
47:19
like we see elsewhere in the ancient world, was also understood to be a heavenly king. And the answer to this is yes, he absolutely was. Let's start with his name because it's pretty darn interesting. According to entomologists, now entomology is the study of the origin of words, Max Mueller, and this is found on page 119 of Edward Perry's article, Indra in the Rig Vita,
47:49
published in volume 11 of the Journal of the American Oriental Society. The name Indra comes from the Sanskrit stem, in do, which means drop or sap. Drop or sap. You long time listeners out there, what does this make you think of?
48:15
Did any of you think of the sap of the Kamaphora muratri, mur? Cause I sure did. But keep listening because it gets even more intriguing. Entomologically, indu comes from the root und, which means to flow or issue out. Now, here is where it really gets interesting. In Sanskrit, indu refers
48:45
specifically to a drop of soma, a drop of soma. And what is soma? We've talked about this on the program before. If you don't remember, soma is the milk or juice of a special plant that gives one immortality. In the Rig Vita 8.48.3, it says that the one who drinks the milk that issues from this plant
49:15
will become immortal. The Rigveda says, quote, we have drunk the soma, we have become immortal, we have gone to the light, we have found the gods. I hope you can see the theological parallel here between soma and myrrh. In both cases, the essential ingredient issues out of some type of flora. Soma milk,
49:44
issues out of a special plant and mer sap issues out of a tree. The milk is the gift of the plant. The sap is the gift of the tree. It's this gift that makes one immortal and allows one to quote find the gods. Don't forget this is the entire objective of the Epic of Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh wants nothing more than to discover the secret to immortality.

50:13
and like Utnapishtim become like the gods. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, Tablet 11, Gilgamesh says to Utnapishtim, tell me, quote, how you came to stand in the gods' assembly and sought eternal life. Utnapishtim then says to Gilgamesh, quote, let me reveal to you a closely guarded matter, Gilgamesh, and let me tell you the secret of the gods.
50:42
plant whose root is like camel thorn. If you yourself can win that plant, you will find and then the tablet is broken here. But considering the context scholars believe it finished you will find eternal life and this is corroborated towards the end of tablet 11 when Gilgamesh tells the boatman Ershonabi that quote with it the plant.
51:10
a man may win the breath of life. Its name shall be an old man grows into a young man." Now you can just imagine there are all kinds of people out there in the world who have tried to identify out of the millions of species of plants out there, which specific plant was used to produce this very special soma. Well, I can tell you right now that they will never find it.
51:39
And that's because when you understand the language of the ancients, you realize that the soma plant is symbolic. Because remember, in the ancient world, the tree symbolized God. The soma plant symbolizes God. And the drop or sap that issues from the plant or tree symbolizes some type of very special gift.
52:08
that issues from God, which is then given to those who are willing to drink from the plant or who are willing to be anointed with the sap of the tree. And this gift ultimately gives those individuals eternal life. Chapter 9 verse 20 of the Vedic Bhagavad Gita says, quote, those who drink of the juice of the pure soma plant are cleansed.
52:37
and purified of their past sins. This makes sense because to stand in the God's assembly, like Gilgamesh desires, one would have to be like the gods, free from violations of the cosmic law. I wanna make one more observation about Indra's name in Soma.
53:02
In our last episode, I mentioned that I had no idea how the Magi, the Zoroastrian priests who sought after the Christ child knew about the importance of myrrh, why they gave him the gift of myrrh. Well, I have a much better idea now. I didn't realize this until I started putting this episode together and I'd probably just forgotten. We actually cover a lot of material on this program. It's hard to keep it all in the brain. But Zoroastrians also talk.
53:31
And most of this is found in Zoroastrian scriptures in the Yasna, that if one drank from a divine plant, the Homa, H-A-O-M-A, Homa, which is a cognate of the Vedic soma. Now cognate means that they share a common linguistic origin. They would be strengthened, healed, and that their body would be invigorated.
53:59
The Yasna 9.17 says, and this is speaking of the Homa, quote, I make my claim on thee for strength. I make my claim on thee for health and healing. I make my claim on thee for vigor of

the entire frame and for understanding. And verse 19 continues, speaking of immortality. O Homa, thou that drivest
54:28
death afar. Verse 22 continues, speaking of Homa's ability to increase wisdom. Listen to this. Quote, Homa grants to those who have long sat searching books more knowledge and more wisdom. And listen to what verse 30 says about the ability of Homa to ensure one's victory over the awful dragon.
54:56
And yes, the L.H. Mills English translation actually says dragon. Speaking of the homa, verse 30 reads, quote, "'At the aroused and fearful dragon, "'green and belching forth his poison, "'for the righteous saint that perishes, "'yellow homa hurl thy mace.'" And mace here is M-A-C-E, it's referring to weapon. It's telling the homa to hurl its weapon at the dragon.
55:26
That's some great stuff. Now verse 32 is really interesting too, because it says the homa even has the power to help one withstand the temptations of the harlot. It reads, quote, against the body of the harlot with her magic minds overthrowing, with intoxicating pleasures, to the lusts of her person offering, whose mind is vapor waivers as it flies before the wind.
55:55
for the righteous saint that perishes, yellow homa hurl thy mace. To have the power to thwart the harlot's temptations, the homa is obviously a very powerful drink that issues from a very powerful plant. There is actually a lot more great stuff in chapters nine to 11, which I wish we had time to talk about.
56:22
Maybe I'll put a recording of them on our sister podcast, the Ancient Tradition Audio Rit.
56:29
guess, just guess, where this special Homa grows. If you had to guess, where would you guess it grows? On the summits of mountains. Of course it does. Listen to the Yasna, chapter 10, verses 3 and 4. Quote, I praise the cloud that waters thee and the rains which make thee grow on the summits of the mountains.
56:58
and I praise thy lofty mountains where the Homa branches spread. The springs of righteousness most verily thou art." Wow, it teaches a lot of great stuff about the power of the Homa and what the Homa helps human beings be able to do. All right, James Darmestetter, whose translation of the Avesta I used in the last episode, wrote the following of Homa. It's a really interesting
57:28
the vidas and the avesta, call it the king of healing herbs. Zoroastrian scriptures say the Homa is of two kinds, the white Homa and the painless tree. Could it be that Soma is the tree of life, the giver of immortality? Well, that's a great question, Mr. Darmistetter. I'm arguing that yes, that yes, they are the same idea conceptually.
57:58
just different cultural expressions of a single, very, very important theological principle. Karl Gledner, a German linguist, an expert in both Zoroastrian and Vedic scripture, showed that the

word Homa was derived from the Indo-European root SAU, S-A-U, from the Proto-Indo-Iranian word Salma, which means to pound or
58:28
press. The Zoroastrians would prepare the Homa drink by pounding or pressing the twigs of a plant. Now this is interesting because if you remember in our last episode I pointed out that the Shah-on-Shah or the Persian king of kings carried a sacred bundle of twigs in his hand like a scepter. The bar-some. Well scholars believe the bar-some is closely related to the Homa ritual.
58:57
and may have originally consisted of Homa stocks, twigs, branches of a tree of some sort. In a peer-reviewed article on Homa culture, the author, Macaulay Bilgiscy writes, quote, in ancient times, the Homa twigs were probably part of the Barsam bundle. Now, from what we've seen in the ancient world, theologically, this makes complete sense.
59:25
Remember the scepter that was given to King Emma Duranki in ancient Mesopotamia? It was the branch of the sacred Qisqanu tree. And here Zoroastrians are using sacred twigs holding them like a scepter. And what's more, Zoroastrians use the milk pressed from these twigs, much like the myrrh pressed from a tree. And they find that it strengthens, heals, helps one become victorious.
59:53
grants one immortality. Theologically it's very consistent. We probably aren't far off on our thinking. Macaulay Bilgesi, who I just mentioned, also connects the Zoroastrian Homa to the Judeo-Christian tree of life. On page 166 he writes the following, quote, the Homa plant is an emblem of immortality. It reminds one of the tree of life of the Christian scriptures in the Garden of Eden.
01:00:24
As the tree of life is guarded by the cherubim, so the homa isophed, or the white homa, is guarded by 99,999 fervashes, or guardian spirits.
01:00:41
If Bill Gisse is correct, then it really wouldn't be that surprising after all that the Magi would know and understand the theological significance of myrrh among the early Christians. Okay, I took a bit of a detour there. I just wanted you to see all of the nifty connections in Indra's name. It basically means a drop or sap of soma. The anointing.
01:01:11
Back to how the God Indra is understood in Hinduism. In the Rig Veda, hymn 32 verse 15, Indra is referred to as a king. The verse reads, quote, "'Indra is king of all that moves and moves not, "'of creatures tame and horned, "'the thunder wielder over all living men. "'He rules as sovereign.'"
01:01:39
So that verse clearly indicates that Indra is understood to reign as a celestial king over all people and all things. He is the divine sovereign. Now what's interesting about this text, the placement of this declaration that Indra reigns as a king in the Rigveda is really important. Why? Because this statement is made right after the text tells us he slayed the awful dragon
01:02:09

Yep, right after. Just like we see across the ancient world, it's only after the hero has slain the dragon that the hero has made a king. The Rig Vita is in complete keeping with this kingship theology. Indra has made a heavenly king precisely because he slayed the dragon. That's why he's king. I've mentioned Indra's defeat of the Awful Vitra several times on the program, but I haven't actually read the original account.
01:02:37
which is recorded in the Rig Vita. So I wanna do that here. It's actually kind of long, so I'm only gonna give a couple sections of it. It's a nice account. In this account, Vritra, who's often depicted as a serpent or a dragon-like being, is holding back the waters crucial for life, rendering the earth barren and dry. Indra actively volunteers to take on the task of defeating Vritra.
01:03:06
This account is found in the Rig Vita, HEM 32. It reads, and this is the Ralph Griffith translation. I'm gonna add a little commentary here and there, which mostly comes from Ralph Griffith himself. Quote, I will declare the manly deeds of Indra, the first that achieved the Thunder Wielder. He slew the dragon. It's actually serpent in Sanskrit. Then disclosed.
01:03:35
the waters and cleft the channels of the mountain torrents. He slew the dragon lying on the mountains. His heavenly bolt of thunder, Vashtar fastened. Now Vashtar is the artisan god. He's the one who fashions the special weapons and in this case the special weapon Indra used to battle Vritra. Impetuous as a bull, he chose the Soma and in three sacred beakers drank the juices.
01:04:05
So to prepare for his battle with Vritra, what does Indra do? He drinks three beakers full of the Soma. Just like what we read earlier, the Soma prepares him and helps him in the battle. Magavan. Now Magavan means wealthy or Lord beautiful. So this is actually an epitaph that's given to Indra. Grasped the thunder for his weapon and smote the death, the firstborn of the dragons.
01:04:35
When Indra, thou hast slain the dragons firstborn, and overcome the charms of the enchanters. Now, the charms of the enchanters here refers to Vritra, and the demons supernatural powers. Then giving life to sun and dawn in heaven, thou foundest not one foe to stand against thee. Indra with his great and deadly thunder, smote into pieces Vritra, worse of Vritras.
01:05:04
As trunks of trees, what time the axe hath failed them, low on the earth so lies the prostrate dragon. So he's taken down like a tree is taken down. He, in this part, refers to Vritra, like a made-weak warrior, challenged Indra, the great impestuous mini-slaying hero. From here, the hymn goes on to describe how Indra, after slaying the dragon, let loose the waters of life.
01:05:33
The hymn ends proclaiming Indra's victory. It says, when Indra and the dragon strove in battle, Mahagavan gained the victory forever. And what is the verse that comes right after this? Right after Indra has triumphantly slain Vritra? Well, it's this, quote, Indra is king of all. That's where he's declared king, right after the battle. So here we see Indra, the king of all.
01:06:01

who's also referred to as the King of the Divas, the King of the Gods, obtains his kingship as a heavenly king, just as we would expect after having conquered the dragon. I wanna point out here too, that this account is cosmogonic. What that means is that this account, in line with the Mesopotamian enuma liege, teaches that the earth was created as a result of conquering the dragon. It's only when Vritra is conquered that the life-giving waters are unleashed.
01:06:31
waters that produce life and fertility and abundance. Okay, let's look at the iconography now. Iconographically, Indra is portrayed as the king of the gods. He's always portrayed anthropomorphically as a man. He's usually shown wielding the Vajra, the thunderbolt, the weapon that Vashtar created for him, which he used to destroy Vritra. The weapon represents
01:06:59
not just his capacity to destroy enemies, but it reinforces his position as the institutor of and protector of cosmic order. And in these representations Indra is often seated on a throne in his heavenly abode in Amravati surrounded by other deities. This emphasizes his role as the sovereign ruler of the heavens and he's
01:07:25
frequently depicted wearing an elaborate crown or tiara. My favorite is when he's depicted wearing a crown called the Kharit Mukut, the Kharit Mukut crown. If you look at the Mukut, it looks like he's wearing a mountain right on the top of his head. And that's because that's exactly what he is wearing on his head, a mountain. The Mukut crown is meant to represent the sacred mountain, Mount Maru.
01:07:53
And we'll talk about Mount Meru more in coming days. But you'll not be surprised to learn that in Hindu tradition, Mount Meru is considered the center, the sacred center of the universe. And it's the sacred location where, surprise, surprise, the gods reside. It's there in Trams Dimsa, heaven, located on the peak of Mount Meru.
01:08:23
that Indra resides in a magnificent celestial city named Amravati in a stunning palace named Vayayanta made of gold and precious jewels. It's from this palace that Indra rules as a celestial king. You can find images of Indra wearing the Makut crown on the webpage for this episode.
01:08:49
As you can see, pretty much everything we've learned about Indra's kingship on this episode matches up with the stubborn bits we've covered on the podcast. And that doesn't even include a discussion on Indra and the cosmic law Rita. There's great stuff there too, but we just don't have time to cover it in this episode. To close out this episode though, I wanna share one last stubborn bit, a stubborn bit that is truly breathtaking.
01:09:16
in terms of its cosmological, theological, and heavenly kingship implications. It's a stubborn bit that corroborates several theological arguments that we made on the program over a year ago. In a Vedic text known as the Brahma Vavarta Purana, we find this amazing account of Indra who becomes excessively proud and needs to be taught a lesson about the consequences of pride.
01:09:45
Now it's important to point out that this text was written much much later than the Rig Vita, which we pointed out earlier was written sometime between 1500 and 1000 BC. Scholars believe this

text, the Vavarta Purana, was written sometime between the 3rd and 10th centuries AD, though they believe some portions of it could have been written earlier. And I point this out because by this time in Vedic history, Indra had lost status.
01:10:12
He was still considered the king of the gods, but other gods like Vishnu and Shiva had risen in prominence. In these late Puranas, Indra is often portrayed as flawed, jealous, insecure, and they portray him sometimes as acting in morally ambiguous ways. And that's how he's portrayed in this account. Now, that's not why I'm sharing this account with you. It's the cosmology that's taught in this account that I'm interested in sharing with you here. Just know that the historical context of the account
01:10:42
is a flawed Indra, which we know is theologically unlikely, considering that earlier texts emphasize his role as the protector and enforcer of Rita, which was illustrated in his victory over Vritra. And from what we've learned from the ancients, we know that Indra was only able to conquer Vritra because he upheld the cosmic law. He wouldn't have had the power to do so otherwise. So.
01:11:08
This becomes another example of the deterioration of some of these theologies over time. Okay, to the account. In this account, which is found in chapter 47, Indra, the king of the gods, after defeating the dragon Vritra, becomes consumed with pride, and he wants nothing more to build an extraordinary palace on the peak of Mount Maru. And he commands Vishvakarma,
01:11:38
the divine architect to construct the most ostentatious palace that he can think of. As Vishpa Karma works on the palace, Indra makes more and more extravagant demands. About this time, a young Brahmin boy, who we learn later in the text is actually the god Vishnu in disguise, visits Indra's ostentatious palace. And the boy says to Indra, and I'm reading from the
01:12:08
quote, Oh best, Oh gods, no Indra before you was capable of affecting such a construction. Indra infatuated with the wine of prosperity and hearing the words of the boy laughed loudly. Indra doesn't quite seem to pick up that Vishnu isn't really praising his construction. His statement is actually an indictment of Indra's pride. Indra does, however,
01:12:36
pick up on the fact that Vishnu said, no other Indra before you. No other Indra? This meant that there were other Indras. That Indra was actually a title and not just a one God phenomenon. So Indra questions him. Quote, oh Brahmin boy, please reveal to me how many Indras you have seen and about how many you have heard.
01:13:07
Indra wants to know how many Indras, how many cosmic kings are out there. And this is Vishnu's response, quote, Oh, king of the gods, indeed, no one can say how many kinds of creation or universes or ages are there. And in each universe, how many Brahmas, Vishnus and Sivas? None can calculate those universes, each of which contains a Brahma.
01:13:37
Vishnu and Shiva. Whoa! Vishnu tells Indra that there are so many universes out there that nobody can say how many there are. You know, universes beyond universes. There's a whole

episode out there on that. And then he tells him that nobody can say how many Brahmas and Vishnus and Sivas are connected to those universes.
01:14:04
This is significant because Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva make up what is known in Hinduism as the Trimudi. In Hinduism, these three gods make up the Trinity of supreme divinity. So what Vishnu is saying is that there is a Trinity of gods associated with each and every universe and that because there are innumerable universes, there are innumerable Trimudi in the cosmos.
01:14:31
Vishnu's statement is mind-blowing on a number of levels, but especially in terms of how three gods seem to be associated with each universe. This is so interesting. Vishnu continues speaking to Indra, Oh, King of Gods, the servants hold that it is possible to count the particles of sand or the currents of rainwater, but no one can count the Indras.
01:15:00
Again, whoa. Here Vishnu answers Indra's original question. How many Indras or heavenly kings are out there in the cosmos? And what does Vishnu say? He says, hey, it's possible to count the grains of sand, but it is not possible to count the number of Indras or heavenly kings that exist out there in the cosmos. Jaw dropping.
01:15:29
just jaw-dropping because this theology is the same theology I've been arguing all along that the ancients have been teaching. Vishnu continues, quote, child not to talk of the number of Indras there are no end of those Brahmas the universes are countless which contain many gods like myself.
01:16:00
quote, as an artificial boat floats on the waters of the world, so the Brahmins float on the pure water. If you're a long time listener, you should know why what is said here is so significant. Vishnu is talking about a boat floating on water. Where have we heard this before? Well, all over the ancient world.
01:16:30
floating on the waters. He's of course talking about Brahma floating on the primordial waters. When God appeared in the chaotic elements and instituted order in the chaos, when he formed a universe. The universe, the sacred space God created in the waters is the boat. Remember how the Egyptian God Ray rules on a throne from a boat? This is the same thing. The boat is the place of safety in the cosmic.
01:16:59
chaotic waters. Stick with me. Remember how R.T. Rundle Clark on page 35 of Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt argued that the primordial waters don't actually have a surface? That really the ancients were talking about God creating a vast cavity of sacred ordered space in the profane waters like a bubble? Well that's what Vishnu was talking about here when he says quote, as an artificial boat floats on the waters of the world
01:17:28
So the Brahmins float on the pure water. It's the same theology. He's talking about innumerable sacred air bubbles called universes floating in the primordial waters, each one governed by an Indra, a heavenly king. That's a lot to think about. That's it for me.
01:17:58

I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare, knowledge is the wing we're with, flight of heaven. I'm Jack Logan.
01:18:12
You've been listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production.

Episode #50 - A Cosmic Temple

https://theancienttradition.com/50-a-cosmic-temple/

00:00
Music
00:10
You're listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. Here's your host, Dr. Jack Logan.
00:25
Welcome to the Ancient Tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. Welcome to all of you, longtime listeners and new listeners. We're glad that you're listening in. Today I think you're going to learn something new. Maybe not, but hopefully you will. If you're a new listener, we heartily welcome you to the program. But I think it's important to start by telling you what to expect from this podcast because this podcast is unlike other religious podcasts in the cyrosphere.
00:53
This podcast is not set up like a sermon or a Sunday school class or a scripture a day podcast. There are plenty of awesome and wonderful podcasts just like that already available. Nor is this podcast focused on one particular religion like Islam, Taoism, or Hinduism. This podcast is unlike any other religious podcast out there because we start with the premise that in the very beginning of human history, God imparted
01:23
to human beings the immutable truth about who he is, his true nature and divine characteristics, along with the immutable truth about the heavens, the spiritual realm where he dwells, and the immutable truth about why we're on this planet. And why do we begin there? Why do we begin with this premise? Well, because that's exactly what the ancients themselves tell us.
01:53
They tell us in their writings that in the beginning, God imparted to them a rich, sophisticated theology. A theology which human beings needed to know and needed to understand if they were to reach their fullest potential. And I'm gonna give you an example of this. For example, in Hinduism, in the Satapatha Brahmana, it's dated to sometime between the eighth and sixth centuries BC, we find an important passage on Vedic ritual.
02:23
The Satapatha Brahmana is a commentary. It's a commentary on the Vajravita, which focuses almost exclusively on Vedic religious rituals. Now listen to what the Satapatha Brahmana 7.2.1.4

says about Vedic ritual. And this is the Julius Eggeling translation. It says, quote, "'Now that same thing which the gods did is done here.'"
02:52
This passage attests that the rituals that Hindus perform are understood to be the same rituals that gods performed. Even though it doesn't say it directly in this verse, the verse actually refers to the rituals that the gods performed in the very beginning. The context of the chapter, chapter seven, is kind of important. It's actually about the ritual erecting of an altar, which Hindus believe has the power to dispel darkness and evil.
03:21
The erection of this altar was actually the ritual reenactment of the creation of the world in the very beginning, which we're going to talk about more when we talk about altars. And the casting out or the dispelling of evil, which the gods did before the world, aka the altar, could be created. So in this first, Hindus are telling us that the rituals that are performing on earth are the same rituals.
03:50
that the gods performed in the beginning. The rest of 7.2.1.4 reads, quote, Now that same thing which the gods did is done here. Even now that darkness and evil has indeed been dispelled by the gods themselves. But when he, and that he refers to the human being that's erecting this altar, now does this. It is because he thinks, quote,
04:19
I must do what the gods did. The passage is pretty straightforward. Hindus are telling us that the rituals they perform are modeled after the rituals the gods performed in the beginning. Rituals the gods modeled for human beings in the very beginning. This is what the ancients themselves tell us. So for you new listeners, what we just did here is what we do in every episode.
04:48
actual texts the ancients left. The papyri and the hieroglyphs, cuneiform tablets and the codices. And we read directly from them right on the program. We read what the ancients actually had to say. On this program the ancients get the center stage. We give them the pulpit. Because we do this, because we dive into the texts,
05:14
Sometimes the podcast can feel a little bit academic and sometimes maybe even a little bit tedious, but that's because I don't want you to take my word for it. I want you to hear it directly from them, from the ancients themselves. And if you're anything like me, a bit nerdy and a bit of a wonk, then you'll find that what the ancients had to say was incredibly exciting, especially because as we've discovered up to this point in the program, from what we've learned from their texts,
05:42
that they're teaching what looks like a number of universal truths and one theology, a theology which we call in this program the ancient tradition. If you're interested in this topic, as I think all human beings should be, I of course invite you to listen in, but I also want to invite you to study the ancient texts for yourself. Don't take my word for it.
06:08
There are so, so many ancient texts now that have been translated into English or can be easily translated using Google Translate into any language, which makes them accessible to anyone

who wants to take a look and study them. I also wanna make you aware of just a couple of additional resources. This podcast has a companion website, thea
06:32
where you could find a webpage dedicated to each episode. You just go in to the menu and you click on show notes and you scroll down until you find the episode that you want. In each episode page, you'll find pictures and you can find a full transcript and some links. And in addition to that, you can find full audio recordings as some of the ancient texts that we refer to on the program. On our sister podcast, the ancient tradition audio writ.
07:01
And you can find audio writ anywhere that you get your podcast. With that, let's jump into today's episode. We've spent quite a bit of time over the past couple of episodes examining who the major civilizations in the ancient world, in particular, the ancient Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Canaanites, Hebrews, Persians, Chinese, Hindus, and early Christians.
07:30
tell us God is. And we've dug into the ancient texts and the iconography and we found that each one of these ancient civilizations taught the same thing about who God is. Each one attested and continue to attest that a civil government exists in heaven and that God reigns at the head of that celestial government as a king. And there are several other ancient civilization that
08:00
to the magisterial character of God, like Zeus, who reigned as the king of the gods in ancient Greece, and Jupiter, who reigned as the king of the gods in ancient Rome, and the Japanese Amei no Minakhanushi, who rules in the very center of heaven as the great kami sovereign, and the Vietnamese god, Om Troi,
08:30
who's always depicted dressed in imperial attire, and who was referred to as the Vlaa Cha Njap Jong, which in English is the monarchical father, or the Aztec god, Tezla Copoca, from which Aztec kings drew their legitimacy, and who in the frontispiece of the Codex, Freyavari Meyer, is featured in the center of four trees, each marking a cardinal point.
08:59
and who wore jade jewelry, which symbolized his divine status. And of course, the Norse god Odin, whom we learn in the Old English poem titled Nine Herbs Charm, dated to the 11th century AD, slew a worm, wyrm, which is a serpent or a Germanic dragon, with, get this, the twig or branch.
09:28
a tree. The poem reads, and this is the Bill Griffiths translation, a serpent came crawling but it destroyed no one when Odin took nine twigs of glory and then struck the adder, which is the serpent, so that it flew into nine pieces. So there's the Theomache and it's quite interesting, of course, that he used a branch of a tree to slay the serpent.
09:57
And Odin, of course, goes on to rule as the king of the gods, the king of the Norse pantheon. In a book titled Myth and Religion of the North, written by Edward Turville Petra, professor of ancient Icelandic literature and antiquities at the University of Oxford, it says this of the god Odin on page 70. Odin appears as the god of chieftains, kings, and thus the highest god.
10:26

the legendary founders of the English nation, were said to descend from him. And as Bede said, many indeed nearly all of the provincial kings traced their descent from Odin. So here again, we see a direct tie between the king of heaven and the earthly king's right to rule. There's an important Norse text titled Gilfonganing.
10:54
which is found in the 13th century AD proseda, which we've talked about on the program. The King of Sweden, King Gylfi, is taken into heaven to Asgard, to the home of the gods, where he sees three figures, each seated on a throne. And this is the Arthur Gilchrist Broder translation, speaking of what King Gylfi saw. Quote, he saw three high seats.
11:23
each above the other and three men sat there on one on each. Note how there are three separate thrones here and three separate gods who are described in the text as men each seated on a throne. Quote, and he asked what might be the name of those lords. He who had conducted him in
11:51
answered that the one who sat on the nethermost high seat was a king. Note how the god seated on the high throne is called a king. A couple of lines later, King Guilfy learns that this is Odin, the All-Father, called the All-Father because he is the father of all the gods. The text reads, quote, Gonglery began his questions thus, who is foremost or oldest
12:20
of all the gods. Howrey answered, He is called in our speech All-Father, but in the Elder Asgard he had twelve names. Then the text goes on to list Odin's twelve names. He lives throughout all ages and governs all his realm and directs all things great and small. Then just guess what the text recounts next.
12:48
one of whom is Odin, slew the terrible giant Ymir, after which Odin created the earth out of Ymir's dead carcass. And you longtime listeners know why Odin used Ymir's carcass to create the earth. What the text says right after this is really important, but I'm gonna save it for our next episode. In section 14, we're told that the first thing that Odin did as the king of heaven was, quote, established rulers, of which there were 12.
13:19
gave them power to, quote, ordain fates, and bade them build a house, a palace hall in Asgard where they could hold council or court. The text reads, then said, gonglery, what did all father then do when Asgard was made? Howrey answered, in the beginning, he established rulers and bade them ordain fates with him.
13:46
and give counsel concerning the planning of the town that was in the place which is called Eid-el-Feyeld, and that is a large field or plain in the center of Asgard, which is heaven, in the midst of the town. It was their first work to make that court in which their twelve seats stand, and another the high seat which All-Father himself has. That house is the best made of any on earth and the greatest.
14:14

Without and within, it is all like one piece of gold. Men call it gladshime. If you're a long time listener to the program, I'm sure you can see the pattern here like we see everywhere else, where God reigns as a king over a royal court in a celestial palace.
14:32
And finally, the Celtic god Lugos or Lugus was the king of the gods over the Celtic pantheon. In Ireland, there was a mortal hero by the name of Lug. He was a victorious youth who, no surprise, defeated the monstrous Balor, who was, quote, a malevolent supernatural being who wrecked havoc and destruction in the Second Battle of Moitura.
15:01
After Lug defeats Balor, he goes on to be the, quote, paradigm of holy and priestly kingship. And of course, you're not going to be surprised at all to learn that Lug had in his possession several special weapons, a, quote, unstoppable fiery spear, and a special sling stone. Lug is the Irish expression of the Celtic god, Lugus.
15:27
The pattern of kingship and kingship theology here is unmistakable, and it's unmistakable in all of the examples that we've covered today and that we've covered over the past couple of episodes. Now I know I have really driven home this point, and I've probably overdone it. I understand that, but that's because it's so important. If we don't get that God reigns as a king,
15:52
and see that this is a universal truth that all the ancients taught, then we're never going to understand the full magnitude of the theology that God imparts in the beginning, in the dream time, in the first time, in the Garden of Eden. And that would be a terrible misfortune because as we've already begun to see on the program, this theology holds a whole heck of a lot of answers for why we're here on this planet and the nature of our highest destiny. Now
16:21
Before I can return to a discussion of the first time, we kind of have to take a slight step back and talk about a few things, which are gonna greatly increase our understanding of the first time. Over the past two years, we've taken a deep dive into the ancient texts. We've seen the ancients teach us over and over and over again, regardless of where we are in the ancient world, the same theology, which follows a consistent
16:51
sequence of events. Now please forgive me for just a moment as I briefly recount them. I just want to make sure that our new listeners are following along. The ancients tell us that in the beginning number one a rebellious God sought to overthrow the order of heaven. Number two a selfless God stepped forward and offered to battle the rebellious God. Number three the selfless God
17:20
with the help of special weapons defeated the rebellious God. And number four, having victoriously defeated the rebellious God, the selfless God was crowned by his father, a divine heavenly king. Now it's what the ancient texts tell us happened next that we're going to talk about today and is of utmost importance to understand to get a comprehensive understanding of the remainder of the podcast.
17:50

All of you long time listeners out there, do you recall what happens next? Well, the ancient texts tell us that one of two things happened. The newly crowned heavenly king either number one began creating the universe or the world, or number two, he began building a temple or both. I want to take
18:16
Just a minute here and briefly review a couple of the examples of this in the ancient text so you get a feel for this aspect of the theology. For example, in tablets four and five of the Mesopotamian enumerate, it tells us that after Marduk defeated Tiamat, he then used Tiamat's carcass to create the earth. We saw the same thing among the Hebrews in the Old Testament in Psalm 89
18:45
where the text tells us that Yahweh defeated Rahab and then created the world. And like we mentioned in our last episode, we saw the same thing in the Rig Veda when Indra defeated Vritra. He initiated life into the world, having unleashed the waters Vritra was imprisoning. And like I just mentioned earlier in today's episode, like we see in the prose Edah, where the sons of Bor, one of whom is Odin, defeated Ymir.
19:14
then used Ymir's carcass to create the world. In each of these texts the ability to create the universal world to impose order on chaos was the result of the selfless god's defeat over the rebellious god, the god of chaos. Now in other texts we see that after the defeat of the rebellious god the first thing the selfless god does is seek a place to rest.
19:43
after the battle. He can't find a place to rest, so the first thing he does is build a palace temple where he can dwell. We see this mentioned in Tablet 4 of the Mesopotamian Enuma Elish right after Marduk uses Tiamat's carcass to create the earth. Tablet 4 reads, and this is the Stephanie Dalley translation, quote, He sliced her in half like a fish for
20:11
roof the sky. Then two lines after this and I'm going to talk about those two lines in our next episode because they're really important but I'm going to save that for then. The text reads, speaking of Marduk, quote, he crossed the heavens and sought out a shrine which is a temple. In tablet five Marduk says, I shall make a house which is a temple to be a luxurious dwelling for myself.
20:41
and I shall establish my private quarters and confirm my kingship." Now, the statement that he makes right there comes just six lines after the text says, quote, they, the gods, gave kingship to Marduk. So here in the Mesopotamian enuma Elish, we see that after Marduk defeats Tiamat, he's crowned a king, and then he both creates the universe and builds a temple. In the ancient Canaanite literature,
21:11
We see that after the god Baal defeated Yam, the first thing that he desired to do was build a temple. In fragment two, AB, Baal appeals to the high god for their right to build a temple. The text reads, quote, "'But alas, he cries unto Bol El his father, "'to El the king his begetter. "'Look, no house,' which is a temple, "'has Baal like the gods.'
21:41

Let a house be built for all like the gods. So build thou a silver and gold house, a house of most pure lapis lazuli. And I realize I've been pronouncing that wrong this whole time. I thought it was lapis lazuli, but it's apparently lapis lazuli. It doesn't look like that when it's spelled that way, but there you go. After this comes Kather Wakasa, who's the divine master builder. Then answered Poussaint Ball.
22:09
Quickly, a house, O Cawther, quickly raise up a palace. Quickly the house shalt thou build. Quickly shall raise up the palace. A thousand fields the house shall cover. A myriad acres the palace. So the temple that Baal wants to build is massive. It covers, according to this text, quote, a thousand fields, a myriad acres.
22:39
The sheer size of this temple is actually an important tidbit. In this text, the victorious god Baal earned the right to build this temple because of his victorious defeat over Yam. Among the Hittites, in a text known as the Myth of Iluyanca, the storm god teams up with a god by the name of Inaris.
23:08
Ulyanka the dragon. And after they succeed, Inaris builds a temple. The text reads and this is the Gary Beckman translation quote when the storm God and the serpent came to grips in the town of Kiskalusa. The serpent smote the storm God and then he seeks Inaris help. The storm God came and slew the serpent. The other gods were at his side. Inaris
23:37
went to the town of Kiskalousa, that's where the battle originally took place, and set her house. Temple. And if you recall, we saw the same pattern in ancient Greece. In line 287 of the Homeric hymn to Apollo, when the god Apollo, after defeating Python, resolved to build his, quote,
24:06
Here is the place I intend to erect a most beautiful temple.
24:14
From these examples, we can clearly see that after the hero God defeats the dragon and is crowned a heavenly king, he does one of two things or both. He either initiates the creation or he builds a temple. Okay, so why two different options? Well, the answer to this question is incredibly important because
24:43
In the ancient world, there is no difference between the two. Between creating the universe and building a temple. They are one and the same thing. To create a universe is to create a temple. To build a temple is to build a universe.
25:12
both are expressions of kingdom building. They are both expressions of the newly crowned heavenly king initiating the creation of his newly inherited cosmic kingdom. And this is pretty easily illustrated in ancient Egypt. If you remember when the ancient Egyptian high god Atum appeared over the primordial waters of Nune and he saw nothing but an infinite mess of chaotic
25:41
And this is found in Coffin Texts, Spell 80. Quote, I could find no place on which to stand or sit. My throne had not yet been put together that I might sit on it. So when Atum looks out, he sees

no creation, no palace temple, no throne on which to sit and rest. And what happens next? Well, Pyramid Texts 600.
26:11
which we talked about extensively in episode number 31, tells us that the chaotic elements, which we learned from the Memphite Shabaka Stone were commanded via divine utterance by the god Ptah to order themselves into land, into a hill known as the Primordial Hillock or Primordial Hill, rose out of the chaos. The creation began. See,
26:41
The response to Atum's distress about not having a throne that had been put together yet wasn't the building of a brick and mortar throne. The response was the initiation of the creation, the initiation of his cosmic kingdom. And that's because the building of a palace temple where the throne would sit in the center and the building of the universe, the creation, where God would sit in the center of his
27:10
and the same thing. To create a universe was to create a cosmic temple. And this is exactly how the ancient Egyptians depicted Atum. Now remember Atum was syncretized with Re and Ra. So when I say Atum, I'm talking about Atum, Re, Ra. They're all the same. They almost always
27:39
seated on a throne at the very top of the obelisk, right on the Pyramidion, the Benben stone, the stone that represented the Primordial Mount. The creation, that first land to come out of the chaos. For example, if you're lucky enough to visit the Piazza del Popolo in Italy, I have not yet been. You'll find what's known as the Flaminio Obelisk.
28:06
It's an ancient Egyptian obelisk dedicated to King Sedi I. He was the second pharaoh of the 19th dynasty. And this exact obelisk was actually the very first obelisk that was removed from Egypt on the orders of Emperor Augustus, then taken to Rome, where it was placed on the Spina as the axle center of the Circus Maximus. That's where they ran the chariot races. This is actually really important and we're going to talk about that more in another episode.
28:36
This very obelisk originally stood outside the very, very important temple to Re in Heliopolis. Now if you were to examine this obelisk on the pinnacle of this obelisk right on the Pyramidion, the Benben stone, you're going to see a depiction of Atum seated on a throne, a scepter in his hand. But it's simply
29:04
This obelisk depicts Atum sitting directly atop the primordial mound, directly atop his creation. That's where his throne is. Iconographically, his creation is his palace temple. You see that? If you'd like to see a picture of this, you can find it on the webpage for this episode. In the ancient world, the creation of the universe was understood to be nothing less
29:34
than the construction of a temple. And this is no better illustrated than in chapter 8 of the book of Job in the Hebrew Bible. So listen very closely to these verses to how Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament, himself uses temple imagery to describe the process of creating the world.
29:59

See if you can count how many temple building references Yahweh uses to describe the creation process. Starting in verse 4, Yahweh says, and he's speaking to Job here, and this is the revised standard version, quote, Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know.
30:29
or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone? How many temple references did you count? I counted five. In these three verses, Yahweh directly links the creation of the world to the building of a brick and mortar temple. He refers to a foundation.
30:58
precise measurements, bases, which are solid supports, and a cornerstone. Yahweh also asks, quote, "'Who stretched the line upon it?' Which actually refers to a very important ancient temple building ritual where a line or a rope was stretched out to lay out the temple's foundation and to plot its axis. In ancient Egypt, the stretching of the line ceremony
31:26
and this is going to come as no surprise to many of you, was directly associated with Ma'at, which represented truth and righteousness and order. And don't forget that just two episodes ago, in episode number 48, Uhura Mazda, we saw that the Zoroastrian god Uhura Mazda is universally depicted holding what looks like a ring in his hand, but which we learned represents the rope.
31:55
that was used to stretch the line for a sacred temple. And to drive home the point even further, it's this ring, this rope, that Ahura Mazda grants to the earthly king, which signifies that Ahura Mazda has granted the earthly king the right to rule as a king and to build a temple. Don't miss the profound depth of the theology here.
32:23
temple building is equivalent to creating a cosmos, a cosmic kingdom, then what Ahura Mazda is really symbolizing when he grants the rope ring to the earthly king is the power and authority to create, the power and authority to build a sacred cosmic kingdom, the power and authority to create a sacred cosmic temple. This is the theology of the ancient world.
32:53
That is the theology that is conveyed when Ahura Mazda passes the rope ring to the Earthly King. It's all right there. But you have to know that in the ancient world, like we just saw in the book of Job with Yahweh, that the creation and temple building are one in the same thing if you're to see and understand the theology that's being conveyed. If you'd like to see pictures of Ahura Mazda grasping the rope ring, or a picture of him giving the rope ring to the Earthly King,
33:22
You can find it on the webpage for episode number 48. You know, it's no wonder in the Lord of the Rings that the creature Smeagol didn't want to let go of the ring because that ring would give him unimaginable power. In a previous episode, we talked about how Gandalf experienced a name change. Well, did you know that in the series, Smeagol did too? See, Smeagol was originally a hobbit.
33:51

It was actually his cousin, Deagle, who originally found the ring in a river bed near Gladden Fields. Smeagol killed his cousin so that he could obtain the ring. And because he killed for the ring, we already know he wasn't worthy for it. He wasn't worthy to have the ring or that kind of power. And when the other hobbits found out that Smeagol had killed his cousin, they banished him from the Shire. So now he's an outcast.
34:17
and he goes into the Misty Mountains and he finds shelter in a dark, dank cave. And then he lets the thoughts of that ring consume and corrupt his mind to the point that he becomes a hideous, disfigured creature. Smeagol was his birth name. That's the name he was given at birth. The new name was given to him to represent the monster that he became.
34:43
The name he was given after that awful transformation that took place was Gollum. Pretty interesting. Again, in the ancient world, creating a universe is the same thing as creating a cosmic temple and building a cosmic temple is the same thing as building a universe. So why is creating a universe and building a cosmic temple the same thing? Well,
35:11
That's because the definition of a temple is a sacred or holy precinct. A holy precinct that's cut off or separated from everything that's profane. Whenever God brings about order, or in cosmology speak, cosmo-sizes something, which comes from the root word cosmos, which if you remember, literally means ordered or orderly arrangement. It changes. It shifts.
35:40
from a profane, disordered state to a sacred, ordered state. Take the disordered, inert, dark, primordial waters where the dragon dwells, for instance. These waters represent disorder and chaos, a profane state. When God imposes order on them, it sanctifies them precisely because such order can only be brought about by upholding the cosmic law of righteousness.
36:10
It can only be established through truth and justice and righteousness. So to establish order is to sanctify it. The antonym of chaos is order and the antonym of profane is sacred. So when God brings about order, he's bringing about the sacred. This means that every single thing that God has ordered into existence, the earth,
36:37
the universe, the entire cosmos, his entire cosmic kingdom is sacred space, a sacred cosmic temple. In other words, God's entire cosmic kingdom is a temple. So when we read in the ancient texts that the young Canaanite god Baal, after defeating the dragon Yam, desired to build a temple,
37:06
a temple that covered quote, a thousand fields and a myriad acres. We know that it's talking about a much, much, much, much grander temple than our finite minds have the capacity to comprehend because it's talking about creating an entire cosmos, a sacred cosmic space or bubble with myriad planets and myriad stars that are cut off from the profane chaotic waters. It's talking about Baal.
37:35
building not just any old temple, it's talking about him building a cosmic temple. In the ancient world, earthly temples like the temple of Karnak in ancient Egypt or the temple of King Solomon

in Jerusalem or something like the temple of Angkor Wat in Cambodia were and are miniature models of God's vast cosmic kingdom or temple.
38:03
Earthly temples were designed as microcosms or miniature representations of the macrocosm, which is the entire universe or cosmos. These ancient temples were intentionally crafted to reflect the structure and order of the larger universe, which because its sacred space is a cosmic temple. As above, so below. Now, these are not my ideas.
38:33
This understanding is well established in the scholarly community. A scholar by the name of Dina Ragavine out of Harvard, who worked as a postdoctoral fellow at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, organized a seminar and edited this amazing tome. And it's a tome titled Temples, Ritual and Cosmic Symbolism in the Ancient World. And this is what she says on page one, quote,
39:02
The idea that sacred architecture held cosmic symbolism has a long history in the study of the ancient Near East. From the excavations of the mid-19th century to the scholars of the early 20th century, we see repeated the notion that the Mesopotamian ziggurat reflected the form of the cosmos. Temple topography provides evidence for the conception of the temple as a reflection or embodiment of the cosmos.
39:31
And then on page three she says, the heart of the seminar published here is the idea that architectural forms at any scale can be images or replicas of the greater cosmos. Microcosms of the macrocosm. I wanna illustrate this notion. I wanna illustrate the notion of the cosmos as sacred space or a cosmic temple, and the notion of earthly temples as miniature models of the cosmic temple.
39:59
by using R.T. Rundle's cosmic bubble metaphor. And part of this is gonna bleed over into our next episode. So don't worry if you don't get it all here. Rundle argued that the ancient Egyptians understood the universe like we would a massive air bubble, an air bubble completely surrounded by water. The ancient Egyptians attested that everything within the air bubble was ordered and sacred. They understood that the bubble was sacred space.
40:29
a cosmic temple. They attested that everything outside the bubble, the waters, which I'm referring to here in quotes because you long-time listeners know that the ancients weren't talking about actual water here, they're talking about unorganized chaotic matter, was disordered and profane. The waters were the place in the cosmos where God did not dwell. Now as you're going to see in just a second, the ancient Egyptians were not the only ones who taught that the cosmos were structured
40:59
virtually every group of people that I've come across in the ancient world attest to this exact same structure. That out there in the cosmos there is a division, a cosmic division between sacred and profane space. I'm gonna give you example. While R.T. Rundle Clark likes to symbolize the ancient Egyptian understanding of this division with the image of a sacred air bubble, other ancient civilizations used the symbol of an egg.

41:28
or like we saw in ancient China, a gourd. Or do you remember the Chinese account of the Old Yellow One? We talked about it in episode number 39, Symbols of the Sacred Center. And I love the account of the Old Yellow One. It's one of my favorite. I haven't shared the whole account with you yet, but if you recall, in that account, the first man, the Chinese Adam, who's referred to as the Old Yellow One, is visited in the very beginning
41:58
by a gold being who teaches him some very important things, all of which align with the theology we see taught in the ancient tradition. As part of this instruction, the gold one teaches the old yellow one this very thing, this very thing, how the cosmos are truly structured. And as a quick aside, take note how this gold being descends from heaven in a ray of light. That's going to be important down the line.
42:28
I'm going to read Barbara C. Sproul's retelling of the account on page 200 of her book Primal Myths. In this account, the Chinese atom is gazing upon the setting sun when a quote, brilliant ray fell to the earth. The account reads quote, out of this illuminating powder, out of this illuminating pattern, a brilliant ray fell to the earth.
42:58
and standing in front of this amazed man, and that's the old yellow one, appeared someone like him, yet different. He was completely golden in color. Now, this probably goes without saying, but note how this being who descended from the heavens in a ray of light looked just like a man. That's what the account says. He had anthropomorphic features, yet he was different. He was golden.
43:28
like there was a glory to him. The Gold One goes on to teach the Yellow One a lot of important things, one of which is the structure of the cosmos. The account continues, and this is the Gold One speaking to the Chinese Adam. The great earth lies in the middle of the world sea. The water flows around all the sides of the great earth. Here we see the Gold One teaching the Chinese Adam.
43:57
how the cosmos are actually structured. He's telling him that in the cosmos, God's sacred creations are surrounded by the waters of chaos. And then get this, the gold one uses an analogy to help the Chinese atom grasp the concept. The account continues, quote, "'The great earth lies in the middle of the world sea. "'The water flows around all the sides of the great earth "'as the juicy meat
44:27
surrounds the seed of fruit. I love this. The golden one compares the structure of the cosmos to a piece of fruit, like a peach, where the stone seed inside the fruit represents God's sacred creations, his sacred cosmic temple. And then the flesh or the meat of the fruit around the stone seed represents the chaotic profane waters. And then the gold one tells the Chinese Adam something really interesting.
44:56
He says, speaking of how the fruit or peach is a microcosm of the greater macrocosm, the following, quote, in this way, everything corresponds to the great in the small and the small in

the great. He's basically telling him as above, so below. He's teaching him that the things on earth, even a piece of fruit is patterned after what's above.
45:27
But it sounds like what he's saying is even more profound than a piece of fruit. I mean, it almost sounds when he says the small, that he could be talking about the very structure of the atoms that make up this world, which if you're familiar with the structure of atoms is very similar to the structure of a peach, where there's a dense center called the nucleus made up of positively charged protons.
45:55
which is surrounded by a mist or cloud of negatively charged electrons. If this is what the gold one is teaching the Chinese atom, then this is pretty darn cosmologically and theologically amazing, because this would mean that literally every single atom, the microscopic building blocks of matter which make up the material world, attests to the true structure
46:24
the cosmos themselves, where God resides in the sacred center of his creation, like the dense nucleus of an atom, which is shielded from the profane space, like the nucleus is shielded from the cloud of electrons that surround it. Did you know that it is nearly impossible for an electron to penetrate the nucleus of an atom? Did you know that it is nearly impossible for an electron to
46:53
penetrate the nucleus of an atom? If you're interested in this, then read up on the Heisenberg uncertainty principle. Each of these symbols, though they're different, give us the same image of how the cosmos are structured. The bubble, the egg, the gourd, the peach seed, and the nucleus of an atom symbolize distinct, enclosed spaces, indicating that what's within the bubble, egg, gourd, peach seed, or nucleus
47:23
is qualitatively different from what's outside of it. And they also symbolize that a clear boundary of some sort separates the two spaces. For the bubble, this boundary is the outer membrane. For the egg, it's the outer shell. For the gourd, it's the tough outer rind. For the peach, it's the stone seeds rock-like exterior. And for the atom, it's the repulsive shield.
47:53
that's created around the nucleus. Everything within the bubble, egg, gourd, peach seed or nucleus is sacred space. Thus, the bubble, egg, gourd, peach seed and nucleus symbolically represent God's cosmic temple. And the membrane, shell, outer rind, rock exterior and repulsive shield symbolize that there is some sort of wall
48:22
or protective barrier around God's cosmic temple that is protecting it from the profane space that surrounds it. Virtually all ancient peoples taught this. Virtually all ancient peoples taught that in the cosmos there are firm barriers or cosmic barriers, if you will, between sacred and profane space. It's a strong stubborn bit.
48:51
I don't know whether you caught it or not, but in the account of the old yellow one, the gold one tells the Chinese atom that the Earth is surrounded by profane waters and not the cosmos. Now, I don't want you to get confused by this. In the ancient world, the cosmos and the created Earth

were understood to be essentially the same concept. The creation. For example, in ancient Egypt. Egypt itself.
49:20
represented the whole earth and the whole earth represented everything that had been created or the cosmos. So because of this we find temples that were erected as microcosms of the earth like the great pyramid of Giza and the pantheon in Rome and Chichen Itza in the Yucatan which I'll talk about more down the line.
49:48
points out that all religions reproduce on Earth this cosmic differentiation between sacred and profane space. On page 24 and 25, he writes, quote, to exemplify the non-homogeneity of space, meaning that not all space is the same, like non-religious man would claim, we may turn to any religion. We will choose an example that's accessible to everyone, a church in a modern city.
50:17
For a believer, the church shares in a different space from the street in which it stands. The threshold that separates the two spaces indicates the distance between two modes of being, the profane and the religious. The threshold is the limit, the boundary, the frontier that distinguishes and opposes two worlds.
50:47
Note how Eliade stresses that there's a boundary that delimits sacred space from profane space, a boundary that's symbolized in churches by the front doors or the threshold. The front doors have the ability to keep one out or let one in. The doors serve as the boundary between the sacred and profane. Like I just mentioned, the ancients teach that there is a
51:17
completely surrounds God's cosmic temple, blocks the profane out, keeps them from entering God's sacred cosmic temple. Every church on earth serves as a microcosmic reflection of this larger macrocosmic divide. It acts as a model of the sacred air bubble, the egg, the gourd, the peach, the
51:47
mirrors the separation found in the heavens, in the cosmos. This is deeply significant because it indicates that every church or temple in its very structure affirms the reality of this sacred cosmic division. As I've mentioned on the program of the symbols used to depict God's cosmic temple, I really like the air bubble.
52:12
And that's because this is exactly how modern astrophysicists are beginning to theorize that the cosmos are actually structured as an infinite number of cosmic air bubbles. Listen to physicist Brian Cox explain this. There's a theory called eternal inflation, which is a theory that, and it's actually the most popular theory, I think, at the moment for what happened, but why the Big Bang is the way that it is.
52:39
It's got some very special features of Big Bang, which we could talk about. But inflation is the idea that space, space time was around before the Big Bang, and it was expanding extremely fast. And it was doubling in size in the most popular of these theories, every 10 to the minus 37 seconds, which is 0.00000 with 37 knots, one of a second. So it's an unimaginably fast

expansion. And then the idea is that draws to a close, so it quite naturally sort of dies away, and the expansion slows down.
53:09
And all the energy that was causing that expansion sort of gets dumped into space and heats it up and makes particles, and that's what we call the Big Bang. And those theories, that slight extension to those, say that that slowing down just happens in little patches. So most of the universe, the overwhelming majority of the universe is still inflating at that insane sort of speed. And the just little patches stop and they're Big Bangs.
53:38
So you get multiple universes, a multiverse, it's called the inflationary multiverse, and we are in one of those bubbles. And that's one of the more popular theories.
53:50
So interesting. And for the record, R.T. Rundle Clark, who wrote Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt, where he talks about the ancient Egyptian conception of the universe as a cosmic air bubble, wrote that book in 1959, which was more than 25 years before Andre Lind, the physicist at Stanford University who developed the concept of eternal chaotic inflation.
54:17
which suggested that our universe is just one of many, many universes or bubble universes. Seems like the Egyptians knew what they were talking about. If you ever get the chance to watch any of Brian Cox's interviews on the internet, I highly recommend it. He's got this enthusiasm and awe for the cosmos that I find pretty infectious. But it's his humility.
54:42
and his honesty about what physicists do and don't know about the cosmos that I love the most. If you've got extra time be sure and check him out. To summarize, the ancients taught that in the beginning, God appeared over an infinite expanse of profane, disordered, chaotic elements. Elements which the ancients referred to as water. And through the power and authority of his righteous name,
55:13
commanded some of those disordered elements to order themselves into his creations. One of which was this Earth. The ancients tell us that he didn't command all of the disordered elements to order themselves, only some of them. As the disordered elements were infinite, like a never-ending ocean or sea, this ordering process transformed the profane elements
55:42
and sanctified them, making them sacred. The ancients tell us that in order to preserve the sanctified, holy, sacred nature of His creations, God created a cosmic boundary around His creations, around His cosmic kingdom, which separates it from and protects it from the profane waters
56:10
where dwells chaos and the awful sea monster and his followers, thereby creating a sacred, holy precinct on a cosmic level, thereby creating a vast cosmic temple. That's it for me. We'll pick it up right here in our next episode. I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare, knowledge.
56:39
is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven. I'm Jack Logan.

56:48
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