

COSMIC CONFLICT: A 6-WEEK BIBLE STUDY SERIES

TEACHER'S GUIDE – WEEK 1: SETTING THE STAGE – THE UNSEEN REALM AND DIVINE REBELLION

Session Objective:

Introduce participants to the biblical worldview of a populated spiritual realm and the reality of supernatural rebellion. Help them see that divine conflict is a consistent theme throughout Scripture and foundational to understanding the gospel.

1. Opening Prayer (2–3 minutes)

Invite God's presence and wisdom as participants begin exploring spiritual realities often overlooked in modern theology.

2. Warm-Up Question (5 minutes)

Ask:

“What comes to mind when you hear phrases like ‘spiritual warfare’ or ‘cosmic conflict’? How often do you think about the supernatural realm when reading the Bible?”

Let a few participants share. Transition by noting how the Bible assumes the supernatural world is real and active.

3. Key Themes to Emphasize

- The *Divine Council* is the biblical depiction of God ruling alongside created spiritual beings (e.g., Psalm 82; Job 1–2).
 - *Cosmic geography* refers to how the Bible assigns spiritual authority over nations (Deut 32:8–9).
 - *Supernatural rebellion* involves more than just humans—some spiritual beings rebelled as well.
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4. Read and Discuss Key Texts (30–40 minutes)

A. Deuteronomy 32:8–9

- Explain the difference between the Masoretic Text (“sons of Israel”) and older witnesses (LXX, DSS: “sons of God”).
- Ask: “What does it mean that God ‘allotted’ the nations to others but kept Israel for Himself?”

B. Psalm 82

- Read aloud. Ask: “Who are the ‘gods’ being judged?”
- Discuss the concept of divine beings being held accountable for injustice among the nations.

C. Job 1–2

- Highlight the “sons of God” presenting themselves before Yahweh and the presence of “the satan.”
 - Ask: “What do these scenes reveal about how decisions are made in heaven?”
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5. Key Points to Draw Out

- The Bible presents a real, structured spiritual realm with agency and rebellion.
 - God allows delegated rule (both in heaven and on earth) but will ultimately hold all rulers accountable.
 - Recognizing these structures helps explain the depth of spiritual conflict throughout redemptive history.
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6. Clarifying Misconceptions

- The existence of other “elohim” (spiritual beings) does not threaten monotheism. Yahweh is unique in essence, uncreated, and sovereign.
 - The term “gods” in Scripture does not always refer to idols or false gods—it often denotes real spiritual beings (see Psalm 82).
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7. Closing Reflection (5–7 minutes)

Ask participants:

“How does this understanding of the divine realm affect how you view your faith, prayer life, or the spiritual battle around you?”

8. Challenge for the Week:

Invite them to reread Psalm 82 and Job 1–2 on their own. Ask them to journal one question they still have about the unseen realm and bring it to next week’s session.

TEACHER'S GUIDE – WEEK 2: SATAN UNMASKED – TRACING THE ADVERSARY'S DEVELOPMENT

Session Objective:

Help participants understand how the biblical portrayal of Satan developed over time—from a role (“the satan”) to a fully consolidated adversary. Emphasize the theological and narrative clarity this brings to spiritual conflict.

1. Opening Prayer & Recap (5 minutes)

Begin with prayer. Briefly review Week 1's key takeaways: supernatural rebellion, the Divine Council, and God's sovereign plan amid chaos.

2. Warm-Up Discussion (5 minutes)

Ask:

“When you think of Satan, what images or ideas come to mind? Where do those ideas come from—Scripture or tradition?”

3. Key Concepts to Emphasize

- *Ha-satan* originally means “the accuser” or “the adversary”—not a proper name.
 - Over time, Jewish and Christian texts reflect *theological consolidation* and *conceptual amalgamation*—uniting multiple evil figures into one adversary.
 - The New Testament reveals Satan more fully as the enemy of God and His people (Rev 12:9; John 8:44).
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4. Read and Discuss Key Texts (30–40 minutes)

A. Job 1–2 & Zechariah 3:1–2

- Note the courtroom setting and legal function of “the satan.”
- Ask: “Does the satan have permission or authority here? What does this reveal about God's sovereignty?”

B. Revelation 12:7–10

- Discuss how this text retroactively interprets the fall of Satan.
 - Highlight how the New Testament links “the accuser,” “the serpent,” and “the dragon” into one figure.
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5. Teaching Insights

- The Bible's development of Satan is not evolution away from truth but Spirit-guided refinement.

- Early Jewish thought was open to multiple spiritual enemies; Christian theology focused them into a single adversary for clarity and urgency.
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6. Clarifying Misconceptions

- Satan is not omnipresent or equal to God.
 - The devil is a creature—powerful but finite, accountable to God.
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7. Closing Reflection (5–7 minutes)

Ask:

“How does understanding Satan’s role in divine rebellion affect your perspective on spiritual warfare?”

Encourage journaling a personal reflection or prayer of spiritual vigilance.

8. Weekly Challenge:

Invite participants to read Genesis 3, John 8:44, and Revelation 12. Ask: How does the New Testament interpret older serpent imagery?

TEACHER'S GUIDE – WEEK 3: WATCHERS AND THE SONS OF GOD – REBELLION BEFORE THE FLOOD

Session Objective:

Explore the Genesis 6 rebellion and its dramatic consequences in Second Temple literature. Help participants see the seriousness of spiritual corruption before the flood and its enduring legacy.

1. Opening Prayer & Warm-Up (5 minutes)

Begin with prayer. Ask:

“Have you heard of the ‘Watchers’ or the ‘Nephilim’? Why do you think Genesis 6 is often avoided or misunderstood?”

2. Key Themes to Emphasize

- The “sons of God” (*bene ha'elohim*) in Genesis 6 are supernatural beings—not human kings.
 - The Watchers’ sin involves crossing boundaries—spiritual and biological.
 - The Nephilim represent a hybrid corruption of creation.
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3. Read and Discuss Key Texts (30–40 minutes)

A. Genesis 6:1–4

- Discuss who the “sons of God” and “daughters of men” are.
- Ask: “How does this passage connect to the judgment in the flood narrative?”

B. Jude 6 & 2 Peter 2:4

- Show how New Testament authors reference the rebellion of angels.
- Note their use of 1 Enoch as background literature.

C. 1 Enoch 6–16 (summarized)

- Briefly explain how 1 Enoch elaborates on the Watchers’ rebellion, their offspring (giants), and the origin of demons.
- Ask: “Why might early Jews have taken this story so seriously?”

4. Key Insights

- The Watchers narrative was influential in Second Temple theology and early Christianity.
- It explains the origin of chaos, giants, and evil spirits (especially in the Gospels).
- Jesus’ ministry of exorcism confronts the fallout of this rebellion.

5. Clarifying Misconceptions

- This isn’t myth—it’s theological literature meant to explain evil and justice.

- Christians can value 1 Enoch as historical background even if it's not canonical.

6. Closing Reflection (5–7 minutes)

Ask:

“What do you learn about God’s justice and patience from this story?”

Invite participants to reflect on how spiritual rebellion parallels human rebellion.

7. Weekly Challenge:

Have participants read Matthew 8:28–34 and 1 Enoch 15–16. Ask them to consider how ancient readers might have understood Jesus’ authority over demons.

TEACHER’S GUIDE – WEEK 4: DIVINE JUDGMENTS AND COSMIC FALLOUT

Session Objective:

Understand how the judgment at Babel triggered spiritual disinheritance of the nations and set the stage for God’s redemptive plan through Abraham, Israel, and ultimately Christ.

1. Opening Prayer & Review (5 minutes)

Invite reflection on previous rebellions. Ask:

“What do the earlier spiritual rebellions tell us about God’s justice? What themes are building?”

2. Key Themes to Emphasize

- Babel wasn’t just a human rebellion—it triggered a cosmic reshuffling of authority.
 - God “divorced” the nations (Deut 32:8–9) and assigned them to lesser elohim.
 - Israel became God’s own inheritance—a remnant to carry forward His promise.
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3. Read and Discuss Key Texts (30–40 minutes)

A. Genesis 11:1–9

- Ask: “Why did humanity resist God’s command to fill the earth?”
- Note that the tower was an act of autonomy and idolatry.

B. Deuteronomy 32:8–9 (LXX, DSS)

- Compare the different manuscript readings (“sons of Israel” vs. “sons of God”).
- Ask: “What does it mean that God allotted the nations to others but chose Israel?”

C. Acts 17:26–27

- Show how Paul reaffirms this divine allotment, yet reveals God’s desire for restoration.
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4. Teaching Insights

- The Babel event helps explain the rise of territorial spiritual powers.
 - This is the theological backdrop for Jesus’ ministry to the nations.
 - God’s redemptive plan doesn’t abandon the nations—it reclaims them through Christ.
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5. Clarifying Misconceptions

- The idea of “gods over nations” doesn’t mean polytheism—it’s about spiritual administration under Yahweh’s sovereignty.
 - God’s choosing of Israel was part of His long-term plan to bless *all* nations.
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6. Closing Reflection (5–7 minutes)

Ask:

“How does understanding cosmic geography change your view of missions, evangelism, and global spiritual warfare?”

7. Weekly Challenge:

Encourage participants to read Psalm 82 again in light of Deuteronomy 32. Ask them to reflect on what it means that God is reclaiming the nations today.

TEACHER'S GUIDE – WEEK 5: ANGELS AND DEMONS – AGENTS IN THE CONFLICT

Session Objective:

Explore the biblical development of angels and demons, distinguishing their roles and origins in God's cosmic story.

1. Opening Prayer & Warm-Up (5 minutes)

Ask:

“What have you been taught about angels and demons? How does that compare to what Scripture reveals?”

2. Key Themes to Emphasize

- Angels are God's messengers and warriors—varied in function and rank.
 - Demons in the New Testament often trace their origins to the disembodied spirits of the Nephilim (1 Enoch 15).
 - The spiritual war involves real agents operating behind earthly events.
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3. Read and Discuss Key Texts (30–40 minutes)

A. Daniel 10:12–21

- Highlight the idea of territorial spirits (Prince of Persia, Prince of Greece).
- Ask: “What does this tell us about angelic activity and human history?”

B. Ephesians 6:12

- Discuss the layered spiritual hierarchy: rulers, authorities, cosmic powers.
- Ask: “What kind of ‘battle’ is Paul describing here?”

C. 1 Enoch 15 (summarized)

- Share the Enochic view of demons as the spirits of the Nephilim.
 - Ask: “Why might this view have influenced New Testament exorcism scenes?”
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4. Teaching Insights

- Not all spiritual beings are equal—some are loyal, others are rebels.
 - The demonic realm is deeply tied to past rebellions and is actively opposing God's people.
 - The church is called to stand firm and wage war with spiritual tools (Eph. 6).
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5. Clarifying Misconceptions

- Angels and demons are not eternal—they are created beings.
 - Demons are not fallen angels per se (though that is a common assumption).
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6. Closing Reflection (5–7 minutes)

Ask:

“How does this view of spiritual warfare change the way you think about prayer, temptation, and perseverance?”

7. Weekly Challenge:

Ask participants to spend time in prayer this week using Ephesians 6:10–18 as a framework. Encourage them to write out a prayer for spiritual strength.

TEACHER'S GUIDE – WEEK 6: CHRIST'S VICTORY – THE END OF THE CONFLICT

Session Objective:

Conclude the study by highlighting how Jesus decisively defeats the powers of darkness and reclaims dominion over the earth, fulfilling God's plan from Genesis to Revelation.

1. Opening Prayer & Review (5 minutes)

Ask:

“Looking back over the last five weeks, what themes or ideas have deepened your faith or changed your thinking?”

2. Key Themes to Emphasize

- Jesus is the culmination of God's plan to defeat the powers and reclaim the nations.
 - His death and resurrection disarmed the rulers and authorities (Col 2:15).
 - The Church is now God's reclaiming instrument until the final restoration.
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3. Read and Discuss Key Texts (30–40 minutes)

A. Colossians 2:13–15

- Ask: “What does it mean that Jesus disarmed the rulers and authorities?”
- Discuss the victory motif (Christus Victor) in Paul's theology.

B. Ephesians 1:20–23

- Christ is exalted above all powers and given authority over the Church.
- Ask: “How does this relate to the cosmic war we've studied?”

C. Revelation 20:1–10

- Discuss the final judgment of Satan and the restoration of creation.
 - Ask: “What hope does this passage offer for today's spiritual conflicts?”
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4. Teaching Insights

- The gospel is not just personal—it's cosmic.
 - Jesus' mission included defeating spiritual enemies, not just forgiving sins.
 - The church is Christ's earthly body engaged in divine mission.
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5. Clarifying Misconceptions

- The spiritual war is real but not equal. Jesus has already won.

- Our battle is to enforce His victory through prayer, proclamation, and perseverance.
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6. Final Reflection & Commissioning

Invite each participant to share one takeaway or change in perspective.

Close with a commissioning prayer, encouraging them to stand firm as agents of God's kingdom.

7. Final Challenge:

Invite participants to go back and reread key texts over the next 6 weeks, journaling how the cosmic conflict lens reshapes their theology and worship.