

**Difficult Texts in the Old Testament: A Workshop Approach**  
**Institute for Biblical Research, 17 November 2023**  
**Psalm 82**

**Brittany Kim**, North Park Theological Seminary, Presiding

Introduction (5 min)

**Part I**

**Elizabeth H. P. Backfish**, Jessup University

*Interpretive Problems in Psalm 82* (5 min)

- Who is the “divine council” (עֲדַת־אֱלֹהִים, v. 1 NRSV)?
- Who is/are the *elohim* in v. 1, and what is their role? Does Deut 32:8 speak to this?
- What does it mean that the *elohim* die?

**Amy N. Allan**, Wheaton College

*Can gods die? An Ancient Near Eastern Perspective on Psalm 82* (5 min)

- What is the ancient Near Eastern background of the divine council?
- Can gods die in the ancient Near East?

Group Discussion (45 min)

Break (5 min)

**Part II**

**David Emanuel**, Alliance University

*Reading Psalm 82 in Its Biblical Context* (5 min)

- How does Jesus understand and use Ps 82 in John 10:34–36?

**S. J. Parrott**, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

*Theology and Ethics in Psalm 82* (5 min)

- How are the *elohim* committing injustice?
- Is God unjust in allowing the *elohim* to continue in their injustice?
- How does this text speak to issues of delayed justice today?

Group Discussion (45 min)

Psalm 82

MT	NRSV
<p>מְזִמּוֹר לְאַסָּף  אֱלֹהִים נֹצֵב בְּעֵדֹת־אֵל  בְּקִרְבַּ אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט:  <sup>2</sup> עַד־מָתַי תִּשְׁפֹּטוּ־עוֹל  וּפְנֵי רָשָׁעִים תִּשְׁאוּ־סֶלָה:  <sup>3</sup> שִׁפְטוּ־דָל וַיְתוֹם  עֲנֵי וְרֵשׁ הַצְּדִיקוֹ:  <sup>4</sup> פְּלֹטוּ־דָל וְאַבְיוֹן  מִיַּד רָשָׁעִים הַצִּילוּ:  <sup>5</sup> לֹא יָדְעוּ וְלֹא יָבִינוּ  בַּחֲשֹׁכָה יִתְהַלְכוּ  יִמוּטוּ כָּל־מוֹסְדֵי אָרֶץ:  <sup>6</sup> אֲנִי־אָמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם  וּבְנֵי עֲלִיּוֹן כְּלַכְּם:  <sup>7</sup> אָכֵן כְּאָדָם תָּמוּתוּן  וּכְאֶחָד הַשָּׂרִים תִּפְלוּ:  <sup>8</sup> קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שִׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ  כִּי־אַתָּה תִּנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם:</p>	<p>A psalm of Asaph  God presides in the great assembly;  he renders judgment among the “gods”:  <sup>2</sup> “How long will you defend the unjust  and show partiality to the wicked?  <sup>3</sup> Defend the weak and the fatherless;  uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.  <sup>4</sup> Rescue the weak and the needy;  deliver them from the hand of the wicked.  <sup>5</sup> “The ‘gods’ know nothing, they understand nothing.  They walk about in darkness;  all the foundations of the earth are shaken.  <sup>6</sup> “I said, ‘You are “gods”;  you are all sons of the Most High.’  <sup>7</sup> But you will die like mere mortals;  you will fall like every other ruler.”  <sup>8</sup> Rise up, O God, judge the earth,  for all the nations are your inheritance.</p>

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