

The Sons of God, Part 1: Are these fallen angels?

Bible Text: Genesis 6; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6, 7

Genesis chapter six:

“When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. “Then the LORD said, ‘My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years.’

“The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.”

And then, if you’ll turn to the book of Job 1:6: “One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them.”

There is, in the NIV, a footnote after the word angels. It’s the little italicized lowercase “a.” And down at the bottom “a” tells us something. We have two notes there on verse six. Note “a” regarding the angels and note “b” regarding Satan. Somebody read out those notes.

Okay. “a”—the sons of God in Hebrew and then turn over to Job 2:1: “On another day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him.”

And if you look there at the footnote—“b” in this case—down at the bottom of the page after angels: “Hebrew, the sons of God.”

And then if we turn over to the end of the book of Job, or almost the end of the book of Job, Job chapter 38, we find this starting at verse six. And, remember, if you notice there Job 38:1 -- and just above verse one they have added to the text, to help you understand it better. And what have they added there in Job 38 at the beginning of the chapter?

“The Lord speaks.” So this is the Lord. “Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm.”

By the way, the entirety of the middle part of the book of Job we have to very cautious about because the book, itself, tells us that it contains many human assumptions that do not line up with the Word of God. The Bible, infallibly and without error, records the human opinions of Job’s three friends. And remember that in the book God says there that they have not spoken correctly about him as has Job. And so the parts of the book that we can look at and say, “Well, boy, this is surely what God is saying,” chapter one and chapter two—which are the prologue—and then where the Lord himself speaks in Job 38.

And I think it’s interesting. When he asked Job about creation and starting in verse four and working his way down, and verse six he says, “On what were its footings set? Who laid its cornerstone—while the morning stars sang together and all the angels [footnote “b”] shouted for joy?” Footnote “b” says, “The sons of God.”

Now, because of New Testament usage we are apt to read into the Old Testament what is not there. I have set before you tonight every single place in the Hebrew Bible where the phrase B'nai Elohim or B'nai HaElohim—because the article is in front of the word God.

B'nai is “sons of.” The word “ben” in Hebrew means son. And we have B'nai B'rith which is “sons of the covenant,” the Anti-Defamation League—B'nai—plural, sons. B'nai Elohim—Elohim is the word for God; B'nai Elohim is “the sons of God.”

We have read every single occurrence of that phrase in the entire Old Testament. It's only found in the book of Job and in the sixth chapter of Genesis. It's found only where God is speaking in the book of Job—or in the prologue. The prologue, where we have the throne room of God and the B'nai Elohim are there, the sons of God.

Satan comes up in the middle of the B'nai Elohim. And then, at the end of the book of Job God speaks and says, “Where were you when I created the world?” And there were the B'nai Elohim there.

Here is the question: Taking this Hebrew phrase seriously there are only five times in the entire Hebrew Bible where it's found. Three of the five cases, without doubt, refer to what? The three cases in the book of Job; Job chapter one, Job chapter two, Job chapter 38 -- in all three cases, B'nai Elohim refers to what? Angels, without doubt.

There is, therefore, as we look back at Genesis—and the only other two places in the entire Hebrew Bible where this Hebrew phrase is found - B'nai Elohim—a strong presumption to say that these are some kind of supernatural creatures.

Turning back to Genesis 6: “When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God...” the B'nai Elohim; exactly the same phrase that is found in the book of Job. “The sons of God—B'nai Elohim—saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose.”

And then in verse four: “The Nephilim,” or the giants, “were on the earth in those days -- and also afterward -- when the B'nai Elohim went to the daughters of men and had children by them.”

Now, there is a book and it is not part of Scripture. In fact, it's not even part of what we call the Apocrypha. The Apocrypha, that's that section of books that were found in the Greek Old Testament that were not found in the Hebrew Old Testament. In other words, when the Jews no longer spoke Hebrew—most Jews in the dispersion—there were Bible scholars, 100 or 200 years before Christ, translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek. We call that the Septuagint. But in addition to the Bible books, the biblical books of the Hebrew Bible, they added some books to this Greek translation, in many cases, because it helped the Jewish people understand their history better.

And there were some nifty pieces of literature; mystery stories like Bel and the Dragon where the prophet Daniel—in this Greek book found in the Septuagint, but not found in the Hebrew Bible

of the Jews—tells the story of the prophet Daniel arguing with the pagans and the pagans saying, “Well, Bel,” that was the name of their god there, “Bel is a real god because we put food in the temple every night and in the morning the food’s gone. So that proves he’s a real god because he’s eating it.”

So what Daniel did, in this detective story called Bel and the Dragon—it’s just a very short story that’s in the Apocrypha which you can find in the Catholic Bible, or you can find in the original King James Version because the original King James Version had all these books—this short, little detective story has Daniel sprinkling flour—without anybody knowing it—sprinkling flour in the temple. And, see, these doors were sealed at night. And see, that’s why they say, “Well, this is proof that Bel is a real god because we put the food in there every night at his altar and we seal the doors. And then the food’s gone.”

So Daniel sprinkles the flour without anybody knowing and the doors are sealed. And the next morning the king says, “Well, look, Daniel. The food’s gone. You see?”

And Daniel says, “Well, let’s look more closely.” And there they see footprints coming out from a wall going to where the food had been and then going back to that wall. And they began to tap on the wall and it was a secret panel. Now, that’s in the Apocrypha.

In addition to the Apocrypha is a group of books called Pseudepigrapha. What are Pseudepigrapha? The Pseudepigraphal books are books that no one has ever thought of, in any sense, as having anything authoritative to say to us. But these Pseudepigraphal books—which means false writings, you’ll find out in a moment why this is a Pseudepigraphal book—somebody writes it—that would be like my writing a book and pretending I’m George Washington. So I write this book, *The Secret Letters between George Washington and King George III*. And I pawn it off as George Washington’s book, but in reality, I’m the author. But I don’t let anybody know. That would be false writing or pseudo, and then graphal is writing and epi is upon. It’s phony writing or writing that purports to be by someone else.

So this book is supposedly written by the patriarch Enoch who was translated that he shouldn’t see death. And so there’s a book that we’ve found and there are no copies in Hebrew of this book and it’s written during the time—give or take 200 years—the time of Jesus.

Let me read you from the seventh chapter of the book of 1 Enoch, okay? Why am I reading you 1 Enoch? Because I believe this is the word of God? No. I do not believe this is the Word of God. This is a forgery. But it does show you that in Jewish tradition—give or take 200 years from the time of Christ, before or after—this was what many people believed, okay? So here I am. I’m going to read to you from 1 Enoch.

“It happened after the sons of men had multiplied in those days, that daughters were born to them, elegant and beautiful. And when the angels, the sons of heaven beheld them, they became enamored of them, saying to each other, Come, let us select for ourselves wives from the progeny of men, and let us beget children...Then their leader Samyaza said to them; I fear that you may perhaps be indisposed to the performance of this enterprise; and that I alone shall suffer for so grievous a crime. But they answered him and said; we all swear; and bind ourselves by

mutual execrations [that's curses], that we will not change our intention, but execute our projected undertaking. Then they swore all together, and all bound themselves by mutual execrations [curses]. Their whole number was two hundred, who descended upon Ardis, which is the top of mount Armon...That mountain therefore was called Armon , because they had sworn upon it, and bound themselves by mutual execrations...These are the names of their chiefs: Samyaza, who was their leader, Urakabameel, Akibeel, Tamiel, Ramuel, Danel, Azkeel, Saraknyal, Asael, Armers, Batraal, Anane, Zavebe, Samsaveel, Ertael, Turel, Yomyael, Arazyal. These were the prefects of the two hundred angels, and the remainder were all with them.”

Let's see, okay.

“Then they took wives, each choosing for himself; whom they began to approach, and with whom they cohabited; teaching them sorcery, incantations, and the dividing of roots and trees. And the women conceiving brought forth giants...whose stature was each three hundred cubits. These devoured all which the labor of men produced; until it became impossible to feed them; when they turned themselves against men, in order to devour them; and began to injure birds, beasts, reptiles, and fishes, to eat their flesh one after another, and to drink their blood...Then the earth reproved the unrighteous.”

What do you make of that? What is that evidence of? It's not Scripture, it's not even Apocrypha. It's not a deuterocanonical book. It's a phony book attributed to the prophet Enoch, but it is a document that was written sometime within 100 or so years of the time of Christ -- 100, 200 years.

Terry?

Yeah, it does. It sounds like J. R. R. Tolkien. It's fantastic.

Yet what does it tell us? What does this tell us because this is a document that is at least 1800, maybe over 2000 years old? And it's a Jewish document. So what does it tell us?

There was that legend. There was that legend.

Now, what I'm saying is: If you look at Genesis six you discover, if you realize that this phrase B'nai Elohim is found only five times in the entire Hebrew Bible and in all of its cases in the book of Job it refers to angels. And if, then, you look at this and the normal interpretation—when I say normal, the less fantastic interpretation of this—is to say, “Well, sons of God is used here as it's used in the New Testament of believers. And then daughters of men would be these evil, wicked women who were descended from the line of Cain.” So that would be a standard interpretation that's not fantastic. These are the godly descendants of Seth and the ungodly descendants of Cain intermarrying. And, of course, that would be wrong. Believers are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers.

However, it doesn't explain to me verse four. Verse four, to me, is something that gives tremendous weight to the fantastical interpretation. Why would I say that? What does verse four tell us—Genesis 6:4? This is never the case when a godly person marries an ungodly person.

But in this case B'nai Elohim, used as it's used in the book of Job...what's the result of the B'nai Elohim marrying the daughters of men according to verse four?

It's a race of giants.

Now, I want to ask you—and I don't know if anyone here is familiar much with Greek mythology—but in Greek mythology there was a group of supernatural beings who were punished and banished from the earth to a special place. Does anyone...there was a movie made about some people with the same name. They took that name as their mascot. Remember the Titans?

The Titans were not the Olympian gods. But they were very powerful beings. And they were banished to a place, according to Greek mythology, these powerful giants; these supernatural creatures were banished to a place called Tartaros.

Now, Tartaros is an interesting thing, an interesting expression. Tartaros was the name, in classical mythology, for the subterranean abyss in which rebellious gods and other such beings as the Titans were punished. The word, however, was taken over into Hellenistic Judaism and used in the book of Enoch in connection with the fallen angels. It's an interesting thought—Tartaros.

Now, turn with me, if you will, to 2 Peter chapter two, verse four. And what do we read here? We've got these two passages. We looked at them a couple of weeks ago. 2 Peter chapter two and verse four; two places in the New Testament comment on this: 2 Peter 2:4 says: "...if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell." Foot note "a" says what?

"Greek is Tartaros."

Now, it's odd because this is a very unusual Greek word. The normal Greek words that refer to a place of punishment are Hades and Gehenna. Hades is a place of darkness and depression, of uncertainty; and can refer to the grave. And Gehenna always refers to the lake of fire, the final abode of the damned including Satan and his angels.

Now, listen to how this is put. "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to Tartaros, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard) -- if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment."

Notice what we just read. "...then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials." Now, notice the last part: "and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment."

What is verse nine saying? Verse nine is saying that in the other world people are being held, or persons are being held for a future judgment that has not occurred yet. And while they are awaiting trial they are not only being held as prisoners, but they are being punished; punishment now, being held for future punishment. Is that what he's saying? Punishment now with a view to future punishment.

Now, in the context here, as we look back, this isn't just talking about human beings. Human beings who die now and go to a place of punishment, even though it's before the day of judgment, and being cast into the lake of fire. So there is a place of punishment, now, for men. But if we look at verse four it isn't just for men. "If God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to Tartaros, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment."

Now, why did I bring up the Titans? I brought up the Titans for two reasons. First, because in the Greek language that word Tartaros specifically was referred to as the specific prison for the Titans who were giants.

Now, what do you do as a Bible believing Christian with the pagan myths of the world around the Bible? Here's what I do and it works for me. The Bible is the Word of God, the only infallible guide for how we ought to live and how we ought to believe. If that's so, then, what do we do with pagan myths? The pagan myths are simply the way that pagans orally pass down biblical stories to their children and they became distorted.

So, for example, throughout the world you find amongst primitives people flood mythology. "There was a flood. My ancestors escaped this flood somehow or another." That's throughout the world there's a flood myth."

Okay. I take it, as a Bible believing Christian, there really was a universal flood and that's in the living memory of people. And as they told the story, the story became distorted among pagan peoples. And that's why all these pagan peoples have a flood story. But in addition to have flood stories pagans also have, in their mythology, judgment on powerful beings that were subordinate to the ultimate gods, but superior to human beings. That's what the Titans were. The Titans are subordinate to the ultimate gods, but they're superior to people.

And these Titans are punished by being sent to a special prison. Now, here Peter is telling us that God didn't spare the angels when they sinned. Here's the question: Do you remember the case of the pigs and the exorcism? What do you read there? Why is it that the demons beg Jesus not to be sent....what happens when Jesus is casting out demons of this man...what do the demons beg Jesus not to do?

"Don't torment us before our time." They beg him not to send them to the what? The abyss. Let's look at that. And it's in several accounts. And I read it recently and I'm relying too much on memory and not enough on notes. But Matthew chapter eight: "When he arrived at the other

side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. ‘What do you want with us, Son of God?’ they shouted. ‘Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?’ Some distance from them a large herd of pigs...”

Anyhow, and so he sends them there. That’s that account. But...and I apologize, but that’s not on the tip of my brain as I thought it was. But, it’s right here because there are three accounts of it. And let’s see here.

Luke’s account....

Luke 8:26. Let’s see what Luke has there. Luke 8:26, and there they say...all right, reading there, the guy, the one demon shouts out and he says in verse 28, he shouts at the top of his voice: “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don’t torture me!”

And then, verse 30: “Jesus asked him, ‘What is your name?’ ‘Legion,’ he replied, because many demons had gone into him. And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the...” What? The abyss, the last word of verse 31.

Now, let’s reason together. Peter tells us that certain angels who sinned had been sent to Tartaros, which is the same Greek word—a rare Greek word—but is the same Greek word that’s used in Greek mythology to describe where this race of god like creatures were punished—the Titans—and where they’ve been sent in their own prison.

These demons in Matthew, Mark and Luke—in the case of the Gadarene demoniacs; these guys, remember, lived among the tombs. They cut themselves with rocks. They didn’t wear clothes. They had very great strength, were able to snap chains. They howled at night. People were afraid of them. And when Jesus begins to deal with them they say to him, “Have you come to torture us before the time?” Some angels are being tortured right now, aren’t they? Their punishment’s being continued. But these angels are not being tormented. They’re not being tortured.

Some angels are being tortured now, being held in prison awaiting the judgment of the great day. Other angels are still awaiting the judgment of the great day, but they’re not being tortured yet. And these demons say, “Have you come to torture us before the time?” That is, before the day of judgment. And they are begging him, “Please don’t dismiss us into the abyss.”

Now, I’m making a jump here. Is Tartaros the abyss? I believe it is. So, as fantastic as it seems and as contrary to reason as it seems when you examine biblical language in Hebrew—B’nai Elohim—of the five times it’s used, three of those in the book of Job clearly refer to angels. In the book of Genesis itself—two and four—where B’nai Elohim is found there is a hint that it’s angels; or let’s say it’s implicit, not explicit because there is some kind of bizarre offspring that’s powerful, powerful offspring as a result of this union.

Then, when we examine the evidence in 2 Peter two there are certain angels being imprisoned right now and we know that others are not. And they are suffering right now. They are being

tormented or tortured right now and they are going to be judged in the future. And there are other angels that are not being tortured or tormented now but they are going to be in the future.

And then, lastly, we look at Jude and what do we read here? The book of Jude, verse six: “And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home [domain, place] -- these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.”

Verse seven: “In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.” There are different kinds of angels. There are cherubim and seraphim. And there are archangels and lesser angels. And those angels that joined with the rebel that we studied last week, Satan, still have their ranks and authority and power but it’s twisted and evil. Some of those angels are in a place of confinement, now. Those fallen angels are in a place of confinement. And some of those fallen angels are not in a place of confinement.

I therefore conclude that, as fantastic as it seems, that it is some kind of fallen angel that is in view in Genesis six, that physically joined itself with human females and the result is monstrosities. And that, as much as anything, lead to God’s destroying the world in the flood.

And it’s interesting that the flood myths often include the myths of this race of powerful beings being dealt with in a judgment connected with the flood.

And my reason for saying it, again, to sum it up: B’nai Elohim used five times in the whole Old Testament, three times clearly of angels in the book of Job. Here there is some kind of weird offspring. It fits in with what we read of certain angels in 2 Peter two and in the book of Jude. It fits in with the use of the word Tartaros, which was used of the special spiritual prison for the Titans that Peter uses that particular Greek word. It fits in with the data that some angels are free, but are scared to death. Some fallen angels are free, but are scared to death that they’re going to be sent to Tartaros, or the abyss, before the time. And it has corroboration that this interpretation has been around at least for almost 2000 years; my reading from the book of 1 Enoch.

What do you think?

Now, someone will say: “Well, what about in Matthew where he says in his dispute with the Sadducees....?” And we’ll hold off for that till next week.

Let’s pray.

Lord, we pray as we examine this weird, mind-boggling, world view changing interpretation that seems to fit all of the biblical data and external data of the mythology of pagan people and of this Jewish legend preserved in the book of Enoch. And yet seems so fantastical that we grasp for anything that we can grasp for to say it can’t be true.

Give us to examine it biblically and without fear knowing that the very hairs of our head are preserved by you and that nothing can happen to us outside of your will and that we need fear nothing and no one except you with a reverence and an awe that is free from terror. In Jesus' name. Amen.