

The “Sons of God” and the “Daughters of Men”

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“O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge — by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.”¹

“Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth.”²

The early Christians were faced with a two-fold threat. Gnosticism (what is falsely called knowledge) resulted from viewing the Scriptures through a Platonic world view. Plato taught that physical matter was corrupt and that man is an immortal soul imprisoned in a flesh body. Escape from the body and the physical creation to ascend into heaven as pure spirit was the Platonic hope. This negated the true Christian hope, the resurrection of the body. And this is why many of the Corinthians denied the resurrection of the body, and why Paul sought to correct this error in 1 Corinthians 15.

Yet, Platonism and its “Christianized” version – Gnosticism – were not the only threat to primitive Christianity. Plato’s philosophy had previously invaded Jewish thinking in the three centuries before Christ, as is evident in some of the apocryphal books.

The Essenes were a significant Jewish sect that had fully embraced Platonic concepts, including the immortality of the soul.³ Josephus wrote that *“they have no certain city, but many of them dwell in every city.”*⁴ They were Jewish mystics who spun elaborate mythologies and fables about angels.⁵ The Book of Enoch, which contains the fornicating angels myth, was highly regarded by the Essene community,⁶ sometimes referred to as Enochic Judaism. Gabrielle Boccaccini writes:

¹ 1 Tim 6:20-21

² Titus 1:13-14

³ Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book II, ch. viii:11 *“For their doctrine is this: -- That bodies are corruptible, and that the matter they are made of is not permanent; but that the souls are immortal, and continue forever; and that they come out of the most subtle air, and are united to their bodies as in prisons, into which they are drawn by a certain natural enticement; but that when they are set free from the bonds of the flesh, they then, as released from a long bondage, rejoice and mount upward. And this is like the opinion of the Greeks...”*

⁴ Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book II, ch. viii:4

⁵ http://www.thenazareneway.com/from_enoch_to_the_dead_sea Scrolls.htm

⁶ http://www.gnosis.org/library/dss/dss_book_of_giants.htm

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“At the center of Enochic Judaism was neither the temple nor the torah but a unique concept of the origin of evil that made ‘fallen angels’ (the ‘sons of God’ also recorded in Gen 6:1-4) ultimately responsible for the spread of evil and impurity on earth. ‘The [Enochic] myths assert, deterministically on the one hand, that human beings are less the perpetrators than the victims of sin, which had its origins in the divine realm. On the other hand, they maintain that sin and evil originated not with God’s permission, but as a result of a rebellious conspiracy that was hatched behind God’s back.’

Taking up traditions that predate the postexilic origins of the movement, Enochic Judaism gave them a different interpretation than that provided within the Zadokite tradition. The cosmic rebellion of the fallen angels was not simply, as in the Mosaic torah, one of the primeval sins that characterized the ancient history of humankind. By crossing the boundaries between heaven and earth, the evil angels led by Semyaz and Azazel broke apart the divisions set by God at the time of creation. According to the Book of the Watchers, it was the mother of all sins, the original sin which corrupted and contaminated God’s creation from which evil relentlessly continues to spring forth and spread. As God said to the angel Raphael: ‘The whole earth has been corrupted through the works that were taught by Azazel: to him ascribe all sin!’ (1 En 6:8). In the cosmic battle the rebellious angels were defeated by the good angels and imprisoned in chains ‘in a hole in the desert which is Dudael ... [until] the day of the great judgment’ (6:4-6). The giants, the monstrous offspring of the unnatural union between angels and women, were killed (10:9-10), but their immortal souls survived as the evil spirits and continue to roam about the earth (15:8-10). As disturbing as this idea can be, God’s reaction limited but did not eradicate evil, until God will put an end to this evil world and will create a new world qualitatively different from, and discontinuous with, what was before.”⁷

The book of Colossians warns Christians against Enochic Judaism, which included speculation and fables concerning the angelic realm. *“Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.”⁸* The Essenes had many things in common with Christians.⁹ Yet they displayed a “false humility.”¹⁰ The Essenes had elaborate angelic mythologies similar to the Gnostic genealogies of aeons (gods).¹¹ They sought to explain the existence of demons as the disembodied souls of a hybrid angel-human offspring of angels who fornicated with human women. Their alleged hidden

⁷ Enoch and Qumran Origins: New Light on a Forgotten Connection, p. 6

⁸ Col 2:18

⁹ Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book II, ch. viii

¹⁰ Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book II, ch. viii, “...the third sect [of Judasim] who pretends to a severer discipline, are called Essens.”

¹¹ Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Hendrickson, 4th printing, 1984, footnote pg. 477: “The mention of the “names of the angels” so particularly preserved by the Essens, looks like a prelude to that “worshipping of angels” blamed by St. Paul as superstitious and unlawful, in some such sort of people as these Essens were, (Coloss. ii.8).”

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knowledge, which puffed them up, was kept secret by them in a manner similar to modern Freemasons.¹² Paul ordered Timothy to remain at Ephesus to counter their influence on that church.

*“As I urged you when I went into Macedonia — remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith,¹³ from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, desiring to be teachers of the law,¹⁴ understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.”¹⁵ ... “Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and **doctrines of demons**, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.”¹⁶*

Paul’s comments fit precisely the teachings of the Essenes, who forbid marriage¹⁷ and had very stringent dietary restrictions.¹⁸ “Doctrines of demons” can be interpreted two ways: either doctrines taught by demons or doctrines about the origin of demons. Since the latter fits perfectly with the Essene doctrine, and the rest of the passage describes the practices of Essene Enochic Judaism, it is most likely that Paul was actually condemning the myth about the origin of demons taught by the Jewish mystics. In doing so, he condemned the whole fornicating angels fable.

The influence of Platonism on both modern Judaism and modern Christianity cannot be overstated. The ancient Jewish mysticism of the Essenes developed into modern Cabbalism. Roman Catholicism adopted Plato’s heavenly destiny and immortality of the soul, as is evident in the teaching of purgatory and prayers to the saints. Protestant Christianity has not abandoned the basic underlying concepts. For two millennia Christians have parroted the Jewish fable that just prior to Noah’s flood, angels

¹² Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book II, ch. viii:7 “...and that he will neither conceal anything from those of his own sect, nor discover any of their doctrines to others, no, not though any one should compel him so to do at the hazard of his life.”

¹³ This was in contrast to the false humility of the Essenes and their monastic lifestyle.

¹⁴ The Essenes were teachers of an esoteric knowledge from the Law of Moses, similar to Cabbalism.

¹⁵ 1 Tim 1:3-7

¹⁶ 1 Tim 4:1-3

¹⁷ Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book II, ch. viii:2 “The Essens reject pleasures as an evil, but esteem continence, and the conquest over our passions, to be virtue. They neglect wedlock, but choose other persons’ children, while they are pliable and fit for learning.”

¹⁸ As Jews, Essenes were strict observers of dietary restrictions in the Torah against unclean animals. Archaeological evidence shows that some Essenes were vegetarians: <http://www.archaeology.org/9905/newsbriefs/vege.html>

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descended from heaven and mated with human women, producing hybrid beings which God destroyed in the flood, and that demons are the disembodied, immortal souls of angel-human hybrids.

There is no denying the great popularity of this myth historically. Enochic Judaism invented this fable prior to Christ, based partly on Platonic concepts about the immortality of the soul. It became widespread among Christians from very early on, as Paul's warnings to Timothy illustrate. Several of the early Church fathers taught it. Some opposed it. It remains popular today.

Some Christians claim that fallen angels are still mating with humans, and producing hybrid offspring. UFO abductions are even claimed to be cases of fallen angels taking human women for their perverse pleasures.¹⁹ However, to date no hybrid babies seem to have been produced by women who claim to have been abducted by aliens.

An examination of this topic, using sound biblical exegesis and investigative principles, is critically necessary if Christians are to avoid deception, particularly as it relates to the study of eschatology. This article is an attempt to deal with this topic using sound exegetical principles in all of the major passages involved in the debate. The place to begin is Genesis 6, from which this fable is allegedly drawn – the “sons of God” taking wives from “the daughters of men.”

I. Understanding the Genesis Context

Genesis was written as the introduction to the “Book of the Law” (Torah). Its purpose was to give the children of Israel a concise history of where they came from, and their special character as the covenant people of JEHOVAH. It traces the major events of God's interaction with man from the creation of the world to the Israelites' arrival in Egypt. God's special covenant relationship with Israel is reflected throughout the book of Genesis. The description of the six days of creation in Genesis 1 was included so that Israel would understand the reason for the Sabbath commandment given to them. *“Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: ... For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”*²⁰ Thus, Genesis provides some of the foundational principles necessary for understanding God's covenant relationship with Israel. It gives a historical account of the Abrahamic Covenant, which was the basis for Israel's existence, and the reason why they were called God's sons and daughters. Genesis ends

¹⁹ <http://www.nephilim.nl/>

²⁰ Exodus 20:11

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with the Israelites in Egypt looking forward to their inheritance in the land God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses even included God's prophecy to Abraham that his descendants would be oppressed by another nation, but that He would miraculously deliver them from slavery.²¹ Thus, every part of Genesis was fundamental to Israel's understanding of who they were as God's covenant people.

The Torah was written during the forty years the Israelites wandered in the wilderness. All five books were collectively called, "The Book of the Law."²² The original scroll written by Moses was placed in the tabernacle beside the Ark of the Covenant.²³ The priests read the entire Torah to the Israelites regularly;²⁴ and the Israelites were commanded to rehearse its contents daily. "*This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*"²⁵ Thus, time after time as the Israelites heard the entire Torah read, they would interpret Genesis in light of their own special covenant with God, as the sons of God.²⁶

For many generations, the Book of the Law was the only canon of inspired Scripture for Israel.²⁷ Moses had forbidden adding to the Torah.²⁸ After the conquest of the land, Joshua appended his own book to the Torah, as Moses' appointed successor. Thus from Joshua's death on, the "Book of the Law" contained six books.²⁹

About 900 years after Moses wrote the Torah, the "*Book of the Law of JEHOVAH by Moses*" was rediscovered in Solomon's Temple during the reign of Josiah, king of Judah, after many years of neglect.³⁰ Even at this very late date, the Torah alone was considered the Word of JEHOVAH to Israel through Moses. While a few of the scrolls of the early prophets existed at this time, most of the prophecies were yet to be fulfilled. Thus, Israel's recognition of them as inspired Scripture was still in question. The first evidence of a collection of inspired books beyond the Torah comes from the time of Ezra after the return from exile in Babylon.³¹ Ezra himself read the entire "Book of the Law of Moses"

²¹ Gen. 15:13-14

²² Deut. 28:61

²³ Deut. 31:26

²⁴ Deut. 31:9-13

²⁵ Josh 1:8

²⁶ Deut. 14:1

²⁷ The Samaritan Pentateuch, which was the only inspired Scripture recognized by the northern Kingdom of Israel at the time of the Assyrian captivity, contains only the books of Moses.

²⁸ Deut. 4:2; Deut. 12:32

²⁹ Josh 24:26

³⁰ 2 Chron. 34:14

³¹ Many scholars believe that Ezra the priest compiled the first Hebrew canon of sacred Scriptures.

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in the presence of all Israel, as they recommitted themselves to obeying God's Word.³² Thus, even in Ezra's day – over a millennium after Moses wrote Genesis – the Torah was held in a unique place, above all books.

In his historical narrative, Moses outlined for Israel the fall of Adam, his expulsion from the Garden of Eden, and the curse upon ground. Yet, God did not leave Adam in a hopeless state. The "curse" contains a promise of eventual deliverance – the first prophecy of the coming Messiah.

Gen. 3:15 NKJV

*5 And I will put enmity between you [the serpent] and the woman, and between **your seed and her Seed**; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."*

The seed of the woman is Christ.³³ The seed of the serpent is Antichrist.³⁴ Yet, this is more than a prophecy of two individuals to appear on the scene thousands of years in the future. The term "seed" implies a genealogical descent – two different races with two different genealogical trees.

The Book of the Law makes it extremely clear that the "children of God" are those in a covenant relationship with Israel's God, JEHOVAH. This special relationship between God and Israel was indeed based on a literal genealogical tree, with Abraham as the root, then Isaac, then Jacob, then the twelve patriarchs. Yet, the genealogy from Abraham to the "seed of the woman" (Messiah) was not exclusively genetic. Two other factors were involved as well. Foreigners could be adopted into Israel (by adopting Israel's God and covenants), being reckoned "Israelites" in every way.³⁵ We see in the genealogy of Jesus (the "Seed" who would crush the serpent's head) that foreigners were reckoned as Israelites including Rahab the harlot and Ruth the Moabite.³⁶ Also, Israelites who apostatized from God to serve pagan gods – which were demons³⁷ – were cut off from Israel's genealogical tree and the covenants.³⁸ Those who apostatized from God and His covenants are considered the adopted children of the Devil.³⁹

God blessed Adam and Eve with two sons. Abel was righteous. But Cain became a murderer, a son of the devil, beginning the genealogy of the "seed of the Serpent." "In

³² Neh. 8:1-12

³³ Rev. 12:1-6

³⁴ 2 Thess. 2:3

³⁵ Gen. 17:12-13; Ex. 12:48,49; Num. 15:14-16; Ezek. 47:22

³⁶ Matt. 1:5

³⁷ Deut. 32:16-17

³⁸ Lev. 20:1-7

³⁹ Matt. 13:38; John 8:44; Acts 13:10; 1 John 3:8-10

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this ***the children of God*** and ***the children of the devil*** are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, ***not as Cain who was of the wicked one*** and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous."⁴⁰ Thus, Cain became the patriarch of the seed of the Serpent – the first son of Satan by adoption. God put a curse on Cain and he and his family were separated from the rest of humanity. "Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth. ... Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden."⁴¹

Moses traced one of Cain's lines of genealogy through six generations, down to Lamech. Moses then showed that Lamech was also a murderer.⁴² The genealogical link between Lamech and Cain was intentional, to demonstrate that wicked parents beget more wicked children who learn by the example of the parents. This also reinforced the Law of Moses for the Israelites, and why it was necessary to constantly teach righteousness to their children. "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."⁴³

The names of Cain's descendants reveal quite a bit about each generation of fathers. Irad means "fugitive." Mahujael means "smitten by God."⁴⁴ Methusael means "I am man, who (or where) is God?"⁴⁵ Immediately following Moses' genealogical linkage between the murderers Lamech and Cain, we find the following account.

Gen 4:25-26 NKJV

25 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, "For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed."

*26 And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. **Then men began to call on the name of the LORD.***

⁴⁰ 1 John 3:10-12

⁴¹ Gen. 4:14,16

⁴² Gen. 4:23

⁴³ Deut 6:6-9

⁴⁴ <http://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Mehujael.html>

⁴⁵ <http://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Methusael.html>

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There is no question that Moses intended to draw a contrast between Cain's descendants and Seth's descendants. Adam and Eve had many other children;⁴⁶ yet Moses gave no account of their genealogies.

The statement, *"then men began to call on the name of the LORD,"* was clearly meant to point to a beginning of a certain activity which continued afterward. The word "LORD" is JEHOVAH in Hebrew, the covenant name of Israel's God.⁴⁷ The word "men" is not in the Hebrew text, but was supplied by the translators. The Hebrew shows that Enosh was meant, not "men" in general. The Hebrew reads: *"then he began to call out (upon or by) the name of JEHOVAH."* Young's Literal Translation has, *"And he called his name, Enos; then a beginning was made of preaching in the name of JEHOVAH."* Thus, "call out by" can refer to proclaiming the message of God in His name.

The KJV illustrates some uncertainty with a marginal note giving the alternate reading, *"or, 'to call themselves by the name of the LORD'."* This is the sense also of the same clause in Isaiah 44:5, *"another shall call himself by the name of Jacob."*

Some have understood this statement to refer to the practice of naming children with compounds of the Lord's name. This was a common practice of the Jews later. Many names in the Bible contain compounds of Elohim or JEHOVAH (eg. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah), and Elohim (eg. Samuel, Daniel, Ezekiel). However, the statement clearly has "the name of JEHOVAH" here and not "the name of Elohim." So, any such compound birth names would have to be compounds of JEHOVAH if naming children with compounds of God's name was meant. Yet, none of the names listed in Cain's or Seth's genealogies are a compound of JEHOVAH.

There are a few names that are compounds of Elohim. Two of them appear in Cain's genealogy. Mehujael (smitten by God) no doubt had reference to the curse put upon Cain. Mehujael's father apparently considered the curse to be of Cain's entire genealogy. One can easily see the anger and resentment in such a name. This resentment was apparently passed on because Mehujael named his own son, Methushael (I am man, who is God?). The Hebrew word used for "man" here is "math," most often used for men capable of combat. Certainly, Moses' reported these names to impress upon his Israelite audience that this race of men was not only cursed, but remained in open rebellion against God, and bitter about the curse of their forefather, Cain. In contrast, we find both humility and hope in the names of the descendants of Seth. Enosh means "mortal," no doubt in recognition of man's fallen condition and his impending death.

⁴⁶ Gen. 5:4

⁴⁷ Ex. 3:15-16 & Ex. 6:3

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Mahalalel means “praise of God.” Noah means “rest,” “relief,” or “comfort.” In any case, there are no names in either genealogy that are compounds of JEHOVAH.

The Septuagint agrees with the KJV marginal reading, “to call themselves by the name of the LORD.” The LXX reads as follows: “And to Seth, to him also was born a son, and he called his name, Enos. This one hoped, therefore he called to himself⁴⁸ the name of the Lord God.” The Jewish translators of the Septuagint understood the Hebrew phrase to mean that Enosh took to **himself** the name of JEHOVAH. Moses used the same term in Genesis when Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph. “The angel who delivers me from all evils, bless these boys, and my name shall be called upon them, and the name of my fathers, Abraam and Isaac.”⁴⁹ In this case it is clear that calling Joseph’s sons by the name of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was a means of recognizing their part in the Abrahamic Covenant.

In what exactly did Enosh “hope” which motivated him to call himself by the name of JEHOVAH? The only possible answer is the promise of the “Seed” of the woman eventually overcoming the “seed” of the Serpent. Adam was a son of God, Seth was a grandson of God, and Enosh a great grandson of God, the first to begin to call himself by God’s covenant name. Four generations later, we find Enoch having such a close relationship with God, that he was transported without dying – a tribute to the godliness of Seth’s covenant line.

Enosh hoped in God’s promise – that the “Seed” of the woman (descended from a covenant people of JEHOVAH) would prevail against the “seed” of the Serpent (descended from an unholy race of children of Satan). He called himself by God’s covenant name, and became one of the patriarchs of the Messianic genealogy. No doubt this is why Luke traced Jesus’ genealogy back from Noah through Seth’s sons to God Himself. Jesus was “... the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan, the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.”⁵⁰ All of these men were literally “sons of God.” Yet, because Cain gave himself over to Satan, he became an adopted son of the Wicked One.⁵¹

The concept of a segregated people of JEHOVAH – referred to as “the sons of God,” and called by the Name of JEHOVAH – was very familiar to the Israelites to whom Moses wrote. They were distinguished by exactly the same covenant terminology.

⁴⁸ The verb “called” is in the middle voice, hence “called to himself.”

⁴⁹ Gen 48:16

⁵⁰ Luke 3:38

⁵¹ 1 John 3:10-12

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Deut 28:9-10 NKJV

9 "The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.

10 Then all peoples of the earth shall see that **you are called by the name of the LORD**, and they shall be afraid of you.

2 Chron 7:14 NKJV

14 if My people **who are called by My name** will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

Deut 32:6 NKJV

6 Do you thus deal with the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? **Is He not your Father**, who bought you? Has He not made you and established you?

Deut 32:19 NKJV

19 "And when the LORD saw it, He spurned them, because of the provocation of **His sons and His daughters**.

Deut 14:1-2 NASB

1 "**You are the sons of the LORD your God**; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave your forehead for the sake of the dead.

2 "**For you are a holy people to the LORD your God**, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."

Isaiah 43:5-7 NKJV

5 Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, And gather you from the west;

6 I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not keep them back!' Bring **My sons** from afar, And **My daughters** from the ends of the earth —

7 **Everyone who is called by My name**, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him."

In the Bible, the terms, "called by the name of JEHOVAH" and "sons of JEHOVAH" are synonymous, always referring to a covenantal people separated unto God, and distinct from the rest of the population. Being "sons of JEHOVAH your God" and being "called by the name of JEHOVAH" were synonymous in the minds of the Israelites. This is a critical component to understanding Moses' hotly disputed comments in chapter 6.

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II. The Sons of Seth according to Josephus

Josephus was a Jew who lived in the first century. He wrote a history of the Jewish people for the Romans. His sources were the Bible, Jewish oral tradition, and also many secular historical sources which are no longer extant. Much of his history relies on the Greek Septuagint version, including many of the dates given. Josephus gave a lengthy account of the sons of Seth in his Antiquities of the Jews.

“Now Adam, who was the first man, and made out of the earth, (for our discourse must now be about him,) after Abel was slain, and Cain fled away, on account of his murder, was solicitous for posterity, and had a vehement desire of children, he being two hundred and thirty years old; after which time he lived other seven hundred, and then died. He had indeed many other children, but Seth in particular. As for the rest, it would be tedious to name them; I will therefore only endeavor to give an account of those that proceeded from Seth. Now this Seth, when he was brought up, and came to those years in which he could discern what was good, became a virtuous man; and as he was himself of an excellent character, so did he leave children behind him who imitated his virtues. All these proved to be of good dispositions. They also inhabited the same country without dissensions, and in a happy condition, without any misfortunes falling upon them, till they died. They also were the inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies, and their order. And that their inventions might not be lost before they were sufficiently known, upon Adam’s prediction that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and at another time by the violence and quantity of water, they made two pillars, the one of brick, the other of stone: they inscribed their discoveries on them both, that in case the pillar of brick should be destroyed by the flood, the pillar of stone might remain, and exhibit those discoveries to mankind; and also inform them that there was another pillar of brick erected by them. Now this remains in the land of Siriad to this day.

According to Josephus:

- The sons of Seth were a righteous race that feared the Lord.
- They lived segregated from the rest of the population in their own country.
- They lived happy lives without violence or calamity.
- This tribe had a great understanding of the heavens and astronomy.
- They preserved God’s prophecies of the flood and Day of the Lord for posterity.

Josephus’ account of the sons of Seth, which was based partly on oral tradition, is consistent with our observations from the Bible.

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III. The “Sons of God” and the “Daughters of Men”

Gen 6:1-3 NKJV

1 Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them,

*2 that **the sons of God** saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.*

3 And the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”

Those who hold to the idea of angels fornicating with women insist that “sons of God” refers to angels, not people. They derive this sense from Job where the same term refers to angels three times.⁵² Yet, there is no evidence that the Israelites, for whom Moses wrote Genesis, had any knowledge of the book of Job, or even that it existed at that time. No doubt, Job lived before Moses, as is evidenced by his great age.⁵³ But, the internal evidence from the book of Job argues for a much later date, written from the land of Israel after the conquest.⁵⁴ Job was not likely known by Moses’ audience. But, more importantly, the book of Job was not considered part of the Jewish inspired canon of Scripture until much later, most likely when the Hebrew canon was settled by Ezra after the Babylonian exile. The “Bible” of the Israelites to whom Genesis was written was exclusively “The Book of the Law of Moses.” Therefore, even if the book of Job existed, there is no reason to suppose that the Israelites would interpret Genesis based on it. Moses certainly expected his Israelite readers to understand Genesis 6 based on the immediate context, not on some obscure book that was not available to them nor considered sacred Scripture at the time, if it even existed. We therefore must interpret this passage as the original audience would have done with the limited knowledge available to them when it was written.

⁵² The manuscript evidence for the reading “sons of God” in the Hebrew version of Job vs. “angels of God” in the Septuagint will be addressed in section IX of this paper.

⁵³ Job 42:16

⁵⁴ Job lived in the land of Uz (Job 1:1), which is identified as “Moab” (Jordan) in Jer. 25:20 & Lam. 4:21. The author of the book wrote that Job “*was the greatest of all the people of the East.*” (Job 1:3). Since “the east” is a relative term, it places the writer west of Uz where Job lived. This would put the author of the book across the Jordan river in the land of Israel. Consequently, the writing of the book would have been after the conquest of this land under Joshua. Also, the reference to “Satan” as a proper name (Job 1:6) was unknown to the Israelites until about the time of the Babylonian captivity (cf. 2 Sam. 24:1 & 1 Chron. 21:1, Zech. 3:1-2). For these reasons, the writing of the book of Job should be dated after the conquest of Canaan, perhaps as late as the Babylonian captivity, even though Job himself lived much earlier. The Israelites would have no knowledge of Job or this book when Genesis was written. Consequently, it would not likely provide a frame of reference for the term, “sons of God,” in Gen. 6. Furthermore, it is not very likely that Moses would leave the interpretation of the words “sons of God” to chance, relying on the hope that his audience would be familiar with the book of Job. It is much more credible to gain an understanding of the term from what Moses had written thus far, and from the Israelites’ own experiences at Mt. Sinai and their wilderness wanderings.

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The clause translated “took wives” is never used in Scripture for fornication, adultery, or any improper sexual behavior. It always refers to the covenantal marriage relationship which God Himself ordained for mankind. Therefore, the union of the “sons of God” with the “daughters of men” was not rape, fornication, or any unnatural or improper sexual intercourse. It was exactly what the text says it was, a marriage in accord with the divine institution introduced for the readers of Genesis only four chapters earlier: “*Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: ‘This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*”⁵⁵ Even the casual reader of Genesis six ought to notice that the plain sense of Genesis six and Jesus’ comments about angels not marrying settles the question decisively.

Gen 6:2

*2 that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and **they took wives for themselves** of all whom they chose.*

Matt 22:30

*30 For in the resurrection they **neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.***

That “sons of God” refers to humans and not angels is plain from God’s immediate reaction to the “sons of God” taking wives from among the “daughters of men.” God said, “*My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.*” The crime was committed by “the sons of God.” If they were angels, why would God react against men of flesh and not angels? The Septuagint translates God’s reaction this way: “*And the Lord God said, ‘My Spirit shall certainly not remain among **these men** forever, because **they are flesh**...’*” The word “these” is the near-referent masculine plural demonstrative pronoun, “*τούτοις*.” The entire substantive “these men” (*ἀνθρώποις τούτοις*) points back in the context to a masculine plural near-referent – the “sons of God.” Therefore, the “sons of God” were clearly called “these men.” And the next clause says “they are flesh.” The Septuagint states emphatically, in two different ways, that the “sons of God” were men. The “sons of God” are “these men” and “they are flesh.”

Furthermore, God’s Spirit had formerly resided among the “sons of God” collectively, as He says, “*My Spirit shall certainly not remain among these men forever.*” God’s dwelling

⁵⁵ Gen 2:22-24

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among a collective group by His Spirit is something unique to the sons and daughters of God – the covenant people of JEHOVAH. This is consistent in the Old and New Testaments.

Exodus 25:8 NKJV

8 And let them make Me a sanctuary, **that I may dwell among them.**

Exodus 29:45 NKJV

45 **I will dwell among the children of Israel** and will be their God.

Haggai 2:4-5 NKJV

4 "Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,' says the LORD; 'and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the LORD, 'and work; for **I am with you,**' says the LORD of hosts.

5 'According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, **so My Spirit remains among you;** do not fear!'"

Isa 63:11 NASB

11 Then His people remembered the days of old, of Moses. Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of His flock? Where is **He who put His Holy Spirit in the midst of them,**

Paul stated, in Romans 8:14, that "as many as are **led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.**" He referred to the local church as "a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."⁵⁶ And in the Kingdom of Messiah, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God."⁵⁷ The presence of God among His people collectively by means of His Spirit is one of the distinguishing marks of the "sons of God." It is no coincidence that when the "sons of God" rebelled, God reacted by saying, "My Spirit shall certainly not remain among these men forever," implying that His covenant relationship had been broken.

Some object that if the Sethite view was correct, the text would say "daughters of Cain" instead of "daughters of men." Yet, the text actually says, "daughters of Adam." According to Gen. 5:4, Adam lived 930 years and fathered many other sons (and daughters) besides Cain and Seth. The clause "daughters of Adam" is a much more generic term than "daughters of Cain." This clause refers to the whole population of the earth, not just Cain's descendants which would be only a fraction of the population. But the clause "sons of God" is very limited and specific to the segregated sons of Seth,

⁵⁶ Eph. 2:22

⁵⁷ Rev 21:3

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distinguishing these men from the rest of the descendants of Adam. Thus Moses meant that the men of God's separated covenant people saw the women from the general population, and took wives from among them. There would be no other way to describe women from the general population other than calling them "the daughters of Adam."

IV. The Nephilim (Giants)

Moses continued in verse 4 to explain that the offspring of the "sons of God" became very violent men, just like the sons of Cain and the other sons of Adam. Those who claim that angels fornicated with women claim that the "nephilim" (rendered "giants" in some versions) were angel-human hybrids. But there is absolutely no basis for this in Scripture. It is based on a misreading of the text.

Gen. 6:4 KJV

*4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also **after that, when** the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.*

The problem with the fornicating angels theory is that the nephilim (giants) were already on the earth before the "sons of God" took foreign wives. This is the natural reading of the Hebrew text. Augustine commented on the Hebrew reading as follows:

*"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became the giants, men of renown." **These words of the divine book sufficiently indicate that already there were giants in the earth in those days, in which the sons of God took wives of the children of men, when they loved them because they were good, that is, fair.**"*⁵⁸

The Septuagint agrees, proving that the Jewish LXX translators understood that the nephilim were already on the earth.

Gen. 6:4 LXX

*4 Now the giants were upon the earth in those days; **and after that** when the sons of God were wont to go in to the daughters of men, they bore children to them, those were the giants of old, the men of renown.*

Some have tried to punctuate the sentence as follows: "Now the giants were upon the earth in those days **and afterwards**. When the sons of God were wont to go in to the daughters of

⁵⁸ Augustine, City of God, Book 15, ch. 23

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men, they bore children to them, those were the giants of old, the men of renown." In this way the text is made to imply that giants were on the earth both before and after the flood (rather both before and after the sons of God took foreign wives). The last clause is made to refer back to the giants who were on the earth before the flood. However, this is grammatically incorrect. The Greek words, "those days" are in the feminine gender and plural number. But, "after that" is in the neuter gender and singular number. The word "that" is a demonstrative pronoun which in Greek grammar must agree with its antecedent in both gender and number. Therefore, "after that" cannot refer to "those days." It would have to say, "after those" (feminine plural) and not "after that" (neuter singular). Therefore, translating this sentence as, *"giants were on upon the earth in those days and afterwards,"* is grammatically incorrect, because "afterwards" is made to refer to "those days," which is impossible in Greek grammar. Instead, it must be rendered, *"giants were upon the earth in those days. And after that when the sons of God went in to the daughters of men ..."* Thus, the demonstrative pronoun "after that" does not refer to "those days" but to the singular fact that there were already giants on the earth in those days. After that (giants already existing) the sons of God took foreign wives who also bore giants. Consequently, the "giants" cannot be the unique offspring of angels and human women. Rather, the union of the "sons of God" with the "daughters of men" produced more of what was already on the earth previously.

This of course raises the question of what the term "giants" means. The Hebrew word is "nephilim." According to Strong's Hebrew Lexicon, this noun comes from the verb "nephal" to "fall" or to "fell" (as in "felling" a tree). The meaning of the noun "nephilim" is a "feller" (one who cuts down, or causes to fall), metaphorically, a "bully" or a "tyrant," someone who uses his strength to bully others.

The Septuagint has "gigantes," which is the plural of "gigas." The meaning of "gigas" and "gigantes" is made plain just a few chapters later.

Gen. 10:8-9 LXX

8 And Cush begot Nimrod: he began to be a giant [gigas] upon the earth.

9 He was a giant [gigas] hunter before the Lord God; therefore they say, "As Nimrod the giant [gigas] hunter before the Lord.

That Nimrod was not an angel – human hybrid is plain from the fact that his father was Cush, the son of Ham, the son of Noah. The text goes on to indicate that Nimrod ruled a very large kingdom. His strength and tyrannical behavior was no doubt the reason for his dominating such a large territory. In fact, Nimrod became the subject of pagan legends as a "god." Yet, he was 100% human, fathered by Noah's grandson.

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It is quite plain that the Jewish translators of the Septuagint did not believe the angels fornicating with women when they made this translation of the Hebrew text into Greek around 300BC. That idea is entirely forbidden by the Septuagint for the following reasons:

- The “sons of God” are called “these men”
- They are called “flesh”
- The giants (tyrants) were already on the earth before this occurred
- Nimrod was one of them, even though his entire ancestry was human

“Nephilim” is not a proper name, just as “giant” is not a proper name. Nor is it the name of a tribe of people with a common ancestry. It is a descriptive term for their tyrannical and violent behavior.

What then is meant by the Hebrew terms, “mighty men of old” and “men of renown?” The term “mighty men of old” indicates they were strong, violent, or intimidating men from ancient times, clarifying the term “nephilim.” The term, “ancient times,” no doubt, was meant by Moses to contrast the more recent use of the term “nephilim,” which the unfaithful spies claimed to have seen in Canaan,⁵⁹ and for which reason the Jews failed to take possession of the land. God punished them with forty years of wandering in the wilderness, during which time Genesis was written by Moses.

The term, “men of renown” is a bit more interesting. It is sometimes translated, “men of reputation.” But, the Hebrew actually says, “enoshi of the name” (using the plural form of the same Hebrew word which was the name “Enosh”). Seth named his son “Enosh,” meaning “mortal,” no doubt recognizing the fallen state in which he lived under the curse. Enosh is the one who *“hoped, therefore calling to himself **the name** of the Lord God.”* Here, the offspring of the “sons of God” were literally called, “enoshi ha-shem” (“Enoshi of the Name”). “Enoshi” is the plural form of the name Enosh. And “Name” likely refers to God’s covenant name, JEHOVAH. The “Enoshi” were the descendants of Seth’s son, Enosh, who had taken to themselves God’s covenant name yet had become “nephilim” (tyrants and bullies). The earth was already full of tyrants and bullies who used violence to terrorize others. And when the “sons of God” no longer remained segregated, but married pagan women who did not worship JEHOVAH, the children of these mixed marriages became just as vile as the tyrants who were already running wild in the earth.

⁵⁹ Numbers 13:33

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When the “sons of God” began to pursue the “daughters of men,” all of Noah’s ancestors named in the genealogy were dead except his father, Lamech, and his grandfather, Methuseleh. Enosh himself lived until the year 1140 after creation, only 396 years before God pronounced judgment on all this wickedness and Noah began building the ark. No doubt, when the ancient fathers of Seth’s tribe began to die off, the godly influence began to wane and eventually the younger generations saw no need to keep their godly covenantal line distinct from the general population. The prophecy of the “Seed of the woman” defeating the “seed of the serpent” was of no concern to them. And when they took wives from amongst those in open rebellion against God, their children were heavily influenced by their mothers and her side of the family. They were “sons of God” in name only; they no longer followed JEHOVAH. Consequently Moses called them, “Enoshi of the Name.” They carried the name of JEHOVAH as their forefather Enosh originated. While the morality of the fathers who initially took foreign wives may not have degraded significantly, the morality of the offspring of these mixed marriages certainly did. They became just as violent and corrupt as the rest of mankind.

V. The Revolt of the Sons of Seth according to Josephus

“Now this Seth, when he was brought up, and came to those years in which he could discern what was good, became a virtuous man; and as he was himself of an excellent character, so did he leave children behind him who imitated his virtues. All these proved to be of good dispositions. They also inhabited the same country without dissensions, and in a happy condition, without any misfortunes falling upon them, till they died. They also were the inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies, and their order. And that their inventions might not be lost before they were sufficiently known, upon Adam’s prediction that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and at another time by the violence and quantity of water, they made two pillars, the one of brick, the other of stone: they inscribed their discoveries on them both, that in case the pillar of brick should be destroyed by the flood, the pillar of stone might remain, and exhibit those discoveries to mankind; and also inform them that there was another pillar of brick erected by them. Now this remains in the land of Siriad to this day.

“Now this posterity of Seth continued to esteem God as the Lord of the universe, and to have an entire regard to virtue, for seven generations; but in process of time they were perverted, and forsook the practices of their forefathers; and did neither pay those honors to God which were appointed them, nor had they any concern to do justice towards men. But for what degree of zeal they had formerly shown for virtue, they now showed by their actions a double degree of wickedness, whereby they made God to be their enemy. For many angels [messengers] of God accompanied with women, and begat sons

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that proved unjust, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength; for the tradition is, that these men did what resembled the acts of those whom the Grecians call giants. But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and being displeased at their conduct, persuaded them to change their dispositions and their acts for the better: but seeing they did not yield to him, but were slaves to their wicked pleasures, he was afraid they would kill him, together with his wife and children, and those they had married; so he departed out of that land.

“Now God loved this man for his righteousness: yet he not only condemned those other men for their wickedness, but determined to destroy the whole race of mankind, and to make another race that should be pure from wickedness.”⁶⁰

Josephus is frequently quoted in support of the angels fornicating with women theory. Unfortunately, he is almost always quoted out of context. Note the following facts from Josephus' quotation:

- The sons of Seth lived in their own country, separate from the rest of mankind
- They were messengers of the prophecies of Adam, preserving them in stone
- They were entirely virtuous for 7 generations
- The 8th generation (Noah's generation) became completely apostate
- The cause of their apostasy was that their fathers had taken foreign wives
- Noah preached repentance to his fellow Sethites, but they rejected his message
- The children were called “nephilim” or “gigantes” because of their violence
- The “nephilim” or “gigantes” were called “men” by Josephus

According to Josephus, the sons of Seth remained faithful to God for seven generations. But, the 8th generation (Noah's generation) forsook the practices of their forefathers and became apostate. Josephus tells us the major cause of the apostasy of the 8th generation of Seth's sons. “**For many messengers of God** accompanied with women, and begat sons that proved unjust, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength; for the tradition is, that these men did what resembled the acts of those whom the Grecians call giants.” The little word, “for,” introduces an explanation of what comes before. The clause, “for many messengers of God accompanied with women...” is an explanation of “in the process of time they were perverted, and forsook the practices of their forefathers,” which was to live segregated from the rest of mankind. The word “messengers” is translated “angels” in our English translations of Josephus. But, it is clear from the context that these “messengers” were the sons of Seth! This is proven by the next statement. “But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and being displeased at their

⁶⁰ Josephus, Antiquities, Book I, ch. 2-3.

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conduct, persuaded them to change their dispositions and their acts for the better.” Did Noah preach repentance to fallen angels, or their demonic offspring? Hardly! He preached to his relatives who were taking foreign wives and producing violent and ungodly offspring!

Augustine explains that some copies of the Septuagint had “angels of God” instead of “sons of God” in Genesis six. And this is no doubt where Josephus drew this term from. Yet, it is clear from the context of Josephus that the angels [messengers] were human. Augustine explained why sometimes the sons of Seth were called “angels.”

“God’s angels [messengers] would bear the message, that they should place their hope in God, like him who was born of Seth [Enosh], the son of resurrection, and who hoped to call on the name of the Lord God, in which hope they and their offspring would be co-heirs of eternal blessings, and brethren in the family of which God is the Father. But that those angels were not angels in the sense of not being men, as some suppose, Scripture itself decides, which unambiguously declares that they were men. For when it had first been stated that “the angels of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose,” it was immediately added, “And the Lord God said, My Spirit shall not always strive with these men, for that they also are flesh.” For by the Spirit of God they had been made angels [messengers] of God, and sons of God; but declining towards lower things, they are called men, a name of nature, not of grace; and they are called flesh, as deserters of the Spirit, and by their desertion deserted [by Him]. The Septuagint indeed calls them both angels of God and sons of God, though all the copies do not show this, some having only the name “sons of God.”⁶¹

Josephus used the term “messengers” in reference to the sons of Seth and not heavenly beings. The term “αγγελος” is often used of human messengers in Scripture. The “angels” of the seven churches in Revelation are the messengers each church sent to bring correspondence to John on Patmos. In Matt. 11:10, John the Baptist is called God’s “αγγελος” quoting Malachi 3:1 from the LXX. James 2:25 refers to the spies who encountered Rahab as “αγγελος.” It is used in this sense in the Septuagint as well, for example:

Gen. 32:3,6 LXX

3 And Jacob sent messengers [αγγελους] before him to Esau his brother to the land of Seir, to the country of Edom....

6 And the messengers [αγγελοι] returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and lo! he comes to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

⁶¹ Augustine, City of God, Bk. 15, ch. 23

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2 Chron. 36:15-16 LXX

15 And the Lord God of their fathers sent by the hand of his prophets; rising early and sending his messengers [αγγελους], for he spared his people, and his sanctuary.

16 Nevertheless they sneered at his messengers [αγγελους], and set at nought his words, and mocked his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord rose up against his people, till there was no remedy.

In what sense would Seth's sons be called "messengers" by Josephus? That is answered in Josephus' previous comment that the tribe of the sons of Seth preserved Adam's prophecies of the coming judgments by flood and fire for future generations. They were "messengers" (αγγελοι) to the generations after the flood according to Josephus. These two monuments with their engraved prophecies still existed in Josephus' day and most likely still exist. Isaiah mentioned them as monuments in a prophesy of the Kingdom.⁶²

VI. The Reason for the Flood

Moses wrote that the reason God destroyed the earth with the flood was because man had corrupted his way, and the whole earth was filled with violence.

Gen 6:5 NKJV

5 Then the LORD saw that **the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**

13 And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for **the earth is filled with violence through them;** and behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

God did not destroy the earth with a flood to drown all the angel-human hybrids. Nor would drowning mankind in any way punish angels. God destroyed the earth because it was filled with tyrants and because His covenant people had become bullies just like the wicked. Noah and his family were the only ones left who cherished their covenant with God. If God allowed only a few more generations, the paternity of JEHOVAH through Adam, Seth, Enosh, Cainan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methusaleh, Lamech, and Noah, would have become polluted by intermarriage with heathen women.

With this in mind, it becomes obvious why Moses would include this story in Genesis. The Law that he delivered to the Israelites commanded that they refrain from taking wives from among the nations for the very same reason, because these women would cause their husbands and children to depart from the Lord. Moses included this as a major reason for the flood, to show to the Israelites just how serious God was about

⁶² Isaiah 19:19-20

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preserving a righteous seed to being about the Messiah who would crush the head of the “seed” of the Serpent – Antichrist.

Some have argued that such a distinct line of people smacks of racial superiority. Yes, the race of God’s sons is far superior to the “children of the wicked one.” This is no different than the superiority of the Jewish nation since its inception. God said, “*Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.*”⁶³ The people of Israel were God’s covenant people after the flood. While genetics is a major component in God’s covenants, the New Testament makes it very clear that genetics is not the only component. Just as Gentiles were adopted into ancient Israel when they renounced their pagan gods and adopted the God of Abraham, so also are Gentiles adopted into the “Seed” of the woman, Jesus Christ, through baptism.⁶⁴ True Christians are of the royal tribe of Judah, because we are joined to Jesus Christ the “Lion of the tribe of Judah.”⁶⁵ We are adopted sons of God.

The real concern for keeping Israel from taking foreign wives was to preserve a holy people generationally. The Jews were permitted to take wives of people they had conquered in war. Their gods were deemed to have been defeated by JEHOVAH. Rahab was such a woman, and ended up in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. The Israelites were normally forbidden to take wives from their unconquered neighbors because they worshipped foreign gods, and would corrupt their husbands and children with idolatry. Israel was given the covenant of circumcision in order to protect the line of Jesus Christ coming through only circumcised males of God’s covenant people. Thus, Moses records the genealogy of Jesus Christ through holy covenant people, from God’s fathering Adam and giving him the inheritance of the whole earth, through the line of Seth, down to the Israelites standing at the Jordan river, about to enter the promised Land.

The reason the Sethite covenant people and the Israelite covenant people were segregated was to pass on the truth of God and the worship of JEHOVAH generationally, from father to sons and daughters, and to preserve the genealogy of the Messiah. After seven generations, the Sethites violated this principle until the righteous remnant became almost extinct. So God destroyed all of humanity except the small remnant – Noah and his family. When Israel did the same thing God’s wrath and judgment fell on them also.

Deut 6:6-9 NKJV

6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

⁶³ Mal. 1:2-3

⁶⁴ Gal. 3:16,26-29

⁶⁵ Rev. 5:5

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7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

The last generation of the firstfruits covenant people of JEHOVAH did not remain faithful. Noah and his sons were chosen by God because of Noah's faithfulness, and to preserve the "sons of God" and true worship of JEHOVAH. Had God delayed His judgment, the rate of decay of the "sons of God" would no doubt have left no one still proclaiming the true worship of JEHOVAH within just a few more generations. The "Seed of the woman" (Messiah) could not have been born in order to defeat the "seed of the Serpent." So, God acted to eliminate even the "sons of God" along with the rest of the population, sparing only this one family for a new beginning. From a descendant of one of Noah's sons (Shem) God called Abraham and established His covenant with him and his descendants after him, ultimately bringing about the Seed who would crush the Serpent's head.

VII. The Angels that Sinned according to Peter and Jude

Peter and Jude are often called upon in support of the theory of angels taking human wives. Yet, neither Peter nor Jude mentioned anything about angels fornicating. Peter stated that Jesus proclaimed something to the "spirits under guard" who had been disobedient in the days of Noah. In his second epistle, Peter added that these who were under guard were "angels that sinned" in the days of Noah, a preacher (messenger) of righteousness. Jude describes their sin as abandoning their assigned dominions.

1 Peter 3:18-22 LGV⁶⁶

18 Because also Christ suffered once for sins, the Just for the unjust, so that He might lead us towards God, having been put to death in the flesh, but brought to life with the breath.

19 With which [breath] having gone to the spirits under guard, He heralded 20 to those [who were] formerly disobedient, when once the patience of God was delaying in the days of Noah constructing the ark, into which few, that is eight souls, escaped through water, 21 (in which [water] also the antitype – baptism – now saves us, not removing the filth of flesh, but the request to God of a good conscience by the resurrection of Jesus Christ), 22 who is at the right of God, having gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers having been subordinated to Him.

⁶⁶ Last Generation Version by Tim Warner; www.lastgenerationbible.org

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2 Peter 2:4 LGV

4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but incarcerating [them] to confinement of gloom, delivered for judgment, having been guarded, 5 and did not spare the original system, but preserved Noah the eighth, a preacher of justice, bringing a flood to the system of the wicked, ...

Jude 1:6 LGV

6 And angels, those not having guarded their personal dominion, but having abandoned their own domain, He has placed under guard in enduring confinement under gloom for judgment of the great Day.

From these three passages we learn the following:

- After Jesus' resurrection, He proclaimed a message to the "spirits under guard."
- These spirits had previously been "disobedient."
- They were kept under guard while God delayed the flood and Noah built the ark.
- Jesus ascended to heaven after subordinating angels, authorities, and powers.
- They were "angels who sinned."
- Their judgment has been fixed.
- They have been "guarded" in "confinement of gloom."
- Their crime was not guarding their personal dominion, but abandoning their assigned domain.

There is nothing here about fornicating with women. Jude indicates that angels were given specific dominions to guard. Their sin was in abandoning their assigned territory.

The "angels who sinned" by "not having guarded their personal dominion, but having abandoned their own domain" are elsewhere called the devil's angels⁶⁷ and the angels of the dragon, Satan, and the devil.⁶⁸ Paul was abused by one of Satan's angels.⁶⁹ Yet, even though Satan and his angels have some power, they are restrained by Michael and his angels.

Dan 10:12-13; 20 - 11:1 NASB

12 Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words.

⁶⁷ Matt. 25:41

⁶⁸ Rev. 12:7-7

⁶⁹ 2 Cor. 12:7

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13 "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. ...

20 Then he said, "Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come. 21 However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince. 11:1 In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him."

Dan 12:1 NASB

1 "Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued."

The angel sent to Daniel had to engage some of the evil principalities and powers who were interfering in the kingdoms of Persia and Greece. They had abandoned their assigned domains, and were intent on destroying the covenant people of God. Yet, Michael commanded the army which stood firmly against these powers. This particular angel protected Darius the Mede, who was a friend to Daniel and to Israel. In the last days, Michael, the one charged with protecting the covenant people, will rescue that remnant from these evil forces. This is what is mentioned in Revelation 12, when Michael and his angels cast down Satan and his angels to the earth, who then wreak havoc on all but the preserved remnant of God's covenant people.

Rev 12:7-13 NKJV

7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.

9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. ...

12 "Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. 14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

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Thus, the fact that Satan's angels are restrained by Michael and his angels does not mean they are locked away in a subterranean cell. Rather, they are restrained by Michael and his forces from molesting God's covenant people, so that God's purposes among the nations can be completed in six millennia. At the proper time, the restraint will be temporarily lifted so that the Antichrist and his hordes can do their dirty work. During this time, Michael and his angels will give their full attention to protecting God's covenant sons and daughters.

2 Thess 2:6-8 NKJV

*6 And now you know **what is restraining**, that he may be revealed in his own time.*

*7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now **restrains** will do so until He is taken out of the way.*

8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

Dan 12:1 NKJV

1 At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.

The "restraining" in 2 Thess. 2 is the same "guarding" that we read about in Peter and Jude. All of which is designed to prevent Satan's angels from overthrowing God's plan to bring about the restoration of the earth at the end of six millennia. The wicked angels are the "principalities and powers" against which we also struggle.

Eph 6:12 NKJV

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

The rebellious principalities and powers, the angels who sinned by abandoning their assigned dominions, are very powerful indeed. Within ten generations of Satan's deceiving Eve, the entire population of the world had been led astray by the angels who followed Satan's example of apostasy from God. God's covenant people became corrupt, and God's plan to bring the Messiah through a righteous seed was on the verge of collapse. Michael and his angels were assigned the task of restraining the wicked

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activity of the one-third⁷⁰ of the angels who followed Satan. This restraining activity began so that Noah would have time to build the ark and save his family. And it will continue until the middle of the 70th week of Daniel. Then, Michael's role will become purely defensive for the remnant of God's sons and daughters.

Some claim that Jude acknowledges that the angels committed fornication by comparing them to the sin of Sodom.

Jude 1:6-7 NKJV

6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

*7 as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them **in a similar manner to these**, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.*

The key clause is "in a similar manner to these." The demonstrative pronoun, "these," needs an antecedent. And those who promote this myth claim the antecedent is "the angels" in verse 6. While this is a grammatical possibility, it is not the only possibility, or even the most likely one. A careful reading of verses 3-19 shows that Jude used the demonstrative pronoun "these" seven times. And in every other case, "these" referred back to the Gnostic apostates in verse 4. Jude also identified the Gnostic teachers as being sexually immoral people six times. They "turn the grace of God into lewdness" (v. 4). They "defile the flesh" (v. 8). They "corrupt themselves" like "brute beasts" (v. 10). They walk "according to their own lusts" (v. 16). They are "sensual persons" (v. 19). In verse 7, Jude wrote: "As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them, **in a similar manner to these**, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh..." The demonstrative pronoun "these" refers to the apostate men whom Jude was warning his readers about, whom he had described as being sexually perverted. He merely likened the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to the apostates of his day, not to angels.

While Jude did mention angels that fell, he did not identify their sin as being sexual. Their sin was that they "did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode." Essentially, the sin of these angels according to Jude is that they violated their rank and left their assigned dominions. This strongly implies a revolt or mutiny.

Notice that Jude was comparing the apostate teachers to three examples of rebellion against God, and God's reaction to all three.

⁷⁰ Rev. 12:4

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- The Israelites at Kadesh Barnea: *“the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.”* (v. 5)
- The Angels who sinned: *“who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day”* (v. 6)
- The Sodomites: *“having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”* (v. 7)

Then in verse 8, he likened the sin of the apostate teachers to all three of these sins, in reverse order.

Jude 8 NKJV

*8 Likewise also these dreamers **defile the flesh** [like the Sodomites], **reject authority** [like the angels], and **speaking evil of dignitaries** [like the Israelites in the wilderness].*

Each of these three groups was guilty of one of the sins of the Gnostic teachers summarized in verse 8. The Sodomites “defile the flesh.” The sin of the angels was that they “reject authority.” The sin of the Israelites was that they spoke evil against God and the authority of Moses when they refused to go into the land. Joshua and Caleb brought back a good report. But the other ten spies convinced the people otherwise.⁷¹ The sin of the Israelites was that they spoke against the Lord and against his appointed ruler – Moses. Jude contrasted the Israelites’ arrogance with Michael’s humility. *“Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’”* Jude’s point was to show a stark contrast between Michael and the Israelites’ respect for authority. In Michael’s dispute with Satan over Moses’ body, he did not even speak evil of Satan! Yet, the Israelites spoke evil of Moses himself while He was carrying out his divinely appointed office!

It becomes quickly apparent from the structure of Jude’s argument that the sin of the angels was not sexual at all. It was rebellion against their appointed rank and dominion. In no way did Jude endorse the myth that angels took human wives and produced angel-human hybrid children.

⁷¹ Num 13:30-14:4

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VIII. The “Sons of God” in Revelation

Revelation 14:1-5 NKJV

*1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having **His Father’s name written on their foreheads.***

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

*4 **These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.***

5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

This passage takes on new meaning when we approach it from the perspective of the first covenant people the sons of God. Consider the four identifying markers:

- They are a fairly small number, 144,000.
- They possess the Father’s name.
- They were “not defiled with women.”
- They are the “firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.”

There is only one group in the Bible that fits all four of these identifying markers, the seven generations of faithful descendants of Seth through Enosh.

A. They are a small number, 144,000: The faithful sons of Seth through Enosh were one tribe spanning only seven generations. If each son, beginning with Enosh, had an average of 7.25⁷² sons and 7.25 daughters (each man having only one wife of the daughters of Enosh), and if this continued for seven generations, the total number of faithful sons of Seth through Enosh would be 145,220 men who were “not defiled with women.”⁷³ All other covenant people in Scripture number in the millions.

⁷² This number (7 sons and 7 daughters) is not unreasonably large given the long lifespans of these people.

⁷³ Traditionally, a multitude is counted by the number of adult males (Matt. 14:21; Matt. 15:38)

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Using the same 7.25 figure, the 8th generation (Noah's generation who took foreign wives) would have numbered over a million wicked sons of Enosh (1,052,845). And their sons would number over seven million tyrants and bullies (7,633,126).

B. They possess the Father's Name: The first covenant people are specifically said to have "*called themselves by the name of JEHOVAH.*"

C. They were "*not defiled with women*": The seven generations of Seth's descendants before Noah's generation were "*not defiled with [pagan] women.*" The Bible teaches that "*marriage is honorable.*" There is only one way, according to Scripture, that "*women*" defile God's people. And that is when God's covenant people take wives from among those who are not God's people.⁷⁴

D. They are the "*firstfruits unto God and the Lamb.*" No group after the flood can claim to be the "*firstfruits.*" The very first covenant people, "*called by the name of JEHOVAH,*" uniquely qualify for this title.⁷⁵

Assuming the identity of this group of 144,000 to be the faithful sons of Seth, the statement that they were "*not defiled with women*" clearly implies that they are from among a larger group, some of which were "*defiled with women.*" The language strongly implies that these are the "*sons of God*" in Genesis who did not take foreign wives. No other group is distinguished in the Bible in this way.

IX. Angels Are Not Equipped to Procreate

Reproduction was designed by God. The first man was called "Adam," which means "earthling," because he was made from the dust of the ground. When God formed all of His physical creatures, He limited their reproduction compatibility to the same "kind." Every creature of God only reproduces after its kind. Breeding is not possible with a different kind. Dogs and cats cannot breed. Humans and animals cannot cross breed. The reason is the DNA is not compatible.

Angels are not only of a different "kind," they are not even of this physical creation. Angels are "spirits" as Peter indicated.⁷⁶ Paul also referred to the obedient angels as

⁷⁴ Exodus 34:11-16

⁷⁵ Methodius (AD 260-312) Discourse VII, v. "For consider what confidence Seth had towards God, and Abel, and Enos, and Enoch, and Methuselah, and Noah, the first lovers of righteousness, and the first of the first-born children who are written in heaven, being thought worthy of the kingdom, as a kind of first-fruits of the plants for salvation, coming out as early fruit to God."

⁷⁶ 1 Peter 3:19

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*“attendant spirits commissioned for those on the threshold of inheriting the deliverance.”*⁷⁷ Jesus clearly stated that angels do not *“marry or are given in marriage.”*⁷⁸ He also said that just before the flood, people were *“eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage”*⁷⁹ and were caught unaware by the flood. He was referring to the sons of Seth marrying pagan women and the associated feasting. He was not referring to fornicating angels.

X. The Source of the “Fallen Angels” Myth – The Book of Enoch

The myth of fallen angels procreating with women is ancient. The first known mention among the Jews comes from the Book of Enoch, written around 250BC. It is an apocalyptic piece, typical of certain groups like the Essenes. The writer of this book falsely claimed to be Enoch, written after God took him. It contains many fanciful and ridiculous claims. Enoch was allegedly caught up to the angelic realm, where he was shown many things, even becoming a go between for the fallen angels and God. They begged for mercy through Enoch, but were refused and condemned to eternal punishment. In his travels in the angelic realm, Enoch was shown how the solar system works in minute detail. There are so many things in this book that are absurd from a scientific standpoint, it is incredible that so many Christians think it should be included as Scripture. No doubt those who think this have not read through the book, but only heard excerpts from it. Some of the more preposterous claims are as follows:

- The offspring of the fornicating angels were 3000 ells in height. An “ell” is a synonym for a cubit. It is the length between the elbow and fingertip, about 18 inches. So, these giants were about 4,500 feet tall!⁸⁰
- These supposed great giants began eating all of men's food, and when that quickly ran out, they began eating all the people, birds, and animals (even though meat was not food before the flood). Then, when those provisions became scarce, they started eating each other!⁸¹
- The Book of Enoch claims that *“The women also of the angels who went astray shall become sirens.”*⁸² “Sirens” were pagan mythological creatures, birds with the faces of women, whose singing allegedly seduces sailors.
- The earth is flat, the heaven is a hemisphere that rests on the edges of the earth.⁸³
- The sun is carried across the sky in a chariot blown by the wind. At dawn, it comes through a window in the sky in the east and then sets through a window in the west. Then once the sun sets in the west, it takes a 90 degree right turn,

⁷⁷ Hebrews 1:14 LGV

⁷⁸ Luke 20:34-36

⁷⁹ Matt. 24:37-39

⁸⁰ Book of Enoch, 7:2

⁸¹ *ibid.* 7:3-5

⁸² *ibid.* 19:2

⁸³ *ibid.* 33:1-3

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and moves around the earth by way of the north until it gets back to its place in the east, where it repeats the cycle daily.⁸⁴

- The revolution of the stars causes lightning. Other stars change their form into lightning.⁸⁵
- God has a place of torment for punishing some of the stars of heaven because they failed to rise in the night sky at their appointed times.⁸⁶ Like the pagans, the writer of Enoch thought the visible stars were living beings.

Other blatant inaccuracies:

- There are exactly 364 days to a solar year.⁸⁷
- The end of the world and last judgment would occur 70 generations from Noah.⁸⁸ (It was 77 generations from Adam to Christ).⁸⁹

The book of Enoch is Jewish mysticism, paganism (evident in the claim that the wives of the fallen angels became “sirens” and the similarity of the “fallen angels” to pagan gods). The Cabalistic-like philosophy found in Philo of Alexandria is also found in 1 Enoch. *“And all the waters shall be joined with the waters: that which is **above the heavens is the masculine**, and the water which is **beneath the earth is the feminine**.”*⁹⁰

Justification for taking the Book of Enoch as inspired Scripture is often claimed from Jude. He is alleged to have quoted from it as Scripture.

Jude 1:14-15 NKJV

14 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, 15 to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

While these words do indeed appear in the first chapter of the Book of Enoch, this is not proof that Jude quoted from this book. Rather, it only indicates that both Jude and the author of the Book of Enoch were familiar with a genuine prophecy of Enoch. No doubt,

⁸⁴ *ibid.* 72:1-5

⁸⁵ *ibid.* 43:2, 44:1

⁸⁶ *ibid.* 18:14-16

⁸⁷ *ibid.* 74:12

⁸⁸ *ibid.* 10:12

⁸⁹ Luke 3:23-38

⁹⁰ *ibid.* 54:8. For more information regarding the masculine and feminine principles of Eastern Mysticism, see the following website: <http://www.transpersonal.com.au/masculine-feminine.htm>

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the author of the Book of Enoch included a genuine prophecy of Enoch's to add credibility to his book of fiction. It is important to note that Jude did not say, "it is written," but "Enoch prophesied saying..." This very likely referred to an oral tradition.

XI. Angels are Not "Sons of God"

The only verses in the Bible that call angels "sons of God" are three verses in Job. This is translated from the modern Hebrew text, the oldest copies of which are from around 1000AD. The much earlier Greek Septuagint does not refer to angels as "sons of God" in Job or anywhere else. And as we have already seen, the Septuagint has proven quite helpful and reliable regarding this issue.

Genesis 6:2 LXX

2 ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ τὰς θυγατέρας τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὅτι καλαί εἰσιν, ἔλαβον ἑαυτοῖς γυναῖκας ἀπὸ πασῶν, ὧν ἐξελέξαντο. (the sons of God)

Job 1:6 LXX

6 Καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς ἡ ἡμέρα αὕτη, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἦλθον οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ παραστῆναι ἐνώπιον τοῦ Κυρίου, καὶ ὁ διάβολος ἦλθε μετ' αὐτῶν. (the angels of God)

Job 2:1 LXX

1 Εγένετο δὲ ὡς ἡ ἡμέρα αὕτη καὶ ἦλθον οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ παραστῆναι ἐναντι Κυρίου, καὶ ὁ διάβολος ἦλθεν ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν παραστῆναι ἐναντίον τοῦ Κυρίου. (the angels of God)

Job 38:7 LXX

7 ὅτε ἐγενήθησαν ἄστρα, ἤνεσάν με φωνῇ μεγάλῃ πάντες ἄγγελοί μου. (all the angels of mine)

Nowhere in the entire Greek Old Testament or Greek New Testament are angels referred to as the "sons of God." The Hebrew text probably became corrupt in these verses of Job sometime after the second century as a letter written by Origen to Julius Africanus in the second century indicates.

Origen did a great deal of textual criticism work, comparing various manuscripts and translations of the Old Testament available in his day – about two centuries after Christ's death. Origen compiled the Hexapla – a six column parallel Old Testament containing all of the Old Testament versions available to Christians in the second century. The six columns were:

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1. The second century Hebrew text
2. The Hebrew text transliterated using Greek characters
3. Aquila's translation
4. Symmachus' translation
5. The Septuagint
6. Theodotion's translation

In his letter to Julius Africanus, Origen discussed the differences he had found between the Septuagint and the Hebrew manuscripts of his day. Here is what he wrote about the first chapter of Job.

*"Then in Job, the words from 'It is written, that he shall rise again with those whom the Lord raises,' to the end, are not in the Hebrew, and so not in Aquila's edition; while they are found in the Septuagint and in Theodotion's version, agreeing with each other at least in sense. **And many other places I found in Job where our copies** [the LXX used by the Christian churches] **have more than the Hebrew ones**, sometimes a little more, and sometimes a great deal more: a little more, as when to the words, 'Rising up in the morning, he offered burnt-offerings for them according to their number,' they [the Jews] add, 'one heifer for the sin of their soul;' and to the words, '**The angels of God came to present themselves before God, and the devil came with them,**' 'from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.' Again, after 'The Lord gave, the LORD has taken away,' the Hebrew has not, 'It was so, as seemed good to the Lord.' Then our copies [the LXX] are very much fuller than the Hebrew, when Job's wife speaks to him, from 'How long wilt thou hold out? And he said, Lo, I wait yet a little while, looking for the hope of my salvation,' down to 'that I may cease from my troubles, and my sorrows which compass me.' For they have only these words of the woman, 'But say a word against God, and die.'"⁹¹*

Several points are worth considering here:

- The LXX with which Origen was familiar (which he called "our copies") certainly had "angels of God" and not "sons of God" in Job 1:6.
- While he was comparing this with the Hebrew and other translations of the Hebrew, he made no mention of the reading, "sons of God" which is in the modern Hebrew text.
- Origen noted that the Hebrew differs from the LXX in verse 7 "from going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it." The LXX has, "strolling around the earth and what is near under heaven."

⁹¹ A Letter from Origen to Africanus, 3; Ante Nicene Fathers, Vol. 4, pp. 784-785

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Origen was not only noting what was added by the Hebrew or missing from the Hebrew (compared to the LXX) but also variant readings. Yet, after quoting verse 6 as “angels of God” he made no mention of any variant reading in the Hebrew (or in any of the other Hebrew translations he was comparing). Apparently, the much older Hebrew text at Origen’s disposal, as well as the other translations of the Hebrew, also had “angels of God” instead of “sons of God” as in the modern Masoretic text. Not only does the LXX not refer to angels as “sons of God,” but apparently neither did the more ancient copies of the Hebrew. The change to “sons of God” in the Hebrew text must have occurred between the second and fifth centuries, where “sons of God” shows up for the first time in the Latin Vulgate.

Every Old Testament quotation in the book of Hebrews is from the Septuagint, including some passages that do not appear at all in the modern Hebrew text. In Hebrews, Paul argued strongly for a dichotomy between the sons of God and angels. In Hebrew culture and the Scriptures, “sons” automatically implies an inheritance.⁹² Paul’s argument rests entirely on the fact that the Septuagint nowhere refers to the angels as “sons of God.”

Heb. 1:4-7,14 LGV

4 having become so much better than the messengers, since inheriting a much more excellent name compared to them.

5 For to which of the messengers has He ever said, “You are My Son, today I have fathered You”? And again, “I will be to Him a Father, and He will be to Me a Son”?

6 Yet again, whenever He should be leading the Firstborn into the Land, He says, “And give worship to Him all the messengers of God.”

7 And indeed unto the messengers He says: “... the One making His messengers spirits, and His servants a blazing fire. ...

13 When has He ever said to any of the messengers, “Sit on my right side until I should place Your enemies under your feet”?

14 Are they not all attendant spirits commissioned for those on the threshold of inheriting the deliverance?

Paul’s point in verses 4 and 5 is that Christ’s title as “Son” makes him greater than the angels. The reason is that a “son” is the heir of the inheritance. Notice in verse 14 Paul wrote that angels are servants to the real sons of God, those on the verge of receiving the inheritance. These are the heirs of God. The angels are NOT heirs of God and are therefore not “sons of God.” The angels are contrasted with God’s “Son” who has the inheritance.

⁹² Romans 8:17

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Paul's entire point in this passage rests on the Septuagint. Verse 6 quotes Deut. 32:44 from the Septuagint, a sentence that does not appear at all in the Hebrew Bible. Had he or his audience been familiar with the reading we find in our modern Hebrew text of Job, they would have immediately challenged his argument that angels are not sons of God.

Heb 2:5-18 NKJV

5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.

6 But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him?"

7 You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands.

8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing **many sons** to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them **brethren**,

12 saying: "I will declare Your name to **My brethren**; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You."

13 And again: "I will put My trust in Him." And again: "Here am I and **the children** whom God has given Me."

14 Inasmuch then as **the children have partaken of flesh and blood**, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,

15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

16 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.

17 Therefore, in all things He had to be made **like His brethren**, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

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There is no question that Paul drew a clear dichotomy between the angels of God and the “sons” of God. Jesus Christ was “the Son of God,” and those who are in Christ are also “sons of God” and “children of God” by adoption. Paul’s point in verses 16-17 was that angels are not Jesus’ “brethren” and are therefore not “sons of God.” Jesus and believers are all “brethren” (fellow “sons” and “daughters” of God). He is the “only begotten Son of God” because He was literally conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit. We are “sons of God” by adoption. The angels could never be “sons of God.” And this passage proves it beyond a shadow of doubt. Paul’s entire point rests on the fact that the Septuagint always distinguishes between the “sons of God” and the “angels of God.” We are therefore compelled to follow the readings in the LXX (particularly in Job), otherwise Paul’s whole argument collapses.

Time and time again, the Greek Old Testament (LXX) proves superior to the Masoretic Hebrew text in those places where the text reflects on the person of Christ,⁹³ and many other important doctrines of Scripture. As noted earlier, the book of Hebrews quotes the LXX exclusively, and several of the points made in Hebrews depend on the Greek version, and cannot be made from the Hebrew text in existence today.⁹⁴

XII. The Early Church

It is indisputable that some of the early Christians believed the fornicating angels theory. The earliest Christian writers to espouse it were Justin and Tertullian. Justin made only passing reference to it. But Tertullian expounded on the subject when discussing the veiling of virgins. However, it was by no means the universal view of early Christianity.

An early work, titled, *The Recognitions of Clement*, claimed to be the work of Clement of Rome who lived in the first century. The authorship is disputed by some scholars. However, it certainly predates Origen, since he quoted parts of it.⁹⁵ That would place it somewhere between AD 70 and AD 230. Clement states plainly that the “sons of God” were men.

*“All things therefore being completed which are in heaven, and in earth, and in the waters, and the human race also having multiplied, in the eighth generation, **righteous men**, who had lived the life of angels, being allured by the beauty of women, fell into promiscuous and illicit connections with these.”⁹⁶*

⁹³ Compare Psalm 22:16 in the Hebrew and LXX. The Hebrew says, “As lions, they surround my hands and my feet,” while the LXX has, “they pierced my hands and my feet.”

⁹⁴ See my article, “The Kingdom Hope in Hebrews,” <http://www.oasischristianchurch.org/articles/hebrews.pdf>

⁹⁵ Recognitions of Clement, Introduction

⁹⁶ Recognitions of Clement, ch. xxix

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Origen (AD 185-254), writing against an enemy of early Christianity, Celsus, pointed out that Celsus' understanding of the fornicating angels myth was based on the Jewish Book of Enoch which was not widely accepted in the Christian churches. Celsus claimed that Jesus was not the only begotten Son of God. He attempted to prove this by appealing to the story of the fornicating angels in the book of Enoch, which he claimed were also "sons of God," showing that Jesus was not uniquely God's Son. Origen countered this argument as follows:

"... what Celsus has adduced, from not understanding the contents of the book of Enoch. ... For he does not appear to have read the passages in question, nor to have been aware that the books which bear the name Enoch do not at all circulate in the churches as divine, although it is from this source that he might be supposed to have obtained the statement, that "sixty or seventy angels descended at the same time, who fell into a state of wickedness."

"But, that we may grant to him in a spirit of candor what he has not discovered in the contents of the book of Genesis, that "the sons of God, seeing the daughters of men, that they were fair, took to them wives of all whom they chose," we shall nevertheless even on this point persuade those who are capable of understanding the meaning of the prophet, that even before us there was one who referred this narrative to the doctrine regarding souls, which became possessed with a desire for the corporeal life of men, and this in metaphorical language, he said, was termed "daughters of men." But whatever may be the meaning of the "sons of God desiring to possess the daughters of men," it will not at all contribute to prove that Jesus was not the only one who visited mankind as an angel, and who manifestly became the Savior and benefactor of all those who depart from the flood of wickedness. Then, mixing up and confusing whatever he had at any time heard, or had anywhere found written — whether held to be of divine origin among Christians or not — he adds: "The sixty or seventy who descended together were cast under the earth, and were punished with chains." And he quotes (as from the book of Enoch, but without naming it) the following: "And hence it is that the tears of these angels are warm springs," — a thing neither mentioned nor heard of in the Churches of God!"⁹⁷

That the meaning of the "sons of God" taking the "daughters of men" was disputed in the early churches is quite clear a few sentences later. Origen wrote, *"that even before us there was one who referred this narrative to the doctrine regarding souls, which became possessed with a desire for the corporeal life of men, and this, in metaphorical language, he said, was termed 'daughters of men'."*⁹⁸ Here Origen argues for a metaphorical understanding of

⁹⁷ Origen, Against Celsus, Book V, liv

⁹⁸ *ibid.* lv

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the passage. Yet he admits uncertainty, “*but whatever may be the meaning of the ‘sons of God desiring to possess the daughters of men,’ it will not at all contribute to prove that Jesus was not the only one who visited mankind as an angel.*”⁹⁹ He then repeated his charge that Celsus was quoting from the Book of Enoch, a document not generally held as authoritative in the Christian churches of the second century. “*Then mixing up and confusing whatever he had at any time heard, or had anywhere found written – whether held to be of divine origin among Christians or not – he adds ... (as from the book of Enoch without naming it).*”¹⁰⁰

Julius Africanus (AD 200-245) was aware of both views among Christians, and a corrupt reading in some of the copies of the Septuagint in Genesis 6.

*“When men multiplied on the earth, the angels of heaven came together with the daughters of men. In some copies I found “the sons of God.” What is meant by the Spirit, in my opinion, is that the descendants of Seth are called the sons of God on account of the righteous men and patriarchs who have sprung from him, even down to the Savior Himself; but that the descendants of Cain are named the seed of men as having nothing divine in them, on account of the wickedness of their race and the inequality of their nature, being a mixed people, and having stirred the indignation of God. But if it is thought that these refer to angels, we must take them to be those who deal with magic and jugglery, who taught the women the motions of the stars and the knowledge of things celestial, by whose power they conceived the giants as their children, by whom wickedness came to its height on the earth, until God decreed that the whole race of the living should perish in their impiety by the deluge.”*¹⁰¹

Augustine strongly opposed the idea that angels fornicated with women. He regarded the “sons of God” as the line of Seth. He also pointed out from the text that the “giants” were on earth before the sons of God cohabitated with the daughters of men.

*“Giants therefore might well be born, even before the sons of God, who are also called angels of God, formed a connection with the daughters of men, or of those living according to men, that is to say, before **the sons of Seth** formed a connection with the daughters of Cain. For thus speaks even the canonical Scripture itself in the book in which we read of this; its words are: “And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair [good]; and they took them wives of all which they*

⁹⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Julius Africanus, Fragments of the Five Books on Chronography, Frag. 2

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chose. And the Lord God said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became the giants, men of renown." These words of the divine book sufficiently indicate that already there were giants in the earth in those days, in which the sons of God took wives of the children of men, when they loved them because they were good, that is, fair."¹⁰²

"For the words are: "There were giants in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men." Therefore there were giants both before, "in those days," and "also after that." And the words, "they bare children to them," show plainly enough that before the sons of God fell in this fashion they begat children to God, not to themselves, — that is to say, not moved by the lust of sexual intercourse, but discharging the duty of propagation, intending to produce not a family to gratify their own pride, but citizens to people the city of God; and to these they as God's messengers would bear the message, that they should place their hope in God, like him who was born of Seth, the son of resurrection, and who hoped to call on the name of the Lord God, in which hope they and their offspring would be co-heirs of eternal blessings, and brethren in the family of which God is the Father. But that those angels were not angels in the sense of not being men, as some suppose, Scripture itself decides, which unambiguously declares that they were men. For when it had first been stated that "the angels of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose," it was immediately added, "And the Lord God said, My Spirit shall not always strive with these men, for that they also are flesh." For by the Spirit of God they had been made angels of God, and sons of God; but declining towards lower things, they are called men, a name of nature, not of grace; and they are called flesh, as deserters of the Spirit, and by their desertion deserted [by Him]. The Septuagint indeed calls them both angels of God and sons of God, though all the copies do not show this, some having only the name "sons of God." And Aquila, whom the Jews prefer to the other interpreters, has translated neither angels of God nor sons of God, but sons of gods. But both are correct. For they were both sons of God, and thus brothers of their own fathers, who were children of the same God; and they were sons of gods, because begotten by gods, together with whom they themselves also were gods, according to that expression of the psalm: "I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High. "For the Septuagint translators are justly believed to have received the Spirit of prophecy; so that, if they made any alterations under His authority, and did not adhere to a strict translation, we could not doubt that this was divinely dictated. However, the Hebrew

¹⁰² Augustine, City of God, Book 15, ch. 23

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*word may be said to be ambiguous, and to be susceptible of either translation, "sons of God," or "sons of gods."*¹⁰³

There is therefore no doubt that, according to the Hebrew and Christian canonical Scriptures, there were many giants before the deluge, and that these were citizens of the earthly society of men, and that the sons of God, who were according to the flesh the sons of Seth, sunk into this community when they forsook righteousness, Nor need we wonder that giants should be born even from these."¹⁰⁴

It is apparent that the early Christians were far from unanimous in accepting the "fornicating angels" myth or the authority of the book of Enoch.

That some of the earliest (and otherwise orthodox) Fathers believed this myth should not influence us to adopt it. Neither should it cause us to throw them under the bus and label them heretics. They were a product of their times and culture. The early Church Fathers were not immune from residual Greek (Platonic) thinking, nor free from influence of popular fables. For example, the myth of the Phoenix – a bird that allegedly arises from the dead – was used in the debates against the Gnostics as proof that the dead can indeed rise again.

"Let us consider that wonderful sign [of the resurrection] which takes place in Eastern lands, that is, in Arabia and the countries round about. There is a certain bird which is called a phoenix. This is the only one of its kind, and lives five hundred years. And when the time of its dissolution draws near that it must die, it builds itself a nest of frankincense, and myrrh, and other spices, into which, when the time is fulfilled, it enters and dies. But as the flesh decays a certain kind of worm is produced, which, being nourished by the juices of the dead bird, brings forth feathers. Then, when it has acquired strength, it takes up that nest in which are the bones of its parent, and bearing these it passes from the land of Arabia into Egypt, to the city called Heliopolis. And, in open day, flying in the sight of all men, it places them on the altar of the sun, and having done this, hastens back to its former abode. The priests then inspect the registers of the dates, and find that it has returned exactly as the five hundredth year was completed.

Do we then deem it any great and wonderful thing for the Maker of all things to raise up again those that have piously served Him in the assurance of a good faith, when even by a bird He shows us the mightiness of His power to fulfil His promise? For [the Scripture] saith in a certain place, "Thou shalt raise me up, and I shall confess unto Thee;" and

¹⁰³ ibid

¹⁰⁴ ibid

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again, "I laid me down, and slept; I awaked, because Thou art with me;" and again, Job says, "Thou shalt raise up this flesh of mine, which has suffered all these things."¹⁰⁵

"If, however, all nature but faintly figures our resurrection; if creation affords no sign precisely like it, inasmuch as its several phenomena can hardly be said to die so much as to come to an end, nor again be deemed to be reanimated, but only re-formed; then take a most complete and unassailable, symbol of our hope, for it shall be an animated being, and subject alike to life and death. I refer to the bird which is peculiar to the East, famous for its singularity, marvellous from its posthumous life, which renews its life in a voluntary death; its dying day is its birthday, for on it it departs and returns; once more a phoenix where just now there was none; once more himself, but just now out of existence; another, yet the same. What can be more express and more significant for our subject; or to what other thing can such a phenomenon bear witness? God even in His own Scripture says: "The righteous shall flourish like the phoenix;" that is, shall flourish or revive, from death, from the grave — to teach you to believe that a bodily substance may be recovered even from the fire. Our Lord has declared that we are "better than many sparrows:" well, if not better than many a phoenix too, it were no great thing. But must men die once for all, while birds in Arabia are sure of a resurrection?"¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

The evidence strongly favors the idea that the "sons of God" in Genesis six were the descendants of Seth through Enosh – the first covenant people of JEHOVAH.

- This view is best supported by the context and purpose of Genesis.
- The Israelites to whom it was written did not have Job as sacred Scripture, and thus could not have interpreted "sons of God" as angels based on Job.
- The "sons of God" had valid marriages after the manner which God instituted in Genesis 2. The nephilim were the children of marriage, not rape or fornication.
- The LXX translators believed the "sons of God" were men, since they consistently distinguished between "angels" and "sons of God." They referred to the "sons of God" in Genesis 6:2 as "these men" and "flesh" in the next verse.
- The "giants" already existed on earth before the sons of God took the daughters of men as wives, as both the Hebrew and LXX indicate.
- No Scripture in the Old or New Testaments speaks of angels fornicating. When Jesus spoke of the human activity just before the flood, as "marrying and giving in marriage," He was referring to the "sons of God" and "daughters of men" in Genesis 6. It is clear that Jesus was not speaking of fornicating angels, but men.

¹⁰⁵ Clement of Rome, chs. 25-26

¹⁰⁶ Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh, ch. 13

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- Paul's argument in Hebrews, drawing a clear dichotomy between angels (who have no inheritance) and the "sons of God" who have the inheritance, proves that angels cannot be "sons of God."
- This view completely solves a previously problematic passage in Revelation.
- It was the opinion of some of the earliest Christians. Whether it was the majority opinion is impossible to say, and irrelevant to the question.

The Book of Enoch is apparently the earliest source for the fornicating angels fable, written around 250BC. That many of the early Christians viewed this book highly is without question, because in many ways it was similar to the Christian view of the Messiah, contrary to the Jewish view. Its flat earth cosmology was something that did not immediately discredit it in the eyes of the early Christians who knew little of science and astronomy. In any case, there is no reason to suppose that the fornicating angels fable is in any way apostolic. Those who taught it did not do so from either exegesis of Genesis six, or from apostolic tradition, but from adopting "Jewish fables." In the same way that Platonic and Gnostic concepts entered Christianity, so also did Jewish fables.