WHO ARE THE SONS OF GOD IN GENESIS 6?

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CHAPTER ONE

TWO VIEWS ON THE IDENTITY OF THE SONS OF GOD

Introduction

Recently I published an article in the Christian Research Journal titled, "Who Are the Sons of God in Genesis 6?" This article started as an examination of the claims of Church Missler that are presented in his book, *Learn the Bible in 24 Hours*, published by Thomas Nelson Publishers, and on his web site, http://www.khouse.org/articles/ prophetic/ 9960101-43.html. Due to the space constraints, much of the reasoning and exegesis behind this article could not be published, so I present here the larger content.

The Passage In Question

The passage in question is Gen. 6:1–4. Below are four tables set up in an interlinear format giving a literal translation immediately below each Hebrew word.

Table #1: Gen. 6:1

עַל־	לָרֹב	הָאָדָם	הֵחֵל	כִּי־	וַיְהִי
upon	to multiply	the man	began	that	And it was
	לָהֶם׃	יֻלְּדוּ	וּבָנוֹת	הָאֲדָמָה	פְּנֵי
	to them.	were begotten	and daughters	the ground	the face of

Table #2: Gen. 6:2

הָאָדָם	בְּנוֹת	אֶת־	הָאֱלֹהִים	בְּנֵי־	וַיִּרְאוּ
the man	the daughters of		the God	the sons of	And they saw
נָשִׁים	לָהֶם	וַיִּקְחוּ	הֵנָּה	טֹבֹת	כִּי
wives	to them	they took	behold	good	that

			בָּחָרוּ׃	אֲשֶׁר	מִכֹּל
			they chose.	whom	from all

Table #3: Gen. 6:3

בָּאָדָם	רוּחִי	יָדוֹן	לֹא־	יְהוָה	וַיֹּאמֶר
in the man	My Spirit	will stay	Not	the LORD	And said
יָמָיו	וְהָיוּ	בָשָׂר	הוּא	בְּשַׁגַּם	לְעֹלָם
his days	And it will be	flesh	he	in which also	to forever
			שָׁנָה׃	וְעֶשְׂרִים	מֵאָה
			years.	and twenty	hundred

Table #4: Gen. 6:4

וְגַם	הָהֵם	בַּיָּמִים	בָּאָרֶץ	הָיוּ	הַנְּפִלִים
and also	those	in the days	in the land	were	The fallen ones
הָאֱלֹהִים	בְּנֵי	יָבֹאוּ	אֲשֶׁר	כֵּן	אַחֲרֵי־
the God	the sons of	coming	who	thus	after
הֵמָּה	לָהֶם	וְיָלְדוּ	הָאָדָם	בְּנוֹת	אֶל־
They	to them	and they begot	the man	the daughters of	to
	הַשֵּׁם׃	אַנְשֵׁי	מֵעוֹלָם	אֲשֶׁר	הַגִּבֹּרִים
	the name.	men of	from old	who	the warriors

In an attempt to be very literal without changing the meaning, the following translation might seem a bit choppy and uneven. Any standard English translation might sound better, but I have tried to retain the word order without changing the meaning. I have also included such things as definite articles where the standard translations tend to eliminate these because to include them would produce awkward English, and word in italics indicates that there is no specific underlying Hebrew word that corresponds to this English word, but it is added to retain the meaning of the original.

1 And it was when the man began to multiply upon the face of the ground, that sons they brought forth to themselves.

2 And the sons of the God saw the daughters of the man that good, behold they took to them women from all whom they chose.

3 And the Lord said, "My Spirit will not reside in man forever, for also he *is* flesh, and his days will be one hundred and twenty years."

4 The fallen ones were in the land in those days and also after this when the sons of the God came into the daughters of the man, and they bore to them; these *are* the warriors from ancient time, men of the name.

What Does the Text Say?

The first issue we face in trying to understand this phrase is to discover what were the exact words in the original text of Gen. 6:2.[1] Before we can attempt to understand what the text means, we must settle on what the text says. This step is called textual criticism. Now we are not going to delve into the technical aspects of textual criticism, but we do have to establish what the text originally said simply because there are some who raise the question. Genesis was originally written in the Hebrew language.[2] But the original documents, called the autographs,[3] have long sense been destroyed. Over the centuries copies were made to preserve the Word of God. Also, the Hebrew text was translated into other languages, including Greek, Latin, and Syriac. These ancient versions, along with the existing Hebrew manuscripts, provide evidence for what words were actually used by Moses. The Greek translation is called the Septuagint and is often referred to by the Roman numerals LXX. The Latin is called the Vulgate indicating that it was written in the vulgar or common Latin tongue.[4] The Syriac is called the Peshitta, which means "straight," and was so named because it was held to be a straight-forward translation of the Hebrew.[5] Although there is one Greek manuscript that has the reading "angels," and we will consider this in more detail below, the overwhelming testimony from the Hebrew manuscripts and the early versions is that the text originally read "sons of God."

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[1] Our present Hebrew text reads בְּנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים (*bᵉnê hāʾelōhîm*), "sons of the God."

[2] The script that the author used may have been an ancient form of Hebrew called Paleo Hebrew script. The phrase may have looked something like this:

[3] From the two Greek words αὐτό meaning "self," and γραφαί meaning "writings" indicating "the writings themselves"

[4] "videntes filii Dei filias eorum quod essent pulchrae acceperunt uxores sibi ex omnibus quas elegerant" (Gen. 6:2). *Biblia Sacra Vulgata: Iuxta Vulgatem Versionem*, 3d ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969).

[5] (Gen. 6:2) *Peshitta*.

Who are These "sons of God"?

There are three main views that have been proposed over the years: 1) The Angels-View, in which the "sons of God" are held to be angels. There are two versions of this perspective. a) The first version argues that these angels are fallen angels who cohabited with human females. b) The second version argues that these angels were unfallen angels who fell because they had sexual relations with human women. 2) The second main view is that the word בְּנֵי (*b^{e}ney*) translated "sons of" actually refers to human males, "nobles, aristocrats, and princes," who were possessed by demons whose "perverted psyches allowed this entrance of the demonic."[6] We will call this the Tyrants-view. 3) The third view is the view that the expression 'sons of God' refers to the line of Seth. In this view, the godly line of Seth corrupted themselves by indiscriminately taking the daughters of men. We will call this the Sethite-View. In this chapter we will consider both the Angels-View and the Tyrants-View. Chapter two will focus on the Sethite-View.

Response to Chuck Missler

I have attempted to go through Missler's claims in the order they be presented as they were in his book and on his web site, so each numbered paragraph presents a particular claim by Missler with observations and comments following.

1. Missler begins his exposition with the statement, "The understanding of this passage [Gen. 6:1–2] hangs on the Hebrew term that has been translated 'sons of God,' *Bene HaElohim*. In the Old Testament this term refers exclusively to angels."[7] Rather than demonstrate his point before asserting his conclusion, Missler states up front that he believes that the term 'sons of God' exclusively refers to angels. Of course this is the very point that must be proven, not simply assumed.

2. As support for his claim, Missler turns to the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. At times, the Septuagint will also be designated LXX:

> Perhaps' our most authoritative source is the Greek translation of the Old Testament from the third century B.C., known as the Septuagint. Greek is a very precise language, and the seventy scholars who produced the Septuagint (a fancy word for seventy) help us understand the Hebrew from which it was translated. The Septuagint clearly translates this term 'angels.'[8]

There are several problems with these claims. First of all, Missler does not attempt to explain why he believes that "our most authoritative source is the Greek translation of the Old Testament." It is not at all clear why the Greek translation should be considered our most authoritative source.

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[6] Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001), 116–17.

[7] Chuck Missler, *Learn the Bible in 24 Hours* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2002), 26.

[8] Ibid.

What about the Hebrew text? Orthodoxy has long held that the Hebrew text is the inspired and authoritative text, not the Greek translation. Missler may, however, simply be proposing that the LXX is the most authoritative witness to the ancient form of the Hebrew text. However, even if this is what he intended to say, this in itself is problematic. The LXX has its own history of revision and transcription that has introduced variants. In fact the very passage under discussion contains a textual variant with reference to the very word, 'angels,' to which Missler so confidently refers.

Karen Jobes and Moisés Silva point out that, "[Alfred] Rahlfs's edition [*The Septuaginta*], in spite of its provisional character, has since [its completion] been regarded as the standard Septuagint text, even though for many books of the Bible it has now been superseded by individual volumes of the larger project, often referred to as 'the Göttingen Septuagint.'"[9] Contrary to Missler's claim, Rahlf's Septuagint does not read "angels": ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ . . ." (Now beheld the sons of the God . . ." Rahlfs's textual apparatus has the following information about this variant: "6 2 υιοι M] αγγελοι A[r]." The symbols indicate the following:

6 2 = this refers to the chapter and verse, chapter 6 verse 2.
υιοι M] = indicates that the Massoretic text uses the Hebrew equivalent to the Greek word υιοι, which means "sons." The Hebrew word is בְּנֵי, *b[e]ney*.
αγγελοι = this refers to the Greek word that occurs as a variant in certain LXX manuscripts
A = this is the symbol for the Codex Alexandrinus, a fifth century A.D. uncial manuscript that contains all of the books of the Bible with only a few gaps. This is the manuscript in which the reading αγγελοι appears.
[r] = this symbol follows the symbol "A." According to Rahlfs's explanation, this symbol refers to a "Rescriptor, i.e. one who, in his correction, has so completely set aside the original text that it is no longer recognisable [sic]."[10]

What the notation A[r] tells us is that the manuscript that has the variant αγγελοι (*aggeloi*, "angels") is clearly an alteration of the original reading of the LXX, which contained the word υιοι (*uioi*, "sons"). So, quite contrary to Missler's claim, the LXX does not "clearly translate the term as 'angels.'" In fact, the LXX translates the term "sons." But, even granting the reading αγγελοι does not guarantee the meaning "angels." The Greek word αγγελοι can simply mean "messengers" and is sometimes used of human beings. James 2:25 states, "In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers [ἀγγέλους, *aggelous*] and sent them out by another way?" It would be a simple matter of going back to the Old Testament passage that recounts this event to discover that the individuals whom Rahab received were not angelic beings, but were men sent by Joshua to spy out the land.

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[9] Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to Septuagint* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000), 75.

[10] Alfred Rahlfs, ed. *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979), LXVII.

Additionally, the Syriac, another ancient witness to the Hebrew Bible, does not support Missler's claim. The Syriac reads ܒܢܝ ܐܠܗܐ which is translated by George M. Lamsa[11] as "sons of God." Both ancient witnesses, the LXX and the Syriac, agree with the reading of the Hebrew text as we have it, "sons of God." Missler's statements are incorrect at best and deceptive at worst.

3. Concerning the expression "daughters of mankind," Missler says, "Another important phrase is 'the daughters of men' (*benoth adam*). They are the daughters of Adam, not just the daughters of Cain."[12] It is interesting that, although Missler accurately reports the earlier term, "'sons of God,' *Bene HaElohim*," he fails accurately to report this latter expression. The transliteration of the Hebrew expression 'sons of God' that Missler gives accurately includes the definite article, *Ha*, ("the") before the word "*Elohim*." However, Missler neglects to include the definite article before the word *adam* in the later quote. Yet the Hebrew text reads, *bᵉnōṯ hāʾādām* (בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם). Interestingly, Missler's confidence in the Septuagint text seems suddenly to wain. Although he calls upon the LXX to support his understanding of the expression 'sons of God,' he conveniently neglects to report that the LXX translates the Hebrew text as, "the daughters of the men" (τὰς θυγατέρας τῶν ἀνθρώπων, *tas thugateras tōn anthrōpōn*). The LXX, which Missler claims is "the most authoritative source," does not translate the Hebrew word *HaAdam* as a proper name the way Missler would have it, but translates it with the generic noun 'men.' Missler is quick to call upon the LXX when it appears to support his view, but he is unwilling to let his readers know when it contradicts his view.

Hebrew scholars generally recognize that in this context the word *HaAdam* should be translated "men," not "Adam." This being the case, Missler's conclusion does not follow. If the daughters are daughters of "the men," it remains to be proven whether this can be restricted to the descendants of Cain or broadened to indicate descendants of Adam generally. The point here is not that this disproves Missler's claim. Rather, the point is that the text does not support Missler's claim. Missler is simply making unsubstantiated assertions. He cannot simply stipulate that this is the correct understanding of the text, because the text does not support his claim. The text is ambiguous enough in this expression to go either way, and Missler has failed to demonstrate that his understanding is the correct one—or even a reasonable one given the textual evidence.

4. Missler next says, "The word *'Nephilim'* means 'the fallen ones.' . . . These were the hybrids that resulted from the mischief between the fallen angels and human women."[13] Once again he takes liberties with the text. Unfortunately for Missler's assertion, the word *Nephilim* is never used in the Hebrew Scriptures to mean "hybrids." From where does Missler get the notion that these were "hybrids"? Obviously he gets this from his belief that the sons of God were "fallen angels" who had sexual relations with women. But, since Missler has not demonstrated that his view is the correct one—he has merely asserted it—any evidence or conclusions he draws are questionable at best and simply wrong at worst. In fact, it is very problematic to take the expression 'sons of the God' to

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[11] George M. Lamsa is the translator of the entire Syriac Bible into English. George M. Lamsa, *Holy Bible: From the Ancient Eastern Text* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968), 12.

[12] Missler, *Learn the Bible in 24 Hours*, 26.

[13] Ibid.

indicate fallen angels, as Missler would have it. Why would fallen angels be referred to as sons of God? Additionally there are some serious problems with the Angels-View in general.

The Angels-View

There is no doubt that the most widely held view concerning the referent of the expression 'sons of God' is angels. Umberto Cassuto says, "The interpretation in the sense of angels is the oldest in the history of exegesis . . ."[14] As early as 400 A.D. "The Book of the Watchers," which forms the first 36 chapters of 1 Enoch, propagated what has become arguably the most popular understanding of this passage. 1 Enoch tells the story of how the "angels of heaven"[15] saw the daughters of men and desired them, and they proposed to take wives for themselves from the daugters of men. The text of Enoch reports the reluctance of Semyaz,[16] their ruler,[17] to take action lest his cohorts refuse to participate and he be left to act alone. Semyaz refers to the act that they propose as a "great sin."[18] The act of having sexual relations with human females was perceived by these "angels of heaven" to be a "great sin," so they bound themselves together with an oath and a curse that none would shrink back from performing the deed. The offspring produced by this union were, according to Enoch, "great giants."[19]

The Expression 'sons of God'

One way to address the question of whether this refers to angels is to discover whether the phrase is used elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. As we observed earlier, Missler rightly points out, "The understanding of this passage [Gen. 6:1–2] hangs on the Hebrew term that has been translated 'sons of God,' *Bene HaElohim*."[20] He goes on to assert, "In the Old Testament this term refers exclusively to angels."[21] Most advocates of the Angels-View, including Missler, refer to Job 1:6, 2:1, and 38:7 to support the claim that 'sons of God' always means "angels." Let's look at these passages to see if this assertion is justified.

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[14] Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, vol. 1, *From Adam to Noah*, trans. Israel Abrams (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1961), 292.

[15] J. H. Charlesworth, ed. "1 Enoch," trans. E. Isaac, in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1, *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 15. οι αγγελοι ουρανου.

[16] Ibid., 6:3, Σεμιαζας.

[17] Ibid., αρχων αυτων.

[18] Ibid., αμαρτιας μεγαλης.

[19] Ibid., 7:2, γιγαντας μεγαλους.

[20] Missler, *Learn the Bible in 24 Hours*, 26.

[21] Ibid.

Job 1:6 "Now there was a day when the sons of God [בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, *bᵉnê hāʾᵉlōhîm*] came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them."[22]

Job 2:1 "Again there was a day when the sons of God [בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, *bᵉnê hāʾᵉlōhîm*] came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord."[23]

Job 38:7 "When the morning stars sang together
And all the sons of God [בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים, *bᵉnê ʾᵉlōhîm*] shouted for joy?"[24]

First of all, notice that in Job 1:6 and 2:1 the expression is "the sons of the God." This requires some explanation about the Hebrew grammar. In English we indicate the idea of possession by using the preposition 'of,' as when we say "the sons of God." In order to express a relation of possession, Hebrew uses what is called a construct relation. A construct relation is the juxtaposing of two word in which the first word is said to be in the construct state while the second word is in the absolute state. Remember, Hebrew reads from right to left, so the first word in the construct relation בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים (*bᵉnê hāʾᵉlōhîm*) is the word translated "sons of," and the second word is translated "the God" since it has the definite article. In a construct relation, the word in the construct state can never take the definite article. So, if the author wanted to indicate that the word in the construct state should be definite, he would put the definite article on the word in the absolute state. This is precisely the arrangement we have in Job 1:6 and 2:1—בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, which should be translated either "the sons of the God," or simply "the sons of God."

The expression in Job 38:7 is slightly different in that the word translated "God" does not have the definite article. It reads בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים (*bᵉnê ʾᵉlōhîm*) and should be translated "sons of God." This difference might not make a big difference, but it is different enough that one cannot simply assume that they are referring to the same things. In fact, the poetic parallelism in 38:7 calls into question the idea that the expression 'sons of God' is a reference to angelic beings. The first part of the poetic line refers to "morning stars," and the expression 'sons of God' functions in poetic parallelism to this. This is most probably a more poetic or figurative reference to the heavenly bodies. At least it is not unambiguously a reference to angels. Since the expression here is itself controversial, it cannot be called upon to support any particular view. It seems clear, however, that the remaining passages of Job, 1:6 and 2:1, *are indeed* references to angelic beings.

On the strength of these related passages, Missler and other proponents of the Angels-View declare that the expression 'sons of God' is "*consistently* used in the Old Testament for *angels*, and

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[22] וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וַיָּבֹאוּ בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים לְהִתְיַצֵּב עַל־יְהוָה וַיָּבוֹא גַם־הַשָּׂטָן בְּתוֹכָם׃ (Job 1:6)

[23] וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וַיָּבֹאוּ בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים לְהִתְיַצֵּב עַל־יְהוָה וַיָּבוֹא גַם־הַשָּׂטָן בְּתוֹכָם לְהִתְיַצֵּב עַל־יְהוָה׃ (Job 2:1)

[24] בְּרָן־יַחַד כּוֹכְבֵי בֹקֶר וַיָּרִיעוּ כָּל־בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים׃ (Job 38:7)

it is *never* used of believers in the Old Testament."[25] But is this accurate? According to Bruce Waltke, "Human beings are called 'sons of God' in Hos. 1:10 . . . and divine kings in 2 Sam. 7:14 . . ."[26] If Waltke's note is accurate, it severely diminishes the strength of the support from Job for the Angels-View. Hosea 1:10 says, "And in the place where it is said to them, 'You are not My people,' it will be said to them, 'You are the sons of the living God.'"[13] At the level of the English translation, it certainly seems to be the case that "sons of the living God" is used to refer to believers. The critical phrase occurs at the very end of the verse: בְּנֵי אֵל־חָי (*benê ʾēl ḥāy*).[14] This passage uses the singular form of the word 'God' (*ʾēl*,) rather than the more commonly recognized plural form אֱלֹהִים (*ʾelōhîm*), which is used in Gen. 6:2. But these two forms are frequently used interchangeably. For example, Gen. 35:7 says, "He built an altar there, and called the place El-bethel [אֵל בֵּית־אֵל, *ʾēl bêt ʾēl*], because there the God [הָאֱלֹהִים, *hāʾelōhîm*] had revealed Himself to him when he fled from his brother."[27] There is no doubt that both passages refer to the God of Israel, the God of heaven and earth. So, even though the passages in Job refer to angels, it is not true that this expression is used exclusively of angels. Of course this does not prove that Gen. 6:2 cannot be a reference to angels, but it does show that it is possible to take the expression 'sons of God' as a reference to human beings as is done in Hosea 1:10. That being the case, we need to look more closely at the Angels-View. There are two versions of this perspective. 1) The first version argues that these angels are fallen angels who cohabited with human females. 2) The second version argues that these angels were unfallen angels who fell because they had sexual relations with human women. We will consider version 1, the Fallen-Angels-View, and then version 2, the Heavenly-Angels-View.

Sons of God as Fallen Angels

As we pointed out above, the expression 'sons of God' is certainly used in two passages in Job to refer to angels. One interpreter specifically identifies the "sons of God" as fallen angels when he says, "These [Nephilim] were the hybrids that resulted from the mischief between the fallen angels and human women."[28] But, do the passages in Job support this claim? A closer examination of the Job passages reveals that there is nothing in these verses that would lead one to conclude that "sons of God" refers to fallen angels. In fact, the opposite seems to be the case. Both passages describe the scene in which the "sons of God" present themselves before the Lord. But, there is someone who comes in among them. The expression, "and the Satan came in the midst of them," is exactly the same in 1:6 and 2:1 (וַיָּבוֹא גַם־הַשָּׂטָן בְּתוֹכָם, *wâyāḇôʾ gam has ̇ āṭān bᵉṯôḵām*). The statement implies that the Satan (הַשָּׂטָן) was not one of the sons of God, but came in *among them*

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[25] Missler, "Mischievous Angels or Sethites?" http://www.khouse.org/articles/biblestudy/ 19970801-110.html

[26] Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001), 116, n19.

[27] וַיִּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא לַמָּקוֹם אֵל בֵּית־אֵל כִּי שָׁם נִגְלוּ אֵלָיו הָאֱלֹהִים בְּבָרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי אָחִיו׃ (Gen. 35:7)

[28] Missler, *Learn the Bible,* 26.

(בְּתוֹכָם) when they came to present themselves before the Lord. This would seem to indicate that the sons of God in Job are not fallen angels, but heavenly angels. It becomes very problematic, then, to assume that the references in Job support the view that the sons of God in Genesis 6 are fallen angels. In fact, it would seem to be contrary to the sense of the expression 'sons of God' to think that it would be used of fallen angels. It is simply not appropriate to refer to fallen angels as the sons of God. It is not at all clear that the use of the expression 'sons of God' in Job offers any support for understanding Gen. 6:2 to refer to fallen angels. If Job offers any support for understanding the reference in Genesis, it would seem to indicate that the expression 'sons of God' should be taken to refer to angels of heaven rather than fallen angels. In fact, the expression 'sons of God' is never used in any other passage of the Old or New Testaments to refer to fallen angels.

Of course this does not prove that 6:2 cannot refer to angels in general or fallen angels in particular. What it does show, however, is that one cannot simply assume that because a word or phrase is used to mean a certain thing in other passages that it must be understood this way in every passage. Even though 'sons of God' is never used of fallen angels does not mean it could not possibly mean this in Gen. 6:2. It is possible that a word or phrase can mean one thing in a single passage even though all other passages use it differently. But, what this does show is that the interpreter cannot rest his interpretation on unproven assumptions. If an interpreter wants to argue that 'sons of God' in Gen. 6:2 means "fallen angels," he must demonstrate this by convincing arguments from the context of Genesis. He must not simply assume that its use in other passages secures its meaning in every passage. Proponents of the Angels-View particularly fall victim to this criticism because they often assume that since it means "angels" in Job, it must mean "fallen angels" in Genesis. Although this is conceivable, given the evidence it is highly improbable. And, after looking at the evidence, it seems to be the case that taking 'sons of God' to mean "fallen angels" has no support from Job or anywhere else.

Sons of God as Heavenly Angels

Genesis and Jude

The second version of the Angels-View is that 'sons of God' is a reference to unfallen or heavenly angels. Here the passages in Job would seem to lend support. But, there are some unproven assumptions that plague this view as well. Every commentator who proposes the Heavenly-Angels-View simply assumes that a sexual relation between heavenly angels and human females is somehow sinful. But on what do they base this assumption? Many commentators refer to Jude 6–7 to support this idea: "And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment

of eternal fire."[29] From this passage interpreters conclude, "Jude made an allusion to these events in Genesis 6 and clearly he was writing about angels who, for whatever reason, went after 'strange flesh.'"[30]

The problem with such a conclusion is that it assumes what it must prove. One can see Jude's statement as an "allusion" to Genesis 6 only if one already accepts the Angels-View of Genesis 6. If Genesis 6 is interpreted differently, say to refer to the line of Seth, then Jude can no longer be seen as an allusion to it. So, in order to interpret Jude as providing support for the Angels-View, one must assume that his interpretation of Genesis 6 is correct. But this is circular. This is a case of using the interpretation of Genesis 6 to understand Jude, and then using Jude as support for his interpretation of Genesis 6.

In fact, there are no compelling reasons to take Jude as referring to Genesis 6. The analogy between Sodom-Gomorrah and the angels is that each group left its proper abode (τὸ ἴδιον οἰκητήριον, *to idion oikētērion*). In the way humans left their proper sexual abode, so angels left their proper spiritual abode. This could be an allusion to the rebellion of angels against God who set them in their proper place. Human illicit sexual relations are often used as symbolic of one's spiritual defection from God. In Hosea Israel is depicted as an adulterous wife (אֵשֶׁת זְנוּנִים, *ʾēšeṯ zᵉnûnîm*, "a wife of holatry"). So the immorality of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah makes a fitting analogy to the angels who rebelled against God rather than remain His faithful servants. This is at least as reasonable an interpretation as the one proposed in the Angels-View. This does not necessarily prove that these interpreters are wrong, but it does bring out into the open their unproven assumptions.

The statements in Jude do not "confirm" Missler's interpretation. It is not necessary to understand Jude as referring to some cohabitation between fallen angels and women. Rather, it is completely consistent with Jude's context to understand his statements are referring to the original fall and rebellion of Satan and the angels who followed him. Jude can only be understood as "making an allusion to these events in Genesis 6" if one assumes the angelic-cohabitation view and imposes it upon the text of Jude. The reference to "strange flesh" (σαρκὸς ἑτέρας, *sarkos heteras*) concerns the actions of those in Sodom and Gomorrah who cohabited with the same sex—men with men, and women with women. The angelic-cohabitation view is not a case involving "strange flesh," because, first, if the sons of God are angels, then angels cannot be referred to as "flesh." Second, the text indicates that males, "*sons* of God," took females, "*daughters* of men." For men to cohabitate with women is certainly not a case of "strange flesh." In fact, the text literally says "other flesh," using the word ἑτέρας (*heteras*) from which we such words as 'heterosexual.' Consequently, the reference in Jude to "strange flesh" cannot properly be an allusion to the cohabitation of angels with female humans.

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[29] ἀγγέλους τε τοὺς μὴ τηρήσαντας τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχὴν ἀλλὰ ἀπολιπόντας τὸ ἴδιον οἰκητήριον εἰς κρίσιν μεγάλης ἡμέρας δεσμοῖς ἀϊδίοις ὑπὸ ζόφον τετήρηκεν, ὡς Σόδομα καὶ Γόμορρα καὶ αἱ περὶ αὐτὰς πόλεις τὸν ὅμοιον τρόπον τούτοις ἐκπορνεύσασαι καὶ ἀπελθοῦσαι ὀπίσω σαρκὸς ἑτέρας, πρόκεινται δεῖγμα πυρὸς αἰωνίου δίκην ὑπέχουσαι (Jude 6–7).

[30] Missler, *Learn the Bible,* 27.

Angels and Human Females

A second serious problem with the Heavenly-Angels version of the Angels-View is that commentators simply assume that angels can have sexual relations with human women. As Bruce Waltke points out, "This interpretation also contradicts Jesus' statement that angels do not marry (Matt. 22:30; Mark 12:25). It is one thing for angels to eat and drink (see Gen. 19:1–3), but quite another to marry and reproduce."[31] In Matt. 22:30, in response to a challenge by the Sadducees, Jesus said, "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels in heavens."[32] Some respond to this argument by making Jesus refer only to the marriage contract, not to the marriage bed. But this would make Jesus' statement nonsensical in its own context. Jesus is responding to the question about a woman who has had seven husbands, but had no children. The question is about having a marital relation issuing in children. Jesus' response must be taken in this light or it makes no sense.

Missler argues, "There is a great deal revealed in the Bible about angels. They can appear in human form, they spoke as men, took men by the hand, even ate men's food, are capable of direct physical combat, some are the principal forces behind the world powers. They don't marry (in Heaven), but apparently are (or were) capable of much mischief."[33] The parenthetical phrase "in Heaven" added by Missler actually misrepresents the text. Jesus did not say they don't marry "in heaven." Jesus says, "angels in heaven don't marry." Missler restates the text in such a manner as to imply that angels can marry if they are not in heaven. Such an implication is not present in Jesus' claim.

Jesus clearly denies that heavenly angels can have sexual relations. Jude says the angels "abandoned their proper abode [ἀλλὰ ἀπολιπόντας τὸ ἴδιον οἰκητήριον, *alla apolipontas to idion oikētērion*]." If these were fallen angels, their "proper abode" would certainly not be heaven. If Jude is referring to angels, he must be referring to heavenly angels who left their proper abode, i.e., heaven, and fell. But, being heavenly angels they could not have fallen by having illicit sexual relations with women since heavenly angels cannot have sexual relations.

Another response that some make to this is to point out that Jesus is referring to angels in heaven, but Genesis 6 is referring to fallen angels. But, this maneuver will not work either. We have already shown that it is highly unlikely that the expression 'sons of God' would be used to refer to fallen angels. Secondly, the traditional view holds that these angels fell because they had sexual relations with human females. But, if they were unfallen angels prior to their sinful act, then they must have been heavenly angels. But, if they were heavenly angels, according to what Jesus said, they cannot have sexual relations. So, as heavenly angels they could not commit the very act that is supposed to have caused them to fall. Besides this, the advocates of this view simply assume that sexual relations between heavenly angels and human females is forbidden. No commentator has attempted to prove this assumption.

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[31] Waltke, *Genesis*, 116.

[32] ἐν γὰρ τῇ ἀναστάσει οὔτε γαμοῦσιν οὔτε γαμίζονται, ἀλλ᾽ ὡς ἄγγελοι ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ εἰσιν (Matt. 22:30).

[33] Missler, *Learn the Bible,* 27.

The Flood

The most devastating argument against the Angels-View, whether fallen or heavenly, is the problem of the flood. If angels were the ones who committed the sin of having sexual relations with human females, then why does God bring a flood upon the land to destroy mankind? It was not mankind who committed this evil, and yet there is no judgment upon the angels or on the angelic realm. In fact, God specifically states that the He is sending the flood "to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life" (לְשַׁחֵת כָּל־בָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁראבוֹ רוּחַ חַיִּים, *lᵉšaḥēṯ kāl bās ār ʾᵃšerʾbô rûaḥ ḥâîm*). The Angels-View cannot account for the most important event in the passage, the flood. There does not seem to be any good reason to take this expression to be a reference to angels.

Additional Responses to Missler

The Nephilim

The next target of Missler's treatment is Gen. 6:4: "The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore *children* to them. Those were the mighty men who of old, men of renown."[34] Concerning the meaning of the expression "'the mighty ones,' the *HaGibborim*," Missler says, "That was translated into the Greek Septuagint as *gigantes*, which does not mean 'giant' but 'earth-born,' from the Greek *gigas*."[35] It is unfortunate that Missler does not tell his reader from where he obtained his information about the meaning of these Greek words. The standard classical Greek lexicon reports the meaning "giants" as the first entry for this Greek word.[36] The standard Septuagint lexicon also gives "giants" as the first meaning of this Greek word.[37] Additionally, none of these standard Greek reference works gives "earth-born" as a possible meaning of this term. Missler goes on to say, "Although the word is translated into English as 'giants'—and they did happen to be very large—it is not true to the original text."[38] In fact, Missler's claim is the one that is not true to the original text. Not only is Missler's translation contrary to the original text, but he makes the illicit claim that, "they did happen to be very large." If the word used in the text does not mean giants, then on what basis does Missler claim that they were "very large"? Such groundless assertions are indicative of the persistent eisegesis that Missler practices.

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[34] הַנְּפִלִים הָיוּ בָאָרֶץ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם וְגַם אַחֲרֵי־כֵן אֲשֶׁר יָבֹאוּ בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם וְיָלְדוּ לָהֶם הֵמָּה הַגִּבֹּרִים אֲשֶׁר מֵעוֹלָם אַנְשֵׁי הַשֵּׁם׃ פ (Gen. 6:4)

[35] Missler, *Learn the Bible*, 26–27.

[36] *A Greek-English Lexicon* (1968), s.v. "Τίγας." The entry reads: "Τίγας [ί], αντος, ό, mostly in pl., *Giants* . . ."

[37] *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, 1992 ed., s.v. "γίγας, -αντος." The entry reads: "Gn 6,4 (bis); 10,8.9 (bis) *giant, mighty one* (mostly pl.)."

[38] Missler, *Learn the Bible*, 27.

One statement that Missler makes about the Nephilim is very revealing. Missler says, "Incidentally, the Nephilim didn't completely end with the flood. Genesis 6:4 mentions, '. . . and also after that . . .' We find the sons fo [*sic*] Anak, the Anakim, later in the Old Testament."[39] What Missler is claiming is that the text of Genesis is in error. The text of Gen. 6:17 says, "Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy *all flesh* in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish."[40] This seems to make it clear that everyone, every human being, except Noah, his wife, his sons, and his sons' wives, would be destroyed from off the face of the earth. By contrast, Missler claims that not all of the Nephilim were destroyed. In other words, Genesis is wrong. Lest there be any doubt about this contrast, consider the statement in Gen. 7:21–22: "All flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and *all mankind*; of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, *died*."[41] Whereas the text of Genesis clearly says *all mankind died*, except for those who were on the ark, Missler just as clearly claims that not all mankind died. There can be no doubt that Missler is ascribing error to the biblical text.

Noah is Blameless

Concerning the term 'perfect' in Gen. 6:9,[42] Missler says, "The word *perfect* is a term to mean 'without blemish,' 'sound,' 'healthful,' 'without spot,' or 'unimpaired.' It is always used with regard to physical defects."[43] Once again Missler has misrepresented the case. The very next occurrence of this word in the OT cannot be taken to refer to physical defects. The verse is Gen. 17:1: "Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless [תָּמִים, *tāmîm*].'"[44] The idea that God is telling Abram to walk before Him and be without physical defect is patently absurd. Such incompetence should alert the reader to look with suspicion on all of Missler's expositions. Missler's

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[39] Ibid.

[40] וַאֲנִי הִנְנִי מֵבִיא אֶת־הַמַּבּוּל מַיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְשַׁחֵת כָּל־בָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר־אבוֹ רוּחַ חַיִּים מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמָיִם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־בָּאָרֶץ יִגְוָע׃ (Gen. 6:17)

[41] וַיִּגְוַע כָּל־בָּשָׂר רָמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ בָּעוֹף וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבַחַיָּה וּבְכָל־הַשֶּׁרֶץ הַשֹּׁרֵץ עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְכֹל הָאָדָם׃ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמַת־רוּחַ חַיִּים בְּאַפָּיו מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר בֶּחָרָבָה מֵתוּ׃ (Gen. 7:21–22)

[42] "These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, perfect he was in his generation; Noah walked with God" (Gen. 6:9).
אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת נֹחַ נֹחַ אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִים הָיָה בְּדֹרֹתָיו אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים הִתְהַלֶּךְ־נֹחַ׃ (Gen. 6:9)

[43] Missler, *Learn the Bible*, 27.

[44] וַיְהִי אַבְרָם בֶּן־תִּשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וְתֵשַׁע שָׁנִים וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי־אֵל שַׁדַּי הִתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי וֶהְיֵה תָמִים׃ (Gen. 17:1)

claim that the text declares that Noah's "genealogy was not blemished" is shown to be false. In fact, the text simply says Noah himself was blameless before God.

Conclusion to the Angels-View

There are serious problems with Chuck Missler's handling of Genesis 6 and the question of the identify of the sons of God. He repeatedly misrepresents the text and the facts, and he often reads into the text meanings that cannot be sustained by the context or by the Hebrew or Greek languages. His claims about meanings cannot be found in any standard lexicons. Additionally, the Angels-View has problems from which it cannot recover. The failure of the Angels-View is evidenced by the rising popularity of what has come to be known as the Tyrants-View. More and more contemporary commentators are abandoning the Angels-View in favor of the Tyrants-View, primarily because they have come to realize that the Angels-View cannot be sustained against close examination. There is no questioning Missler's sincerity and dedication, but on this subject, he has missed the mark, and there is no good reason to take the expression 'sons of God' to refer to angels of any kind.

The Tyrants-View

The evidence does not support the view that the expression 'sons of God' refers either to heavenly angels or to fallen angels. The unproven assumptions are fatal to these views. More and more contemporary commentators are conceding this point and are turning to an different interpretation, what has come to be called the Tyrants-View. This view is the up-and-coming view of commentators. The overwhelming problems with the Angels-View has convinced many commentators to mediate the traditional view with some sort of notion that "sons of God," though referring to humans, involves angelic or demonic powers. Bruce Waltke is a proponent of this view. After briefly considering the Angels-View and the Sethite view, he declares, "The best solution is to combine the 'angelic' interpretation with the 'divine king' view. The tyrants were demon possessed."[45] Allen Ross, also a proponent of the Tyrant view says, "I find most attractive a combination of the 'angel' view and the 'despot' view. Fallen angels left their habitation and indwelt human despots and warriors, the great ones of the earth."[46]

In his criticism of the Angels-View, Waltke says, "This interpretation, however, does not fit the context of the Flood, since the flood judgment is against humanity (Gen. 6:3–5) and not against the heavenly realm."[47] But, Waltke's criticism against the Angels-View is equally effective against the Tyrants-View since the tyrants were controlled by demons. Waltke's quote from W. H. Gispen

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[45] Waltke, *Genesis*, 117.

[46] Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), 181–82.

[47] Waltke, *Genesis*, 116.

makes this point: "The text presents us with men who are controlled by fallen angels."[48] Not only is the flood judgment is against humanity and not the heavenly realm, is not against the demonic realm either. In what appears to be an attempt to head off this criticism, Waltke says, "Their perverted psyches allowed this entrance of the demonic."[49] But there is no indication in the text that the "sons of God" had perverted psyches, and how appropriate would it be to identify men with perverted psyches as "sons of God."

Additionally, why should any conclude that the sexual relation between demon possessed men and women would necessarily produce evil offspring? The Bible has plenty of instances in which the sons of evil men were themselves righteous. A prime example of this is Saul, the first king of Israel. Saul was condemned by God because of his evil. Yet Jonathan, his son, was a righteous man who trusted God and befriended David. Just because their fathers were demon possessed does not mean that the children were necessarily evil. Of course, the proponents of the Tyrants-View will respond that the text is simply stating that these descendants were evil, it is not assuming that the sons of evil men necessarily would be evil. However, this move does not work. The problem with this response is that it doesn't account for the evil of the children. The text merely indicates that they were the descendants were Nephilim. Why are Nephilim considered to be evil? That being the case, why even bring up the relations between demon possessed men and women? It doesn't account for the evil of the children.

In defense of this view, Allen Ross asserts, "The view that interprets the 'sons of God' solely as powerful rulers does not, in my opinion, make enough use of the literary connections with pagan literature."[50] But why assume that the Word of God must be connected with pagan literature? In fact, would not a view that the judgment upon mankind was due to mankind's own rebellion against God and not due to some superhuman interference be a fitting polemic against the pagan literature of the day? Already the text of Genesis has reported facts that were contrary to the generally accepted pagan views. As Cassuto observes,

> All kinds of wondrous stories about the creation of the world were wide-spread throughout the lands of the East. . . . Then came the Torah and soared aloft, as on eagles' wings, above all these notions. Not many gods but One God; not theogony, for a god has no family tree; not wars nor strife nor the clash of wills, but only One Will, which rules over everything, without the slightest let or hindrance; not a deity associated with nature and identified with it wholly or in part, but a God who stands absolutely above nature, and outside of it, and nature and all its constituent elements, even the sun and all the other entities, be they never so exalted, are only His creatures, made according to His will.[51]

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[48] W. H. Gispen, *Genesis I: Kommentaar op het Oude Testament* (Kapen: J. H. Kok), 221; quoted in Waltke, *Genesis*, 117.

[49] Waltke, *Genesis*, 117.

[50] Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 182.

[51] Umberto Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, vol. 1, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, trans. Israel Abrams (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1961), 7–8.

The unproven assumption made by Ross is that the only way one can understand the "literary connections with pagan literature" is if the text makes assertions that are similar to or reminiscent of the assertions made in these pagan texts. However, the literary connection, as seems to be the precedent set forth in the biblical account of creation, is a view of the facts that is contrary to and often contradictory of the view set forth in pagan literature. An understanding of the flood as a judgment brought on solely by the sinful actions of men, not brought on by angels, fallen or otherwise, or by the control of demons, serves to contrast the truth with the fiction. The evil is from men who are evil—not from Satan, or demons, or fallen angels. As a preview and type of the final judgment, understanding the judgment as the fault of mankind fits not only the context, but the flow of biblical theology.

But, there is yet another fatal flaw in the Tyrants-View that no one has addressed. Remember, the Tyrants-View rejects the notion that the term "sons of God" refers to angels or demons. They hold that the sons of God are human beings who are possessed by demons. But, if the term "sons of God" refers to humans, then where is there any reference in the text to demons? Once you eliminate this reference as a reference to angels or demons, suddenly there is no term or statement in the text that even hints at the presence or activity of demons. Likewise, if you take the term "sons of God" to refer to angels or demons, then where is the reference to the men? What the proponents of the Tyrants-View have done is assume the conclusion of the Angels-View, and then rejected any biblical basis for it, imported these conclusions into the text, and used this imposition as an explanatory paradigm. But, this just cannot be supported by the text.

Conclusion to the Critique of the Principal Views

There are just too many inconsistencies and faulty assumptions associated with the Angels-View and the Tyrants-View. Besides these internal problems, there is the primary shortcoming of these two views—they do not give any reason for the existence of this account. Why does Moses even include this material in the narrative? Some will say that Moses includes it because it happened that way. I believe these events certainly happened exactly as Moses reports them. But there are a multitude of other historical events that must have happened that Moses does not include. For example, the first 40 years of Moses life are briefly presented in ten verses in Exodus. I seriously doubt that every historical event that occurred in these 40 years is included in these ten verses. There is no doubt that Moses excluded much historical material.

This raises the question, "Why did he include some events and exclude others?" Moses must have had a reason for including this material, and it seems very likely that he did not include it simply because it happened. For some reason, this material must be relevant to understanding the passage. But, neither the Angels-View nor the Tyrants-View offers any reason. It's not simply the case that the proponents did not bother to offer a reason. The fact is, neither one of these views seems to provide any reason for this account being here. What difference does it make if fallen angels had sexual relations with human females to produce evil offspring? Is the evil that brings on the flood the result of the overpowering of men by evil spirits? Then it would seem to be their fault, not the fault of mankind, and the Flood seems to be unconnected to these events.

The same problem faces the Tyrants-View. If these men were possessed by demons who forced them to do what they did, then the fault lies with the demons, not mankind. The same problem

faces the couple in the fall. Eve was not overpowered by the Satan and forced to take the fruit, and Adam was not overpowered bye Eve and forced to eat the fruit. Eve was deceived, but the text indicates that the choice was her's: "She saw that it was good . . ." Also, if either Eve or Adam were forced to eat, then why does God judge them for their sin? With the Angels-View and the Tyrants-View we are left with the question, Why is this account even included here? What does it contribute to the text? I think the only way to make sense of this account is the Sethite View, that the sons of God are the descendants of Seth, and we will argue for this in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SETHITE VIEW

Introduction

In order to address the question of the identity of the sons of God in Gen. 6:2 it will necessary to see these verses in the light of certain historical and literary contextual factors. I believe these contextual features bear out the truth of the Sethite view of the identity of the sons of God. This context will take us back to the narrative material leading up to this event.

Context

The creation account is divided into two large units corresponding to the characterization of the earth in 1:2 as empty and uninhabitable תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ (*tōhû wāḇōhû*) (see **Figure 1** below). The six days are the pattern of the creation in which God addresses these two states. The first six days God makes the earth habitable, and the second three days He fills it up. The creation pattern is subduing and filling—God subdues the chaos and establishes order, and then He fills the earth with life. Not only is the creation account divided into these two major parts, but the individual days are parallel—day 1 is paralleled by day 4, day 2 by day 5, and day 3 by day 6, each pair presenting an act of creation or making habitable corresponding to a day in which that which was made habitable is filled.

Gen. 1:26–28 records the creation of the man and the woman.

> Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Gen. 1:26–28).[1]

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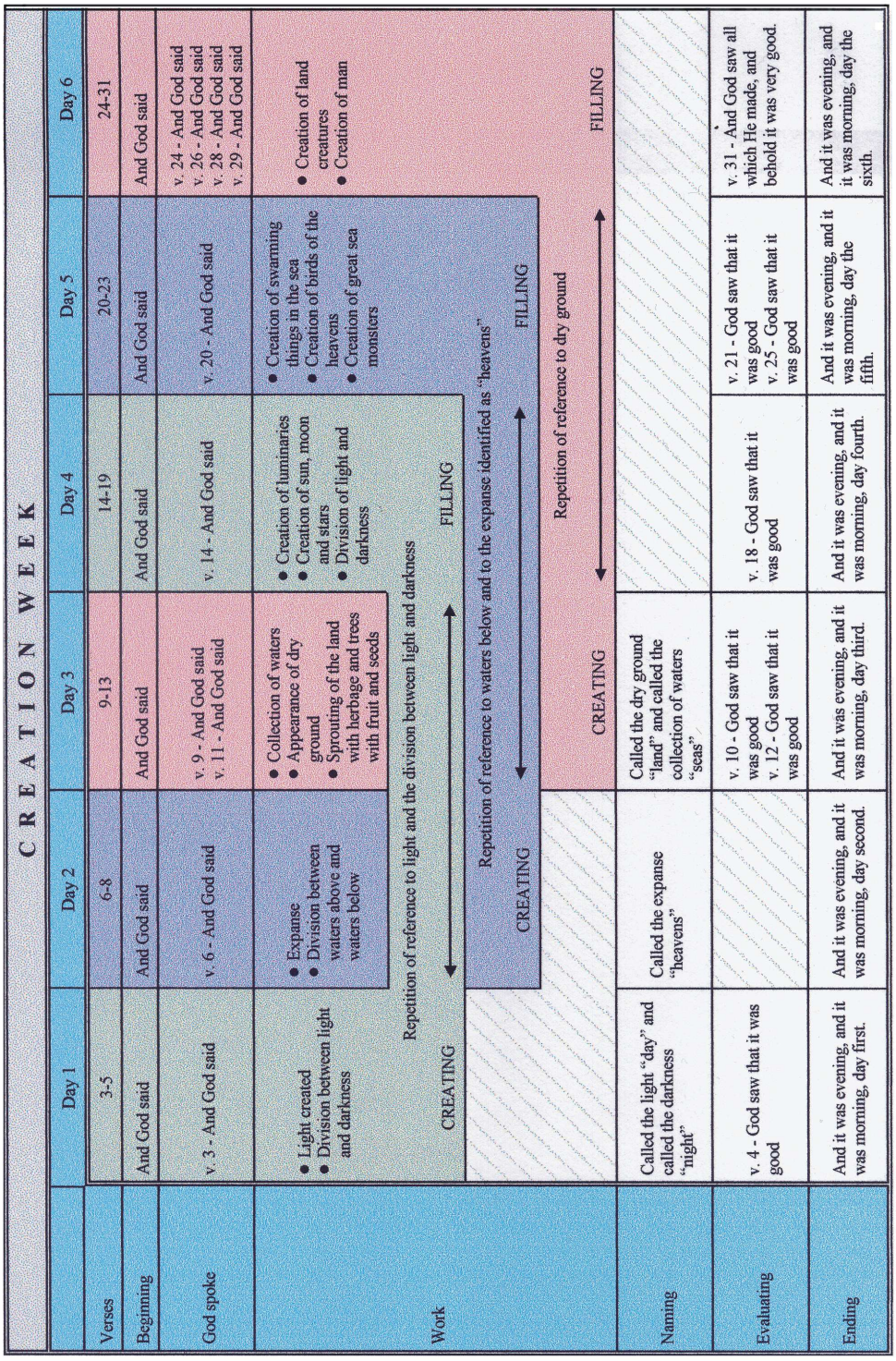
[1] וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כִּדְמוּתֵנוּ וְיִרְדּוּ בִדְגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ: וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם: וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמִלְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְכִבְשֻׁהָ וּרְדוּ בִּדְגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל־חַיָּה הָרֹמֶשֶׂת עַל־הָאָרֶץ: (Gen. 1:26–28)

Figure 1: Creation Week



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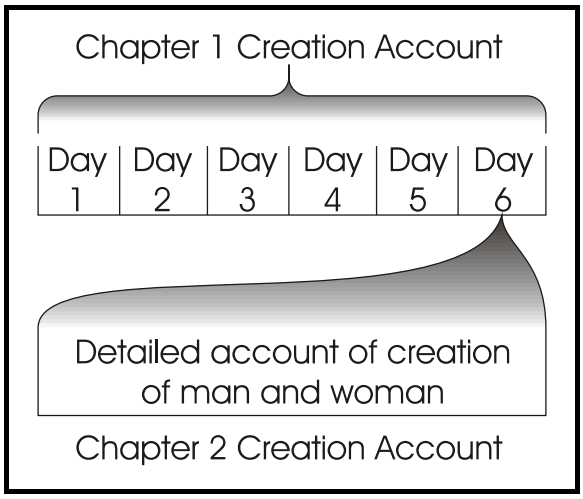
God created them in His image and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply and fill the land and subdue it. This was a command to be like God. The creation account is the record of God's creative activity in subduing and filling. God subdued the chaos by the word of His mouth, establishing the cosmic order and forming a place in which man could live. Then God filled up the ordered cosmos with the heavenly bodies and the earth with plants, birds of the heavens, sea and land creatures, and finally man. As God subdued and filled, He commands the couple to fill and subdue. This pattern is repeated in the three pairs of creative activity forming the six creative days.

Figure 2: Harmony of Creation



Whereas chapter 1 records the six creative days, chapter 2 is a detailed look at the creation of the man and the woman (see **Figure 2**). What is taken by contemporary critics to be a contradiction in the order of creation is actually a misrepresentation by these critics of the Hebrew text. Critics claim that although Genesis 1 indicates that God created the animals and then man, they charge the text with contradiction based on their translation of Gen. 2:19: "Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought [them] to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name." They claim that this verse clearly asserts that God created the animals after He had created man. However, this is a simple matter of ignoring the proper syntax of a Hebrew verb. Hebrew does not have a separate form for a Past-Perfect tense. In English, a past perfect would be formed by add the helping word 'had' to the verb to indicate that some past action had happened prior to some other past action. For example, one might say, "By the time I arrived at the store, they had already closed." Here the action of closing the store happened before the action of my arriving at the store, and both of these actions happened in the past from the perspective of the speaker. Since Hebrew does not have these helping words, the simple Perfect tense of the verb must be used to express both a simple past as well as a Past-Perfect tense. So, verse 19 should be translated: "Out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast . . ." This harmonizes with the order of creation in Genesis 1 and is a perfectly legitimate way to translated this verb. In Genesis 2, God plants a garden and causes the man to rest (וַיַּנִּיחֵהוּ, *wâyanniḥēhû*) in the garden to worship and serve Him. From the man's side God forms the woman who is to be his helpmate.

Chapter 3 is the account of the fall of the couple in the garden. God had instructed Adam not to eat from the tree of the knowledge, good and evil. The woman is deceived by the Serpent, and she sees that the tree is good. She takes the fruit and gives to her husband with her, and they both eat the forbidden fruit. God judges the man, the woman, and the serpent. The judgment upon the serpent is his ultimate defeat at the hands of the seed of the woman, and this is symbolized by the fact that the serpent will go on its belly and eat dust. The toil of the woman in child birth is multiplied, and the toil of the man is the fact that he must work the cursed ground in order to sustain his life. God drives the man out of the garden: "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and

now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" (Gen. 3:22).

Table #5: Chiasm in the Judgment Narrative

Man	10 He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." 11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom You gave with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."
Woman	13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."
Serpent	14 The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life; 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise Him on the heel."
Woman	16 To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you."
Man	17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; 19 By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Chapter 4 begins with the expression, "And Adam knew [יָדַע *yāda'*] his wife Eve . . ." This connects chapter 4 with the previous narrative that is characterized by the couples quest for knowledge (דָּעַת *da'ath*, from the same root as the word "knew") issuing in their rebellion against God. Eve gives her son the name Cain saying, "I have created a man with the Lord" (Gen. 4:1). In verse 25 the text points out, "Adam knew his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth . . ." but curiously, in verse 2 there is no reference to Adam "knowing his wife" in order to produce Abel. Also, though the text indicates why she gave her first son the name "Cain," and why she gave Seth his name, there is no explanation as to why she named her second son "Abel." Notice also, Abel is a keeper of the flocks, while Cain is a worker of the cursed ground. Abel's occupation is the exercise of dominion over the beasts of the field as God had commanded Adam and Eve before the fall. Cain's occupation is working the cursed ground, which was a result of the fall.

Cain plots to kill his brother Abel, and God curses him. As the first couple is driven out of the garden, for, in a sense, killing themselves, Cain is driven out from the presence of God for killing his brother. He journeys to the East and builds a city which he names after his first born son Enoch. Enoch produces a son named Irad. Irad produces a son named Mahujael. Mahujael produces a son named Mathushael. And Mathushael produces a son named Lamech. Notice that there is no comment about the length of their lives of these individuals, how long they lived, or that they died.

Interestingly, the text provides a lot more information about Lamech than about any of his ancestors except Cain. This invites the comparison between Cain and Lamech. Lamech's name probably means something like, "a very powerful man." Notice that contrary to the pattern established in the garden, "and the *two* shall become one flesh," Lamech takes two wives. Roland de Vaux notes, "The story of the creation of the first two himan beings (Gn 2:21–24) presents monogamous marriage as the will of God. The patriarchs of Seth's line (*e.g.* Noah in Gn 7:7) are said to be monogamous, and polygamy first appears in the reprobate line of Cain, when Lamek takes two wives (Gn 4:19)."[2] Lamech boasts of killing at least one man—perhaps two—and he does not need God's protection, as did Cain. Lamech boasts that he is able to protect himself. Lamech produces three sons and one daughter. For each of the sons, the text tells us something about his influence on the antediluvian society. However, the text says nothing about the influence of the daughter, whose name was Naamah, נַעֲמָה (*Naʿᵃmāh*). Victor Hamilton points out that the name *Naamah* means "pleasant, graceful, gorgeous."[3] It is a curious thing that this person would be named and yet not be associated with any identifying accomplishment as are her brothers. As Robert Adler comments, "One might expect an identification that would align Naamah with her siblings as a founder of some basic activity of human culture, but if such an identification was part of the original epic role call, it has been either lost or deleted."[4] It is more likely that Moses deliberately omitted any such reference and that this omission is designed to emphasize an aspect of Naamah's importance later in the context.

Chapter 4 ends with the statement that Adam knew his wife again and that she gave birth to Seth: "Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, [she said], 'God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him.'" The final verse of chapter 4 says, "To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then began to call upon the name of the Lord."

Chapter 5 is the genealogical record of the descendants of Adam through Seth. Notice how chapter 5 begins: "This is the book of the generations of Adam [אָדָם, *ʾāḏām*]. In the day when God created man [אָדָם, *ʾāḏām*], He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man [אָדָם, *ʾāḏām*] in the day when they were created. When Adam [אָדָם, *ʾāḏām*] had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of [a son] in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth."[5]

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[2] Roland de Vaux, *Social Institutions*, vol. 1, *Ancient Israel* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), 24.

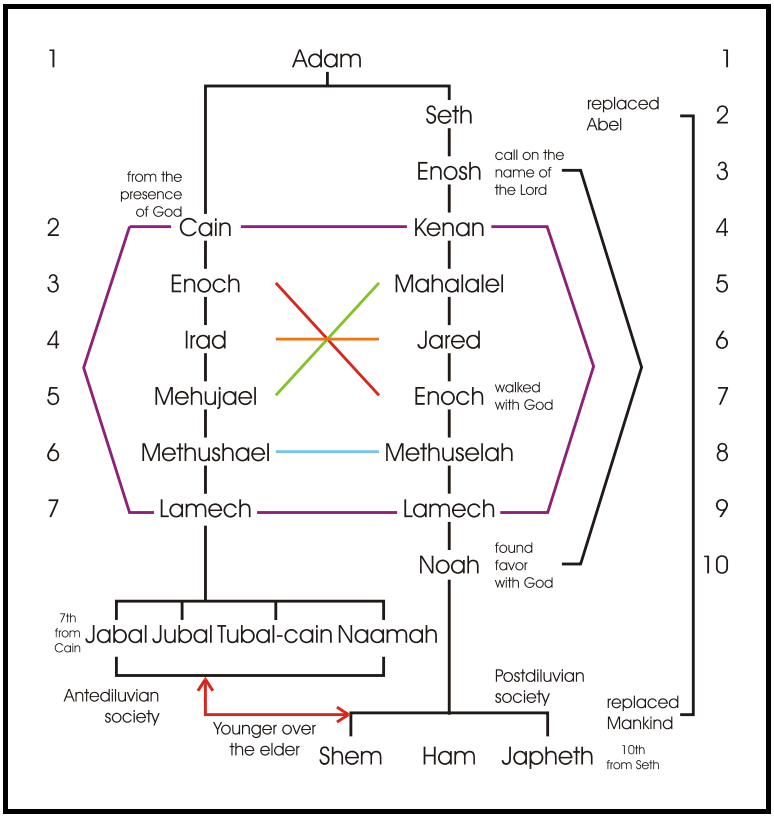
[3] Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 239 (emphasis in original). Bruce Waltke, in his commentary on Genesis, says, "The name *Jubal* is connected with being productive; *Naamah*, pleasant." Waltke, *Genesis*, 100.

[4] Robert Alter, *Genesis: Translation and Commentary* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1996), 20, n22.

[5] זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת אָדָם בְּיוֹם בְּרֹא אֱלֹהִים אָדָם בִּדְמוּת אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֹתוֹ׃
זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בְּרָאָם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָם אָדָם בְּיוֹם הִבָּרְאָם׃ (Gen. 5:1–2)

The similarity of the names of the descendants of Cain and the descendants of Seth invite comparison. There are some obvious parallels and contrasts between the descendants of Cain and Seth if we just compare the two lists in order. But, if we move the list of Cain's descendants down, there are some additional comparisons and contrasts (see **Figure 3** below). The names Cain and Kenan derive from the same root. Cain's first born son is Enoch. Cain built a city which he named after his son Enoch. Enoch was a city dweller. By contrast, the Enoch in Seth's line walked around (וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ *wayyithhalēk*) with God. Cain's second son was Irad, which name comes from the same root as the name Jared in Seth's line. Next in Cain's line is Mahujael, which means "smitten by God," which contrasts to Mahalalel which means "the praise of God." Next is Methushael, which has the same letters as Methuselah. Then follows Lamech, the sixth from Cain and the seventh from Adam, who was a murderer and separated from God, and Lamech, the sixth from Kenan and the eighth from Adam through Seth. Enoch, who walked around with God, is the seventh from Adam in Seth's line. Lamech in Cain's line produces three sons and one daughter. Notice that the descriptions of the professions of Lamech's sons each seems to relate to the primary activities of life. Jabal is the progenitor of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. Jubal is the progenitor of those who are entertainers. And Tubal-cain is the progenitor of those who forge bronze and iron implements. Interestingly there is no descendant of Cain who is the progenitor of any religious practice or priestly cast that might be responsible for directing the worship of God. These observations seem out of place in this context. From Cain to Lamech, the context has portrayed this line as a people separated from God. However, these characterizations of the societal influences of the descendants of Cain seem completely harmless. And perhaps that's the point. The descendants of Cain are going about their lives, marrying and giving in marriage, and not knowing or caring until the day that Noah entered the ark and the flood came. Their city presents an organized and prospering society, hiding the murderous character of its founder and inhabitants. The city of Enoch, founded in separation and rebellion against God offers a contrast to the city of God that Abram, the descendant of Adam through Seth, sought.

Figure 3: Genealogy of Adam



The character of the descendants of Seth is diametrically the opposite of the descendants of Cain. It begins with Seth and Enosh who call upon the name of the Lord. The restatement of the creation of Adam in the image of God in 5:1–2, coupled with the statement in 5:3 that Adam brings forth a son in his own image, draws a line from Adam, the son of God, through Seth, the son of Adam, to his descendants as the sons of God through Adam. Chapter 5 concludes with Noah, the one who would bring comfort from their toil, and Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

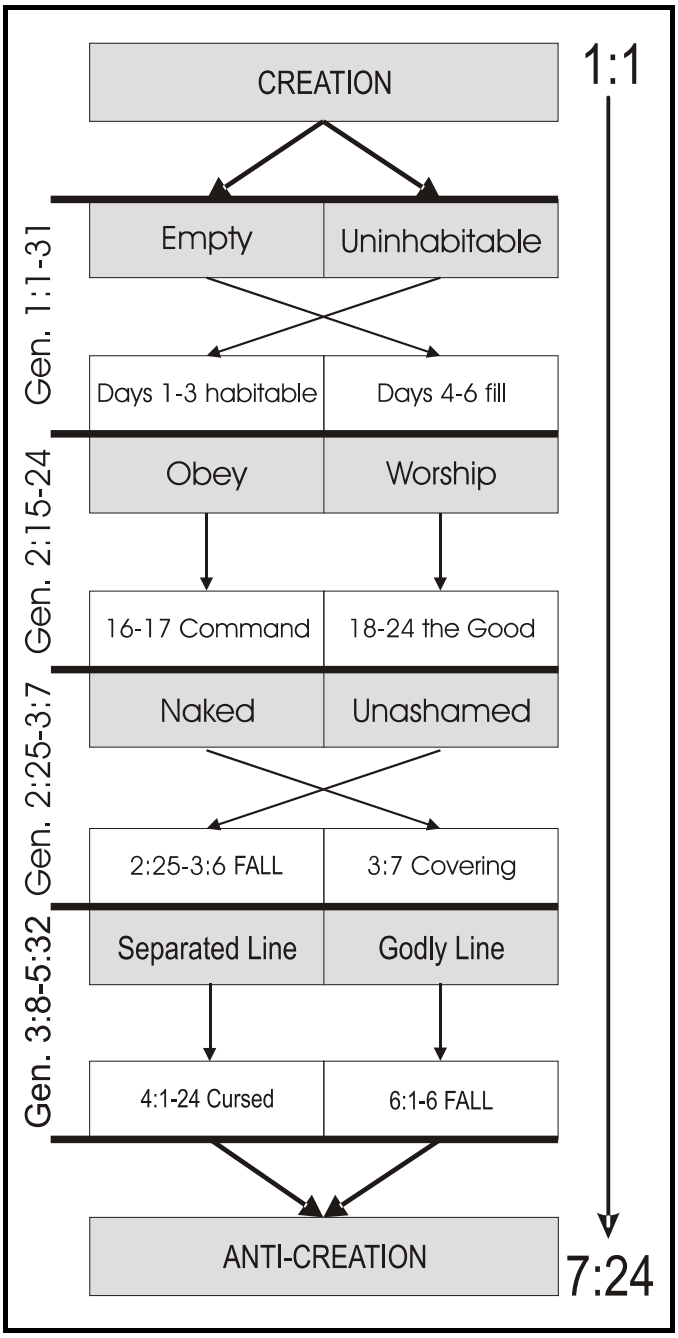
The observation or perhaps the prophetic pronouncement of Lamech in 5:29 introduces a comparison and contrast between Noah and Adam: "Now he [Lamech] called his name Noah, saying, 'This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands [arising] from the ground which the Lord has cursed.'" The curse upon the first Adam was that he would be able to sustain his life only by the toil of working the cursed ground: "Then to Adam He [God] said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, "You shall not eat from it"; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return'" (3:17–19). Lamech specifically declares that Noah will give mankind comfort from the toil of working the cursed ground. Noah is introduced here as the second Adam. This is confirmed by the aftermath of the flood: "And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.'" Also, Noah, whose name means "rest," offers a sacrifice of rest which God smells. The word "smells" is from the root from which derives the word Spirit, רוּחַ (*rûaḥ*).

There are many other parallelisms that depict Noah as the second Adam. Chapters 4 and 5 serve to chronicle the division of mankind into the seed of the serpent, the Cainites, and the seed of the woman, the Sethites. The connection of the Cainites with the serpent as his seed is established in the pattern of murder. The connection of the descendants of Adam through Seth is made in Gen. 4:25: "Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, [she said], 'God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him.'" Of course chapter 4 begins with a similar statement, but there is a significant contrast. In 4:1 Eve says, "I have created a man as the Lord [יְהוָה, *yᵉhwāh*] did." Here the implication is that Eve perceives herself to be on a par with the Lord in being able to produce a man. However, in verse 25 Eve's attitude has changed. Seth is received as a gift from אֱלֹהִים (*ʾᵉlōhîm*), not a produce of a creative ability comparable to that of יְהוָה (*yᵉhwāh*). Whereas Cain and his descendants are characterized by the bookends of the murder by Cain in the beginning of the chapter and the murder by Lamech at the end, Seth's descendants are characterized by their "calling upon the name of the Lord."

The separation of mankind into the two opposing forces is reintroduced after the flood in the opposition of the descendants of Babel, who endeavor to make a name for themselves, and Abram who "calls upon the name of the Lord" (Gen. 12:8). This pattern is followed throughout the history of God's people. The sons of God are opposed by the seed of the serpent, and the failure of the sons of God leads to the division of the seed. Adam's sin divides his descendants, setting brother against brother. As a result of his fall, David brings a sword into his family and sets brother against brother. Jesus takes our sin upon himself, and, as He said, He did not come to bring peace, but a sword that would divide families.

But notice that God curses Adam because, "you have obeyed the voice of your wife . . . about which I commanded you saying, 'You shall not eat from it';" God curses Adam for obeying his wife rather than God. Chapter 6 opens with the observation that men began to multiply upon the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them. If the parallelism between Adam and Noah is accurate, the reference to the daughters of mankind, and the fact that the sons of God indiscriminately take as many wives as they choose, seems to be, in part, a re-enactment of the fall in the garden. Noah lives in a time when the pattern of marriage is abandoned, and Noah must resist the temptation to take as many wives as he chooses. This is yet another significant ingredient for understanding the identity of the sons of God.

Figure 4: Flow in Genesis 1–7



Flow

Notice the movement of these sections leading up to the flood in chapter 6 (see **Figure 4**). Genesis begins with creation, and the land is empty. The narrative moves to worship, then to the fall—from emptiness back to emptiness: from being uninhabitable, to obedience, to nakedness—from being uninhabitable to being uninhabitable. The movement back to emptiness is indicated by the fact that the couple has been driven out of the garden. The fact that the land is no longer habitable is seen in the fact that the man now has to work the ground, and by the sweat of his face he will eat bread, but this will not prevent his death—he will still die. The fall issues in two lines of descendants, the separated line through Cain, and the Godly line through Seth. Man is unable to continue walking with God, and the fall of the sons of God initiates the flood, which is the paradigm act of anti-creation. As man is made from the dust and returns to dust, so the world that is formed out of water is returned to water. The land is again empty and uninhabitable.

Historical Background Summary

The historical background leading up to our text can be divided into five theologically significant narratives. The first narrative is the creation out of the chaos of the waters that cover the land. This is parallel to the post flood narrative in which the present world is formed out of the chaos of the flood waters. The second narrative is the creation and commissioning of Adam as God's son, who is commanded to multiply and fill the land and have dominion over it, signified by Adam's naming the animals. This is paralleled by the commissioning of Noah who likewise is commanded to multiply and fill the land. Noah's dominion is signified by his preserving the animals in the ark, and then by being given animals as food. The third narrative is the fall of man who sins in the garden by eating the fruit of the tree and whose eyes are open so that he knows that he is naked. This also is paralleled by Noah who sins, drinking the fruit of the vine and shamefully exposing his nakedness. The fourth narrative is the conflict of the seed in which Cain is condemned to wander, and the daughters of men entice the sons of God. Seth and Enosh, descendants of Adam, call upon the name of the Lord. This is paralleled by Noah's descendants after the flood who try to avoid wandering by constructing Babel, but are scattered by God. Babel, which is Babylon, is the harlot who entices the sons of God. Abram calls upon the name of the Lord. The fifth narrative is the judgment in the form of the flood in which the waters once again cover the land as in the creation account. God destroys the wicked by bringing a cloud that signals the flood. The old heaven and earth pass away before the present heaven and earth. This is paralleled by the coming judgement in which the "days of Noah" will be upon the land once again (Matt. 24:37ff). This time God comes in the clouds to destroy the wicked, and the present heavens and earth pass away with the coming of the new heavens and earth.

The Genesis 6 narrative falls within the fourth narrative section in which the sons of God are enticed by the daughters of mankind, and violence is rampant upon the earth ultimately leading to the flood judgment.

Exposition of Gen. 6:1–13

1 And it was that began the man to multiply upon the face of the ground, that daughters were born to them.[6]

Chapter 6 opens with the reference to the fact that the man (הָאָדָם, *hāʾādām*), probably a general reference to mankind, began to multiply upon the fact of the ground. Of course this seems to be precisely the command that God had given to Adam and Eve when He created them, although the expressions are slightly different. Gen. 1:28 says, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the land [הָאָרֶץ, *hāʾāreṣ*]."[7] Gen. 6:1 says, "And it came about that the man began to multiply upon the face of the ground [הָאֲדָמָה, *hāʾᵃdāmāh*]." This is only a slight difference, but it is very important. Ever since Gen. 3:17 when God cursed the ground, הָאֲדָמָה (*hāʾᵃdāmāh*), the term 'the ground,' has

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[6] וַיְהִי כִּי־הֵחֵל הָאָדָם לָרֹב עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּבָנוֹת יֻלְּדוּ לָהֶם׃ (Gen. 6:1)

[7] וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמִלְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ (Gen. 1:28b)

associated with the curse. In Gen. 4:1, Eve conceives and gives birth to a man-child whom she names Cain. In 4:2 Eve gives birth to another male-child whom she names Abel. Beginning at verse 3 we have the story of the offerings which the two sons brought to God. Cain brings an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. Abel brought of the firstlings of the flock. Abel's offering is accepted while Cain's is rejected. According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, "The basic idea of *šāʿāh* is 'to look at with interest.' It is never a casual or disinterested glance. This can be seen in the following expanded definitions. In Gen 4:4–5, it means 'to look at with approval,' 'to approve of.'"[8] Thus God approved of Abel's offering, but not of Cain's offering. There has been a lot of speculation as to the reason Cain's offering is rejected. Probably the most popular reason is that Cain's offering was not an offering of blood. However, the word used to describe what both men presented to God was the general word for "offering," מִנְחָה, (*minḥah*) not the more specific word "sacrifice" זֶבַח (*zeḇaḥ*). So, there is no hint that a blood offering was the only acceptable offering. Even in the Levitical system a non-blood offering was acceptable even in the case of a sin offering.

Cassuto argues that the difference was the intention of the one making the offering:

> On the one hand, it is clear that since in regard to Cain it is stated simply that his offering was *of the fruit of the ground*, and in Abel's case the Bible uses two expressions to emphasize that the oblation was the best of its kind (*of the firstlings . . . and of* THEIR FAT PORTIONS), this distinction is not made pointlessly. On the other hand, it must be noted that although there is a *distinction*, there is not *contrast*. Apparently the Bible wished to convey that whilst Abel was concerned to choose the finest thing in his possession, Cain was indifferent. In other words: Abel endeavoured to perform his duty ideally, whereas Cain was content merely to discharge this duty. . . . if we grasp the significance of the preceding lines of the text and clearly see therein the distinction between Cain's and Abel's intention. Our passage reflects the view that sacrifices are acceptable only if an acceptable spirit inspires them.[9]

The problem with Cassuto's proposal is that it seems to make the acceptance of Abel's offering based on Abel's merit, never a basis for being accepted by God. However, there is a strong implication in this passage that what Cain is offering is the fruit of his own labor. The text identifies it as the fruit of the ground. But in the curse in chapter three, beginning at verse 17, God identifies the ground as being cursed. The man was cursed to toil all the days of his life, and that by the sweat of his face he would bring forth bread by which he would live until he returned to the ground. Now Cain offers to God the fruits of this labor from the cursed ground over which he has toiled. Abel, on the other hand, offers to God a life which is the result of the creative act of God. Abel is returning to God the work of God which is acceptable to him. Cain is offering to God the fruit of his own works. and the last reference before chapter 6 is Gen. 5:29: "Now he called his name Noah, saying, 'This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands [arising] from *the ground*

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[8] *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (1999), s.v. "שָׁעָה."

[9] Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, 205–7.

which the Lord has cursed.'"[10] It may be that Moses says it this way to imply that something is wrong with mankind. Later in the Pentateuch the term הָאָרֶץ (*hāʾāreṣ*, "the land") becomes associated with the land of promise. Rather than filling *the land*, man multiplies on the face of *the ground*. Notice that the text makes no reference to them being fruitful and filling the land. All these differences seem to be subtle indicators of some emerging problem.

The term 'man' in verse 1 is used to translate the Hebrew term הָאָדָם (*hāʾāḏām*, "the man"). It is probably simply a reference to all of mankind at this time. In fact, Gen. 5:1–2 says, "This is the record of the generations of Adam [אָדָם, *ʾāḏām*]. In the day when God created man [אָדָם, *ʾāḏām*], He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man [אָדָם, *ʾāḏām*] in the day when they were created."[11] This seems to indicate that the reference, "daughters of mankind" (בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם, *bᵉnôṯ hāʾāḏām*) is not so much a reference to daughters of the ungodly line of Cain. Rather, it is simply a reference to daughters generally.

There is also a parallelism with the genealogy of Cain. In 4:21, at the end of the genealogical record of Cain, mention is made of the daughter of Lamech, Naamah (נַעֲמָה, *Naᶜᵃmāh*). However, the genealogy of Seth recorded in chapter 5 contains no reference to daughters at all. The statement in verse 1, then, serves to fill this gap and to link chapter 6 with both chapters 5 and 4.

2 And saw the sons of God the daughters of the man that good. They also took to them wives from all which they chose.[12]

The expression "and the sons of God saw . . . that good," (וַיִּרְאוּ . . . כִּי טֹבֹת, *wâyirʾû kî ṭōḇōṯ*) is reminiscent of that now infamous observation made by Eve in the garden: "And she saw that it was good" (וַתֵּרֶא . . . כִּי טוֹב, *wattēreʾ kî ṭôḇ*). This expression seems to be used here to remind the reader of the fall and to connect these events. This is not the first time Moses has used this kind of connection. Chapter 4 begins with the expression "And Adam knew his wife Eve . . ."[13] The term 'knew' (יָדַע, *yāḏaᶜ*) serves to connect the beginning of chapter 4 with the events of chapter 3, which have been characterized by the term "know": "the tree of knowledge," "they knew that they were naked."

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[10] וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ נֹחַ לֵאמֹר זֶה יְנַחֲמֵנוּ מִמַּעֲשֵׂנוּ וּמֵעִצְּבוֹן יָדֵינוּ מִן־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אֵרְרָהּ יְהוָה׃ (Gen. 5:29)

[11] זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת אָדָם בְּיוֹם בְּרֹא אֱלֹהִים אָדָם בִּדְמוּת אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֹתוֹ׃ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בְּרָאָם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָם אָדָם בְּיוֹם הִבָּרְאָם׃ (Gen. 5:1–2)

[12] וַיִּרְאוּ בְנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם כִּי טֹבֹת הֵנָּה וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם נָשִׁים מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר בָּחָרוּ׃ (Gen. 6:2)

[13] וְהָאָדָם יָדַע אֶת־חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ (Gen. 4:1a)

The last part of verse 2 also has connections with the previous narrative. The text says, "They also took to themselves wives from all which they chose."[14] This is reminiscent of Lamech who took two wives, a practice contrary to the pattern established in the garden of one man and one woman. When Jesus responded to the Pharisees in Matt. 19:5 He specifically states that the two, the man and his wife, would become one flesh: "and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"[15] The problem in Gen. 6:2 is the indiscriminate taking of women by the sons of God. There is no hint of any selectivity on the part of the sons of God, endeavoring to find brides who are godly. On what basis do they choose? They choose on the basis of the lust of the eyes. The sons of God take the daughters of mankind simply because "they saw that they were good." In the garden the couple grasped after the prerogative of deciding for themselves what was good rather than relying upon God to make these distinctions for them. Here the sons of God are deciding for themselves what is good, and contrary to the standard established in the garden, they take as many wives as they choose.

What is going on here is the corruption of the godly line of Seth. When Adam, the son of God, was confronted by God in the garden, God said, "You have obeyed the voice of your wife . . ."[16] Rather than follow the pattern established by God's command, Adam obeyed the voice of his wife and rebelled against God. So likewise here the sons of God rebel against the pattern established in the garden and take matters into their own hands, following the lust of the flesh, and they take the prerogative to decide for themselves what is good.

Remember that we observed how the sons of Lamech were each characterized as having in some way contributed to the antediluvian society and that Naamah was named but nothing was said about any contribution made by her. It may not be the case that Naamah has been neglected by the author. The author's reference to the daughter's name may function as a stitch to connect with the observation in 6:2, "and the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were beautiful . . ."[17] The word translated "good" or "beautiful" in 6:2 is the word is טוֹב (*tôḇ*), which is usually translated "good," but is also frequently translated "beautiful," as the NASB does in 6:2. The name "Naamah" is probably derived from the verb נָעַם (*nāʿam*), which means "to be beautiful." One reason the terms are different may be the dual function that the word *ṭôḇ* provides the author. Although the terms are different, the use of *ṭôḇ* allows the author to help the reader recall two connections: First, the more immediate connection with the daughter of Lamech whose name means "beautiful"; and secondly, the more remote connection with the similar phrase expressed by the first woman, Eve, when she "saw that it was good (*tôḇ*)." The enticement of the daughters of Cain, Naamah being the representative, has lured away the sons of God to intermarry without regard to spiritual concerns, and

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[14] וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם נָשִׁים מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר בָּחָרוּ׃ (Gen. 6:2c)

[15] καὶ εἶπεν· ἕνεκα τούτου καταλείψει ἄνθρωπος τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα καὶ κολληθήσεται τῇ γυναικὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν (Matt. 19:5).

[16] כִּי־שָׁמַעְתָּ לְקוֹל אִשְׁתֶּךָ (Gen. 3:17)

[17] וַיִּרְאוּ בְנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם כִּי טֹבֹת (Gen. 6:2)

in rebellion against the standard established in the Garden, "a man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife and they two shall become one flesh."

3 And said the Lord, "Not abide with My Spirit in the man to forever, for who also he flesh and they will be his days One Hundred and twenty years."[18]

The term that is often translated "strive," יָדוֹן (*yāḏôn*), occurs only here in the entire OT. Coupled with the expression "in the man" (בָּאָדָם, *bāʾāḏām*), it seems to indicate the notion of abiding in or with mankind. Once again this is a connection with the previous narrative. The word 'forever,' (עוֹלָם, *ʿôlām*) occurs only once prior to this verse, and that is in Gen. 3:22. In that verse, God drives Adam out of the garden: "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever."[19] Adam will not live forever by means of partaking of the tree of life. Nor will "the man" live forever by the indwelling of the Spirit. Because of Cain's violence against his brother, God separated Cain from His presence. Now, because of mankind's violence, God would separate His Spirit from mankind. Although it appears that God is pronouncing judgment upon mankind because he is flesh, it may be that this is an echo of the expulsion of Adam from the garden lest he eat of the tree of life and live forever. Although man is "like God," he is also flesh, and lest he live forever in this state of violence, God will "release" mankind in 120 years by bringing the flood judgment. There is also an interesting parallelism or contrast here between the sons of God who come into the daughters of man, and the Spirit of God who will not abide in man forever.

This seems to imply that the men who had exceptionally long lives, the ones listed in chapter 5, did so because of the indwelling of the Spirit. This seems to be confirmed by the description of the Millennial Kingdom in Isaiah in which a man who dies at the age of 100 will be as an infant (Isa. 65:20), indicating that the lives of those who are indwelt by the Spirit in the Millennial Kingdom will again live extremely long lives. Notice also that in chapter 4 there is no mention of the length of days of the lives of Cain or any of his descendants.

In the statement, "Not abide with My Spirit in the man to forever," the term 'man' is the Hebrew בָּאָדָם ("in the man"), this time with both a prefixed preposition and definite article. Since up to this point in chapter 6 this term seems to be consistently used as a reference to mankind, it is reasonable to take it as such here. Traditionally, this has been taken to be a reference to the length of days of the life a man after the flood. However, this does not seem to be born out in the rest of the Scriptures, or in life in general for that matter. It is probably a reference to the amount of time left to mankind before the coming of the flood judgment.

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[18] וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לֹא־יָדוֹן רוּחִי בָאָדָם לְעֹלָם בְּשַׁגַּם הוּא בָשָׂר וְהָיוּ יָמָיו מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה׃ (Gen. 6:3)

[19] וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים הֵן הָאָדָם הָיָה כְּאַחַד מִמֶּנּוּ לָדַעַת טוֹב וָרָע וְעַתָּה פֶּן־יִשְׁלַח יָדוֹ וְלָקַח גַּם מֵעֵץ הַחַיִּים וְאָכַל וָחַי לְעֹלָם׃ (Gen. 3:22)

4 The Nephilim were in the land in those days, and also after thus, who came in the sons of God to the daughters of the man, and they brought forth to them. They the warriors who from ages men of the name.[20]

Why does the author include this parenthetical note? It creates a problem in the text. The Flood account indicates that every human being on the face of the ground, except the eight souls in the ark, were destroyed. So, if everyone was destroyed, how can there be any relationship between the Nephilim before the flood and the Nephilim after the flood. The next time there is a reference to Nephilim is Num. 13:33: "There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."[21] The term "Nephilim" (נְפִלִים, *nefilîm*) simply means "fallen ones." The Nephilim after the flood, referred to in Num. 13:33, are certainly not angelic beings of any kind. The implication of the description "we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight" is that they were large sized humans who lived in the land and who served as a terror to the spies. Moses is saying something like this: "Just like there were fallen ones in our time, so there were fallen ones then too." And if Moses' connection is of any value, it at least serves to connect these two groups by way of their similarities. The Nephilim after the flood in the land of Canaan may have been large sized humans and were certainly enemies of the people of God. They were apparently warriors who had a terrible reputation. We can conclude from the few statements in Genesis 6 and its connection with the Nephilim after the flood that perhaps the Nephilim of Genesis 6 were also large sized humans who, as the text states, were warriors of great reputation. In fact, Gen. 6:4 says, "They *were* the warriors who *were* from ages, men of the name [אַנְשֵׁי הַשֵּׁם *ʾanᵉšê haššêm*]." The picture we get from Numbers indicates that perhaps the pre-flood Nephilim were also warriors who opposed the people of God, or at least the works of God. Notice another interesting connection. The expression "men of renown" is actually, "men of the name." These were men who made an name for themselves. This will become important in the Babel story where mankind gathers on the plains of Shinar in order to "make a name for themselves" (Gen. 11:4). And what were these men doing? Opposing the commands of God and setting themselves up to be gods. There is also a strong connection between the Nephilim and Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord. Nimrod was the founder of the city of Babel (בָּבֶל, *bāḇel*), which is Babylon, also בָּבֶל (*bāḇel*).

5 And saw the Lord that great evil of the man in the land, and every purpose of the thoughts of his heart only evil all the day.[22]

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[20] הַנְּפִלִים הָיוּ בָאָרֶץ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם וְגַם אַחֲרֵי־כֵן אֲשֶׁר יָבֹאוּ בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם וְיָלְדוּ לָהֶם הֵמָּה הַגִּבֹּרִים אֲשֶׁר מֵעוֹלָם אַנְשֵׁי הַשֵּׁם׃ (Gen. 6:4)

[21] וְשָׁם רָאִינוּ אֶת־הַנְּפִילִים בְּנֵי עֲנָק מִן־הַנְּפִלִים וַנְּהִי בְעֵינֵינוּ כַּחֲגָבִים וְכֵן הָיִינוּ בְּעֵינֵיהֶם׃ (Num. 13:33)

[22] וַיַּרְא יְהוָה כִּי רַבָּה רָעַת הָאָדָם בָּאָרֶץ וְכָל־יֵצֶר מַחְשְׁבֹת לִבּוֹ רַק רַע כָּל־הַיּוֹם׃ (Gen. 6:5)

In the first chapter of Genesis, the expression "and God saw . . ." (וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים, *wâyarʾ ʾᵉlōhîm*) occurs 7 times (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). A similar expression does not occur again until this verse, "and the Lord saw . . ." Whereas in Genesis 1, God saw that it was good, now God sees the great evil in the land. What was the great evil of the man in the land? Twice in this context the word 'violence' (חָמָס, *ḥāmās*) appears; in 6:11 and 6:13. Also, there seems to be a connection of this context with the descendants of Cain and especially Lamech. Both Cain and Lamech were murderers, and Lamech took two wives. God had commanded the man to be fruitful and multiply and fill the land. Contrary to this, the man was hunting and killing others.

In Gen. 6:5, in the statement, "and that every purpose of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," the term 'purpose' comes from the root יצר (*yṣr*). The verb form of this root occurs only three times prior to 6:5; in 2:7, 8, and 19. In each case it has to do with God forming. In verses 7 and 8 it refers to God forming the man from the dust of the ground. In verse 19 it refers to the fact that God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky. God had formed man and beast and given them life. Now man forms evil and brings death on man and beast.

The "devising of the heart" is an echo of Cain's action in killing Abel. Cain devised his plan to murder his brother. The devising of the heart, coupled with the reference to violence in 11 and 13 seem to indicate that the corruption that would bring on the flood judgment was murder. Man devised to murder one another, so God would kill them. The punishment fits the crime. This also explains the institution of capital punishment after the flood, Gen. 9:6. To deter the actions of men to murder one another, God instituted capital punishment. If one man murdered another, his own life would be forfeited as judgment, just as in the flood where the life of mankind is forfeited because of the continual violence against one another.

6 And the Lord was sorry that He made the man in the land, and He was grieved in His heart.[23]

The Hebrew term translated "was sorry" is from the verb נחם (*nḥm*). The interesting thing about this verb is that it occurs only one other time before this verse, in Gen. 5:29. Beginning in 5:28, the text states, "Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son. Now he called his name Noah, saying, 'This one will give us comfort [נחם, *nḥm*] from our work and from the toil of our hands [arising] from the ground which the Lord has cursed.'"[24] Also, the term used here, וַיִּתְעַצֵּב (*wâyiṯʿaṣṣēḇ*), translated "was grieved," is from the root עצב (ʿṣḇ). This is the same root that is used in Gen. 3:16 and 17, בְּעִצָּבוֹן, to refer to the "toil" or "labor" that was part of the curse upon the woman and the man. The woman's toil or labor in child bearing would be multiplied. The man's toil or labor would be in providing sustenance. The man and the woman are cursed with grief for rebelling against their Maker. God is grieved for having made them. In Gen. 5:29, Lamech names his son Noah because he will bring comfort from their toil. Interestingly, Lamech does not name his son "comfort." Rather, he names him "Noah" which means "rest." How

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[23] וַיִּנָּחֶם יְהוָה כִּי־עָשָׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם בָּאָרֶץ וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֶל־לִבּוֹ: (Gen. 6:6)

[24] וַיְחִי־לֶמֶךְ שְׁתַּיִם וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה וּמְאַת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בֵּן: וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ נֹחַ לֵאמֹר זֶה יְנַחֲמֵנוּ מִמַּעֲשֵׂנוּ וּמֵעִצְּבוֹן יָדֵינוּ מִן־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אֵרְרָהּ יְהוָה: (Gen. 5:28–29)

will Noah bring comfort from the toil which is a result of the curse? By means of rest. How does one obtain this rest? By walking with God. Also, Noah brings rest from the toil of working the cursed ground because, in Gen. 9:3, God says, "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as *I gave* the green plant."[25] Prior to this point, man was strictly a vegetarian. He could sustain his earthly life only by working the cursed ground. Now God has given man comfort from the toil of working the ground by allowing man to kill every moving thing for food. In other words, man's life will be sustained by killing living things. Those things will give their lives in order that man may live.

Conclusion and Summary

The discussion of the literary and historical context and background, and the exposition of Gen. 6:1–6 was designed to present the evidence for understanding the expression 'sons of God' as referring to the Godly line of Seth, and to understand the term 'Nephilim' as referring to fallen humans, not to some offspring of a relation between angels or demonic possessed men and human females. Understanding the sons of God to be the godly line of Seth makes sense of all the features of the text, employs the narrative typology and parallelism that is so common in Moses' writings, and provides a rationale for the presence of this episode in the text. Israel should have learned that they would be enticed away from the pure worship of God, but that they should not fall victim to this temptation lest they suffer the judgment of God. Of course, this is precisely what happened to Israel. They were enticed away by the nations, and God brought a flood judgment to sweep them away to Babel/Babylonian captivity. Israel had fallen victim to the desire to take the prerogative to decide for themselves what is good. They saw that it was good to be like the nations, and they abandoned the Holy One of Israel and went after the gods of the nations.

Objections to the Sethite-View

We began this study by critiquing the claims of Chuch Missler, so it is perhaps fitting to conclude the study by considering some of Missler's objections to the Setthite-Viow

Missler's Straw-man Argument

Missler's critique of what he calls "the lines of Seth" view turns out to be a straw-man argument. First of all, it is not a necessary part of the Sethite-View that the sons of God refer to "the leadership of the line of Seth" as Missler claims, nor is it even a part of the view that "the sin involved was their failure to maintain separation—the two were not to mix."[26] The Sethite-View claims that the sons of God refers to the godly line of Seth who should have been faithful to serve God according to the standards He had laid down in the creation. The sons of God abandoned their submission to God and took to themselves the prerogative to decide what is good, and they

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[25] כָּל־רֶמֶשׂ אֲשֶׁר הוּא־חַי לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאָכְלָה כְּיֶרֶק עֵשֶׂב נָתַתִּי לָכֶם אֶת־כֹּל׃ (Gen. 9:3)

[26] Missler, *Learn the Bible in 24 Hours*, 28.

abandoned the standard of one wife, and, following the lust of the flesh, they took as many wives as they chose. The abandoning of submission to God led to violence and murder as men began to do whatever they chose, and every purpose of their heart was only evil continually. None of this assumes the factors that Missler describes.

Missler's Chronological Snobbery

Missler's report that the Sethite-View "started in the fifth century A.D." is apparently designed to cause the reader to question its validity on the basis of its origin. But, such points are instances of the genetic fallacy or what is frequently referred to as chronological snobbery. The origin of a truth-claim, or an interpretation, does not necessarily disqualify it as a true claim or a correct interpretation. Also, that a truth-claim is recent does not mean that it cannot be true. So, the fact that the angelic-cohabitation view probably finds its beginnings in the mid-second century B.C. in the apocryphal book of 1 Enoch does not mean that the view is necessarily wrong, nor does the fact that the "lines of Seth" view began with Celsus in the fifth century A.D. disqualify it.

Missler's Mishandling of the Text

Missler's claim that the Sethite view "violates the text" is unsubstantiated. He says, "The phrase, 'sons of God,' is never used of believers in the Old Testament."[27] But as we have seen, it is simply false to assert that the phrase is never used this way. Also, to claim that the expression is never used this way is a case of begging the question since this is the very point that is being contested. But Missler does not prove his claims. Rather, he simply makes them. To the contrary however, Missler claims that the phrase, "sons of God" refers to "fallen angels," and yet this phrase does not have this meaning in any of the other places where it is used.

The assertion, "Seth was not God and Cain was not Adam," is nonsensical and irrelevant since noone claims that they are. Since it is not a part of the Sethite view that the lines were supposed to "remain separate," Missler's criticism simply misses the real issues. His assertion, "'all flesh are corrupted' . . . include the Sethites" is precisely the point of the Sethite view. However, it is not obvious that a cohabitation between angels and women would constitute a corrupting influence. Additionally, the text clearly says, "they took to them women from all whom they chose." However, the text does not say that the sons of God took every single woman alive at the time. If follows that there were women who were not taken by the sons of God. Consequently, it does not follow that "all flesh was corrupted" as Missler claims. If Missler's view is accurate, then the biblical text must not be correct. How could "*all* flesh" be corrupted as a result of angels cohabiting with *some* women?

Missler claims that the "real problem" with the Sethite view is the "Nephilim." He declares, "When believers and unbelievers marry, they do not yield offspring that are physiologically different."[28] But where does the text of Genesis say the Nephilim were "physiologically different"? Missler went to some length to claim that the Greek word *gigantes* does not mean "giant," but rather

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

means "earth-born." But, how does he get physiological difference from a word that means "earth-born"? Since the word does not carry the sense of physiological difference, nor do any of the standard lexicons give "earth-born" as a possible meaning, Missler's criticism of the Sethite view once again misses the mark.

Missler's charge that the Sethite view "infers a Cainite subset of the Adamites" that he claims is a case of "reading into the text" actually misrepresents the Sethite view. It is not necessary to infer any "Cainite" subset in order to conclude that someone's descendants follow a path of separation from God. In fact, the Canaanites who dwell in the land at the time of the invasion of Joshua are characterized in the Scripture as a people who, for 400 years, have lived in opposition to the will of God. It is not necessary to claim that the Cainites are a "subset" to view them in this light.

But, let us concede that the Sethite-View does propose a Cainite subset of the Adamites. It is only a case of "reading into the text" if one accepts Missler's view. Once again Missler merely declares rather than demonstrates. If one reads the text from the perspective of the Sethite view, one might be able legitimately to argue that the text supports the notion of a Cainite subset. Indeed, what in the world does Missler mean by the term "subset" anyway? Cannot the term be used simply to refer to a genealogical line, which Cain's descendants certainly constitute.

Godliness of the Sethites

Missler claims that the Sethite view "infers the godliness of the Sethites, which the text does not support."[29] This is a very curious statement since on his own website he declares, "The Flood was preceded by four generations of prophets/preachers warning of the coming judgment: Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah."[30] Does Missler really expect his readers to believe that Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah were ungodly "prophet/preachers warning of the coming judgment"? By Missler's own admission the text does indeed support the notion of the godliness of the Sethites. The repetition of certain affirmations with reference to certain descendants of Seth can indeed be taken as textual support for the "godliness" of the line of Seth. Gen. 4:26 points out that it was at the birth of Enosh, Seth's first born, that "men began to call upon the name of the Lord." Other such observations concerning the line of Seth are made, such as "Enoch walked with God," "Noah was a righteous man," "Noah walked with God."

Additionally, the narrative style sets up a contrast between the descendants of Cain and the descendants of Seth, not the least of these is the contrast between Lamech, the seventh from Adam through Cain, and Enoch, the seventh from Adam through Seth. The text points out that Lamech took two wives. Immediately the reader is alerted to Lamech's departure from the husband-wife relationship established in the garden—one man and one woman: "For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife [singular]; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both [literally "the two of them"] naked and were not ashamed" (Gen. 2:24–25). In his poem, Lamech boasts of killing at least one man, and possibly two. But, rather than crying out to God for protection from the blood-avenger, as Cain did, Lamech essentially boasts that

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Chuck Missler, "As The Days of Noah Were," http://www.khouse.org/articles/ prophetic/19960101-43.html.

he does not need God's protection, for he can protect himself. The sense of separation from God, which overtly begins in 4:16 with the declaration, "Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord . . ."[31] culminates in Lamech's boastful arrogance and self-righteousness. This picture is in stark contrast to depiction of Seth's descendants. Contrary to Missler's claim, the text does indeed support the notion that the line of Seth was the godly line.

In his argument against the notion that the line of Seth was the godly line, Missler claims that the English translation "masks" the fact that it was Enosh, Seth's son, who introduced apostasy into society at this time: "In fact, Seth's son Enosh was the one who introduced apostasy to that world. This is masked by a mistranslation of Genesis 4:25, which should read: '. . .then men began to **profane** the name of the Lord.'"[32] The NASB translates this verse as follows: "To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then *men* began to call upon the name of the Lord."[33] The word in question is הוּחַל (*hûḥal*), which in English is translated "began." This is the only occurrence of this word in the Hophal stem in the entire OT. The word occurs in 124 verses of the Old Testament, but only here in this particular form. Several times, however, the word is used to indicate the beginning of an action or condition. An important and interesting instance of the occurrence of this word is in Gen. 6:1: "Now it came about, when men began [הֵחֵל, *hēḥēl*] to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them." According to Missler, this same word in Gen. 6:1 has the meaning "began."

Also, the LXX does not translate the Gen. 4:26 passage as "profane." In fact, the Greek word used here is ἤλπισεν from ἐλπίζω, which is usually translated "to hope." Sir Lancelot Brenton translates the Greek text as follows: "And Seth had a son, and he called his name Enos: he hoped to call on the name of the Lord God." According to the *New International Dictionary of Theology and Exegesis*, this word occurs 54 times with the meaning "begin."[34] In fact, the word is used and translated "began" or "became" seven times in Genesis before it occurs with the meaning "defiled" for the first time in Gen. 49:4. None of the standard reference works, nor even the Septuagint, understand the term in Gen. 4:26 as "profane." Missler consistently misrepresents the facts and engages in selective reporting. Additionally, the expression, "call upon the name of the Lord," which occurs in 12 verses throughout the OT, is never used in the sense of being profaned.

Conclusion

The Angels-View and the Tyrants-View have insurmountable problems that disqualify them as likely explanations of the identify of the sons of God in Genesis 6. Missler's arguments are plagued with misrepresentation, mistranslation, and misunderstanding. Missler consistently imposes upon the text his already-present conclusion about what the text must be saying, and he engages in

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[31] וַיֵּצֵא קַיִן מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאֶרֶץ־נוֹד קִדְמַת־עֵדֶן׃ (Gen. 4:16)

[32] Missler, "As The Days of Noah Were."

[33] וּלְשֵׁת גַּם־הוּא יֻלַּד־בֵּן וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אֱנוֹשׁ אָז הוּחַל לִקְרֹא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה׃ (Gen. 4:26)

[34] *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (1997), s.v. "תְּחִלָּה."

circular reasoning and logical fallacy to argue his position. The Sethite-View seems to be the only view that actually does justice to the text in terms of the literary and historical context, the literary character of Moses' writing style, and the spiritual lesson that it teaches. The sons of God are the godly line of Seth that departs from serving God, and the Nephilim are mighty warriors who terrorize the land and fill it with violence precipitating the anti-creative flood judgment of God.

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