

## Before the Flood, the Other Factor

(GEN 6:1) And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

(GEN 6:2) That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

(GEN 6:3) And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

(GEN 6:4) There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

(LUK 20:34) And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

(LUK 20:35) But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

(LUK 20:36) Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

GEN 6:1-4 describe conditions on earth at the time when God determined to destroy the earth with a flood. LUK 20:34-36 shows that the children of the resurrection in the *world to come* do not marry, even as angels do not marry. The parallel accounts in MAT 22:30 and MAR 12:25 speak also with clarity on this point. The children of that world are not "...given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" (MAT 22:30). God's order for His mighty angels excludes them from the relationship that is unique to human marriage. This raises an interesting and controversial point which the reader is encouraged to consider.

In the days of Noah, "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (GEN 6:11). The conditions on earth were so bad that "...it repented the LORD that he had made man..." (GEN 6:6) and so He designed to bring "...the flood upon the world of the ungodly" (2PE 2:5), a global deluge to wash the earth of its corruption and give it a fresh start. It appears, though, that the problem was not limited to corruptions among humans. GEN 6:1-4 states that "...the **sons of God** saw the **daughters of men** that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose...and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." The juxtaposition of "sons of God" with "daughters of men" is interesting. Some have suggested that this is describing an unfortunate wedding of godly men with worldly women and it is true that many a saint has been brought down by such unions. *Evil communications corrupt good manners* (1CO 15:33). Others have suggested that the *sons of God* were earthly despots who sought to further their dominion by engaging in polygamy, taking to themselves many *daughters of men*. But there is another explanation of GEN 6:1-4 that deserves attention. Having examined various theories about GEN 6:1-4, I am persuaded that the following thoughts represent the most consistent interpretation of this text.

The concept of "sons of God" often refers to God's elect among men (1CH 28:4-6; 1JO 3:1-2 c/w ROM 8:14-15; GAL 4:4-6). However, by the Bible's own method of "...comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1CO 2:13), it may be observed that the phrase "sons of God" in the Old Testament elsewhere refers to angelic beings. Review these texts which are the only other places in the Old Testament

where the *phrase* “sons of God” (Heb. *ben elohim*) are found:

(JOB 1:6) Now there was a day when the **sons of God** came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

(JOB 2:1) Again there was a day when the **sons of God** came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

(JOB 38:4) Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

(JOB 38:5) Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

(JOB 38:6) Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

(JOB 38:7) When the morning stars sang together, and all the **sons of God** shouted for joy?

JOB 1:6 and JOB 2:1 describe an audience with God in glory in which events on earth are discussed by God and Satan (JOB 1:7-11; JOB 2:2-3). These “sons of God” which present themselves to God with Satan could be the spirits of God's elect who died in the flesh and their spirit returned “...unto God who gave it” (ECC 12:7). See also HEB 12:22-23; REV 6:9-10. However, Scripture does speak of such heavenly conventions as consisting of the *angelic host* (1KI 22:19-23) and such a case best fits the context of the Book of Job in view of JOB 38:4-7. That text is God's review of the primal creation that was witnessed by *sons of God* which shouted for joy. This cannot be referring to humans since the foundations of the earth were laid and the earth populated with animals and vegetation before man was created on the sixth day (GEN 1:1-31). These *sons of God* must be the only other intelligent, rational beings that God created: angels, who evidently witnessed some of the natural creation. It is not unreasonable to deduce that angels can be called “sons of God.” Jesus Christ, the *Son of God*, is also called in prophecy the “...**messenger** of the covenant...” (MAL 3:1) and the Hebrew word underlying “messenger” there is “malak” (Anglicized spelling) which commonly means “angel” and is so translated in many places. Thus, the *Son of God* is also the *Angel of God* Who revealed the covenant (ACT 7:53 c/w HEB 1:1-2). Angels are *spirits* (HEB 1:13-14) and God is the “...Father of spirits...” (HEB 12:9) as He is also the Father of saved men by His Spirit (GAL 4:6). Heaven's angels and heaven's redeemed from among men have the same Father, are *brethren* (REV 19:10; REV 22:8-9) and are both the *sons of God*.

The possibility exists, therefore, that GEN 6:1-4 is speaking of a pollution of humanity by rebellious angels who insisted on obtaining what was not given to them: marriage (and offspring). It should be remembered that angels can materialize as men: they did so on various occasions (GEN 19:1-5; MAT 28:2-5 c/w MAR 16:5-6, for example). HEB 13:2 says, “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained **angels** unawares.” In this visible form, angels are seen to be able to interact with matter so as to prepare food (1KI 19:5-7) or even to eat it (GEN 18:1-8; GEN 19:1-3). Also, devils (presumably fallen angels) are able to tangibly affect their hosts which they possess, empowering them in unusual ways. They can give their pawns psychic ability (ACT 16:16) or superhuman strength (MAR 5:1-4), for example. Could rebellious angels have materialized and impregnated women, or at least have taken possession of sinful men to such an extent that their physical/genetic make-up was altered to produce some type of demigod hybrids which would then

generate their kind in the earth and run interference with the plan of God to bring Christ into the world as the *seed of the woman* (GEN 3:15)? Mind that the one person who stood out in that day was Noah, who "...was a just man and **perfect in his generations**...And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth" (GEN 6:9-10). The word *generation* primarily means "The act or process of generating or begetting physically; procreation; propagation of species." There was nothing questionable or deficient about the generations of Shem, Ham and Japheth: they were the biological products of a godly *man of faith* (HEB 11:7) married to one woman, according to the ordained pattern of marriage and generation given at the beginning of time (GEN 1:27-28). Perfect.

But suppose an angel had been swept along in Satan's rebellion against God (REV 12:3-4), becoming corrupt. Suppose a corrupt angel, knowing that man was made a lower creature than himself (PSA 8:4-5), was *envious* of man who could reproduce his kind (and envy is a *devilish* concomitant of pride, 1TI 6:4; JAM 3:14-15), pride being Satan's downfall (1TI 3:6). Suppose that angel in defiance of God's order that angels not marry (LUK 20:35-36), knowing that God intended to exalt some man born of woman to supremacy over Satan (GEN 3:15), decided that it was best to pollute humanity so as to produce a line of *mighty men* (GEN 6:4) to establish dominion in the earth to counteract the woman's Seed and produce a counterfeit christ. Such a ploy would require not only generation but *marriage* in order to pass itself off as a legitimate lineage producing a false Christ (since *marriage* of male and female was indeed God's order from the beginning, was the expected manner through which His Christ would come, and Moses' law later barred a bastard, DEUT 23:2).

Adding weight to this scenario is the language of JUDE 1:4-8:

(JUDE 1:4) For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

(JUDE 1:5) I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

(JUDE 1:6) And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

(JUDE 1:7) Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

(JUDE 1:8) Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

There are three categories of sinners (vs. 5, 7, 8) out of four here that readers have little trouble seeing as having had two common major faults: illicit sexual lust and despise of authority, or as Peter put it in a virtually parallel address: "...chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government..." (2PE 2:10). Israel in the wilderness (v. 5) too often were guilty of despising God's rule by His Law and His mediator (Moses) and were on at least one occasion smitten with destruction specifically because of illicit sexual lust (1CO 10:8). Sodom and Gomorrha and their neighboring cities (v. 7) obviously had rejected God's rule and given themselves over to illicit sexual lust. The dominion-despising filthy dreamers of v. 8 are obviously the ungodly, *lascivious* (inclined to lust, lewd, wanton) men in v. 4. But what of the angels in v. 6?

It is said in JUDE 1:6 that these angels which sinned were consequently “...reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day” (c/w 2PE 2:4). Therefore, these angels must be a *special subset* of the “...third part of the stars of heaven...” (REV 12:3-4) that were drawn into Satan's rebellion against God, since there are evidently numbers of the larger group who Scripture says are anything but chained up: they seduce, afflict, possess and manipulate men. There is something unique about these rebel spirits: they “...kept not their first **estate**...” (JUDE 1:6). Estate means “State or condition in general, whether material or **moral**, bodily or mental.” Remembering that God's state or condition for angels did not include marriage (LUK 20:35-36), it would be an emphatic statement against God's dominion and ordained *morality* for a rebellious angel to flagrantly reject that law. Note especially that the Holy Spirit, having set forth these “...angels which kept not their first estate...” (JUDE 1:6) in the midst of a set of examples of rebels who were noted for illicit sexual lust, qualifies the angels' error by the phrase, “Even as...” in v. 7 where sexual sins are THE topic. The phrase, Even as equates with “just as; both...and, equally...” when “as” is referring to the *manner* of something, and in such usage Even means, “exactly, precisely, just.” Both categories of sinning rebels in JUDE 1:6-7 (angels and men) were evidently guilty of illicit sexual lust and both ended up in a nether-region of judgment. As for the offspring of such a “barrier-crossing” relationship, they would have been destroyed in the Flood wherein only “...eight souls were saved by water” (1PE 3:20). Those eight were of the family of Noah, a just and righteous man (GEN 6:9; GEN 7:1) who was “...perfect in his generations” (GEN 6:9), having no pollution in his ancestry traced back to Adam (GEN 5:1-29) and having a godly marriage to a single wife who bore him children (just as God had ordained at the beginning). Through this family humanity would be preserved and the true Messiah brought forth.

(All English definitions from Oxford English Dictionary)