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Telephone: 503 292 4352

• Internet: www.askelm.com •

E-Mail: askoffice@askelm.com

Who Are the Nephilim?

by David Sielaff, December 2013

Read the accompanying [Newsletter for December 2013](#)



This article presents a new perspective to the question “who are the Nephilim?” This is an intriguing but difficult subject, and I do not claim to present the last word on the matter. However, a unique understanding about the Sons of God presented by Dr. Ernest L. Martin in the late 1980s, combined with a verse that I now read with new discernment, a better understanding of Nephilim can be known. Below is a text version of a PowerPoint presentation I gave on September 29, 2013, jointly hosted by the Strange Events Inquiry and Oregon MUFON (Mutual UFO Network).

I became interested in the Nephilim when I first read the appendices in E.W. Bullinger’s *Companion Bible* in the 1970s. I shifted my understanding of this subject through the work of Dr. Ernest Martin. He came up with an extraordinary insight to a clear passage from the Book of Hebrews. You cannot avoid the Bible if you are going to talk about the Nephilim, because the subject begins there. I will cover four topics.

- First, **who are the Sons of God** told about in Genesis chapter 6? They were the fathers of the Nephilim.
- Second, we will talk about **the origin of the Nephilim**.
- Third, we will talk about **what or who are the Nephilim**.
- Fourth, we will talk about **the relationship of the Nephilim to UFOs and to non-physical entities**.

Who Are the Sons of God?

What I am giving is my understanding, my worldview, which I believe comports with the biblical worldview, which is not standard Christian doctrine. It is not standard evangelical teaching. Parts of it you will find with specialists, but you will not find this anywhere as I present it. Go to Genesis 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**.”

• *Genesis 6:4*

Let us analyze this verse.

<p>“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 them² the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">• Genesis 6:4</p>	“giants” in Hebrew is Nephilim, a plural term
	“Sons of <u>the</u> Elohim” in the Hebrew, with the definite article
	The word “men” is <i>adam</i> , ¹ singular, the superlative Hebrew term indicating a human being. The phrase could be translated “ the daughters of the Adam .” The purpose of Genesis 6:4 is to distinguish the Nephilim from the Sons of God and from the daughters of men.
	Although the word “children” is in the King James Version, it does not occur in Hebrew. It is implied.
	referring to the Nephilim
	“mighty men” is the Hebrew word <i>gibbor</i> ³ (plural, <i>gibborim</i>) in Hebrew, someone who could fight well and perform great deeds.
“men of renown” is the Hebrew word <i>enosh</i> , not <i>adam</i> . It relates to fame and mortality	

So in this one verse you have *adam*, *gibbor*, and *enosh*, distinguished from each other. The first usage of “men” is *adam*, a generic term for mankind. It is also the personal name of the first man created earlier in Genesis. The second term for “men,” *gibborim*, means “mighty men.” The third term *enosh* is plural and means mortal men “of renown,” or famous men.

What Is Man?

I want to shift quickly to Psalm chapter 8:

“What is man [*enosh*, mortal], that you [YHWH, see Psalm 8:1] are mindful of him? and the son of man [*adam*], that you visit him?”

• **Psalm 8:4, Davidic**

In this case *enosh* and *adam* is a repetition and a description. Next, “For you [again, YHWH] have made him **a little lower than the angels** and have crowned him with glory and honor” (Psalm 8:5). This is not “angels” in the Hebrew. It is *elohim*; it is “gods.” It should read “You [YHWH] have made him a little lower than the gods.” We are not gods now, but that is our destiny as Christians, through Christ, eventually. Everyone will be saved. Everyone in this room will be saved, and you will be happy for it. But that is not why I am here today.

“You made him [*adam*] to have dominion over **the works of your hands** [that means everything, including supernatural beings that exist]; you have put **all things** under his feet [under *adam*, man].”

• **Psalm 8:6**

In the Book of Hebrews chapter 1 in the New Testament this Psalm 8:6 passage focuses to Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:2 and especially 2:8), but it still applies to the sons of *adam* and to all of us eventually.

¹ The word *adam* is singular with a definite article. It means “**the Adam**,” the name of the first man and the designation of human beings descended from Adam.

² Net Bible, note 14, Genesis 6:4: “**The masculine plural suffix ‘them’ refers to the ‘sons of God,’ to whom the ‘daughters of humankind’ bore children.**”

³ The term is plural in the Hebrew, *gibborim*.

So Who Are the Sons of God?

Look at Job chapter 38, talking about the Sons of God:

“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? ...

Who has laid the measures thereof, ...? or who has stretched the line upon it?

Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

When the MORNING STARS sang together, and ALL the SONS OF GOD shouted for joy?”

• *Job 38:4–7 (see also 26:7)*

These **“Sons of God”** were present at the time of creation (when YHWH **“laid the foundations of the earth”**). This is not me or you shouting for joy in an earlier or reincarnated life. This refers to a group of beings, in Hebrew the *beni ha-elohim*. We will get into the nature of the Godhead later, yet it all relates to the Nephilim, as we will see. The Sons of God are not human and are not of adam. They existed when the earth was formed.

Job 26:7 says that the earth hangs upon nothing. It is a falsehood that ancient people thought the earth was flat. Job knew it was not. Job was probably one of the first complete books set down to writing. Genesis was a compiled work of shorter, older documents. How did Job know this information? Job 38:4–7 was something God told Job about, face to face from a cloud, or however He did it. You can judge for yourself if this is legitimate. I believe it is. Back to Genesis chapter 6.

Now that we have an idea that the Sons of God are not human, look at Genesis 6:1–4. Note the symmetry and how verse 1 relates to verse 3, and verse 2 relates to verse 4:

1 And it came to pass, when men [adam] began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

2 That the SONS OF GOD [elohim] saw the DAUGHTERS OF MEN [adam] that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

3 And YHWH said, 'My spirit shall not always strive with man [adam], for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.'

4 There were giants [the Nephilim] in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the SONS OF GOD [elohim] came in unto the DAUGHTERS OF MEN [adam], and they bore children to them, the same became mighty men [gibbor] which were of old, men [enosh] of renown.

• *Genesis 6:1–4*

You have a more complete picture if you relate verse 2 and 4 together.

The Origin of the Nephilim

“That the SONS OF GOD [elohim] saw the DAUGHTERS OF MEN that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. ...

There were giants [the Nephilim] in the earth in those days; AND ALSO AFTER THAT, when the sons of God [elohim] came in unto the daughters of men [adam], and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.”

• *Genesis 6:2, 4*

The term “took wives” (or wife) occurs frequently in Hebrew. They married these women. This is what you get in the Greek myths. This is what you get in other pagan myths, which I believe are corruptions of the biblical original. We can argue about that.

Notice something in verse 4, **“and also after that.”** What is the text talking about there? There are the pre-flood Nephilim **“in those days”** and then there were the post-flood Nephilim **“also after that.”** This whole section of Genesis 6:1–4 is leading up to why the flood was necessary. Verses 1 and 3 (and else-

where) talk about the evil of humanity, while verses 2 and 4 say there was extra evil committed by the *beni ha-elohim*, the Sons of God.

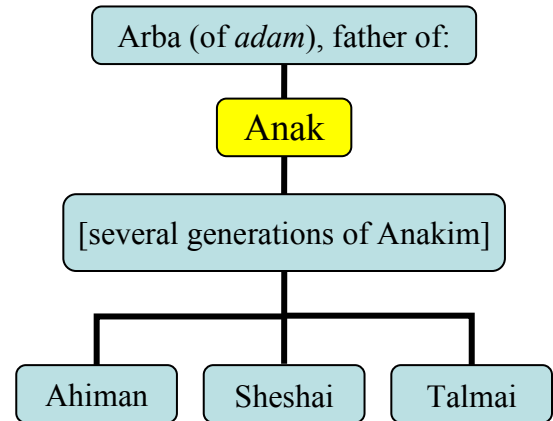
Almost all cultures have a flood tradition. Most of those also have a tradition of giants. Other authors have noted this. All the original Nephilim who were not killed by violence before the flood were killed in the flood. It says, **“All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died”** (Genesis 7:22). Could not the Sons of God have taken their children up? Apparently not. Most traditions say only eight were saved (as Genesis 6:18, 7:13 and 1 Peter 3:20 say).

After the flood, the Sons of God again mated with the daughters of men. It says that in verse 4, **“and also after that ...”** This is not difficult linguistic material. This is a straightforward reading of the text. **“There were giants in the earth in those days,”** so why did we get the word “giants” translated from the Hebrew word Nephilim? Nephilim was translated by the Greeks, especially by the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint or LXX) as *gigantes* in Greek. The Latin Vulgate kept that transliterated Greek word when Jerome translated Genesis into Latin. Hence we have the word “giants” inserted into the King James Version. In my opinion, it would have been better if they had just left the term “Nephilim.”

Israelite Spies

Now I want to discuss the spies sent to the Promised Land. Moses sent twelve men to scout the land before Israel entered it. Upon their return, ten of the spies said the situation was impossible. We do not want to go there; these people are too many, too dangerous, and too huge. Only two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb said, let us go up and seize the land. God said He will drive these people out, we need not worry (Numbers chapter 13).

By the way, Israel did not have to kill all the people, the Canaanites, and all the people in the Promised Land. God said that He would drive them out, but because of their sins, God made Israel do it. I offered, you sinned, therefore as part of the punishment that you agreed to, you must kill the people occupying My land. You have to kill the women and children and the men, and even the animals in many cases. When the spies first went there, it says they **“... came unto Hebron;⁴ where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, were”** (Numbers 13:22).⁵ (See the Genealogy Chart.) They were not direct children of Anak. They were several generations down. Continuing with the spies:



Genealogy Chart 1: Anakim at Kirjatharba

“Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children [sons] of Anak there. ...

for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report ... and all the people that we saw in it are men [enosh] of a great stature. And there we saw the giants [Nephilim], THE SONS OF ANAK, which come of the giants [Nephilim]: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.”

• **Numbers 13:28, 31–33**

This equates Nephilim with the sons of Anak.

⁴ Hebron is 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem.

⁵ Later these three Anakim brothers were driven out of the Hebron area by Caleb and his people (Joshua 15:14). After Joshua died, the three brothers were killed by the men of Judah (Judges 1:10).

Og of Bashan

Now we come to Og of Bashan. Og is of the Rephaim, different but similar to the Anakim and the Nephilim. The Sons of God were the gods of the pagan nations. They produced offspring who were considered (by pagan peoples) as demigods: Hercules, Dionysus, Osiris, Gilgamesh, and all others who became bastardized in the pagan myths — in my understanding.

“For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants [rephaim]; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of IRON; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.”

• Deuteronomy 3:11

Regarding the **“bedstead of iron,”** they had iron as early as the Exodus period.⁶ Bronze was still more effective for weapons because they were not able to work iron until later, during the time of judges, to make arrowheads, swords, and spearheads of iron. I have had a historian tell me, yes, you see iron mentioned in the Iliad of Homer traditionally about 1300 BC and later in the time of David. In the time of the Judges, the Philistines took away all the iron-making tools of the Israelites. They invaded and took all their kilns and furnaces so they could not make iron weapons like the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19–22). The Israelites continued using bronze.

Back to Og. His bedstead was made of iron. It was nine cubits in length and four cubits in width, **“after the cubit of a man.”** A cubit of a man was roughly from the tip of your finger to your elbow, about 18 inches, maybe 15 inches, minimum. Therefore, if a cubit is roughly 18 inches, we can estimate that his bedstead was 13½ feet long and about 6 feet wide. Considering that his bed was probably longer than he was, you can figure him to be probably about 12 feet tall.

Goliath and His Relatives

“And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.”

• 1 Samuel 17:4

Six cubits and a span makes him almost 10 feet tall. You only have these two examples, but there is a diminution of the size of giants from Og to Goliath. But ten feet is quite large. It says in 1 Samuel 17:51 that Goliath was **“a champion,”** a *gibbor*, a mighty man. He was a bulky man.⁷

It is interesting that in 1 Samuel 17:54 it says David brought Goliath’s head to Jerusalem. Why? I do not know. It also says that he possessed his sword (1 Samuel 21:9 and 22:10) and his armor (1 Samuel 17:54).⁸ If David’s Tomb would be discovered, and I believe it is in Jerusalem, if Goliath’s head is in the tomb (what else would David do with it?) it could be buried in one of the chambers. After all, it was one of his significant accomplishments. DNA could be extracted from tooth enamel of Goliath to see what kind of genetic material he had.

There were other Philistine Rephaim during the time of David who were killed by his men. There were at least four others besides Goliath (2 Samuel 21:15–22, Net Bible):

⁶ Iron is first mentioned in Genesis 4:22, before the flood. Either Noah or his sons brought the technique of smelting iron with them after the flood, or it was reinvented. The Hebrew term for iron is used 70 times in the Old Testament, 10 times in Mosaic writings and even in Job, **“He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through”** (Job 20:24).

⁷ In the movie *Troy*, Achilles killed a powerful giant warrior with his small sword. That is another way than David’s method, but Achilles was also a hybrid mighty man, but of normal size. That is what the Greek myths say. Take that for what it is worth.

⁸ The Hebrew term translated “armor” in 1 Samuel 17:54 is variously rendered as “armor” or “weapons.” It probably indicates general military gear.

- (vv. 15–17) Ishbi-Benob **“had a spear [actually the spearhead] that weighed three hundred bronze shekels”** [7.5 pounds], He had said that he would kill David. He failed.
- (v. 18) A Philistine warrior named Saph (also 1 Chronicles 20:4). David’s men killed him.
- (v. 19): **“Elhanan ... killed the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam”** (also 1 Chronicles 20:5).⁹ His spear was so thick and heavy, he probably also used it as a club.
- (vv. 20–21): **“a large man [*ish*, male] who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in all.”** David’s brother slew him (also 1 Chronicles 20:6–7).

“These four were born to the giant [*rapha*] in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.”

• **2 Samuel 21:22 (and 1 Chronicles 20:8)**

Regarding the fellow with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot (verses 20–21 above), this is a condition called polydactily. It occurs rarely. If such breeding of Rephaim is still going on, I suppose they have bred this out of their products.¹⁰

Who Are the Nephilim?

The Book of Joshua talks of Caleb, the other faithful spy with Joshua. He was given an inheritance of the land of the tribe of Judah according to the command of YHWH. Joshua was to give Caleb the territory he requested because Caleb was faithful to God:

“And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of YHWH to Joshua, even the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron.”

• **Joshua 15:13**

Notice that Arba was the father of Anak. Previously in Joshua, Arba was discussed:

“And the name of Hebron before was Kirjatharba; which Arba WAS A GREAT MAN [*adam*] **AMONG THE ANAKIMS.”**

• **Joshua 14:15**

How do we read this? How do we look at this? Does this mean that Arba was an *adam* among the hybrid Anakim? These verses say Arba was not just a great man, but he was the father of Anak. The Anakim were hybrids.¹¹ It does not say in these verses that Arba was a Son of God (a *beni ha-Elohim*), so Arba must have been a Nephilim, because we established earlier from Numbers 13:32–33 that Nephilim are Anakim (and vice versa). Therefore, Arba was an Anakim AND of *adam*. Again to be clear, a son of Anak = a human being. All Anakim are human because Arba was of *adam*. Again,

“Hebron therefore became the inheritance of CALEB the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed YHWH God of Israel. And the name of Hebron before was Kirjatharba; which Arba WAS A GREAT MAN [*adam*] **AMONG THE ANAKIMS. And the land had rest from war.”**

• **Joshua 14:14–15**

⁹ The Net Bible translators inserted the phrase “the brother of.” 2 Samuel 21:19 says simply “Goliath,” but 1 Chronicles 20:5 says **“the brother of Goliath.”**

¹⁰ Search the internet for the term “polydactily” and note the photos of both hands and feet with six or more digits. These are not doctored or fake photos. Medical texts have similar photos. The occurrence of polydactily is understood by modern medicine and has no relationship to either gigantism or hybridity. The writers of 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles were reporting the facts.

¹¹ Some researchers do not like this designation of “hybrid,” but that is what they were, as we shall see.

Hebron is 20 miles south of Jerusalem. The valley of Hebron was also known as the Valley of the Rephaim. The name of Hebron prior to that time was Kirjatharba. Was Arba merely a human being, was he also a hybrid Anakim? We know from Goliath there were multiple generations. These men could successfully breed. They were not like mules. They could breed successive generations, which is what we see here. Once a Nephilim was born, they could further breed with other human beings. This is to be expected because they themselves were classified in Joshua 14:15 as being of *adam*.

Caleb drove the three Anakim brothers from Kirjatharba (Judges 15:14). This happened before Joshua died (Joshua 24:30 and Judges 1:1). They were later killed during the early period of the Judges, but some survived. They escaped to reside in the cities of the Philistines, particularly Gath into the reign of King David of Israel.

There is no mention of Rephaim (giants) from the time of Joshua and Caleb until Goliath, a period of some 400 years. During this time Samson was a judge in Israel who fought the Philistines who oppressed Israel. There is no record in the Bible of Samson encountering any Nephilim, Rephaim, or Anakim.

The entire Book of Deuteronomy is a retrospective by Moses of the entire Exodus and wilderness experiences of the people of Israel, written just before he died. It talks about the various giant peoples:

“The Emims dwelt therein in times past [during the times of Jacob and Esau], a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; Which [the Emims] also were accounted giants [*rephaim*], as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims.”

• **Deuteronomy 2:10–11**

Different peoples called them by different names. The Moabites called them Emims. The people from Hebron called them Anakim. Others were calling them Rephaim, which seems to have been a general term for these tall, strong, rough people.

“That also was accounted a land of giants [*rephaim*]: giants [*rephaim*] dwelt therein in old time; and the Ammonites call them Zamzummims; A people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; but YHWH destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead.”

• **Deuteronomy 2:20–21**

Everyone had their own local name for these big boys, **“A people great and many.”** They were numerous in the time of Moses and Joshua. While God destroyed them by the people of Israel, perhaps the Sons of God continued their post-flood breeding with the daughters of men. Why did not God put a stop to this? He does in a way, as we will see later.

The Land of the Rephaim

“And the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, being the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half tribe of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, with all Bashan, which was called the land of giants [*rephaim*].”

• **Deuteronomy 3:13**

“And the coast of Og king of Bashan, which was of the remnant of the giants [*rephaim*], that dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, ...”

• **Joshua 12:4, (and Joshua 13:12)**

The northern part of this territory (south of Jerusalem), extends west to the Mediterranean coast. It begins close to the valley of Hinnom, the area also known as Gehenna, near Jerusalem. You have Jerusalem, the valley of Hinnom south of Jerusalem (the City of David), where Gehenna will take place.¹² That is the place of punishment south of Jerusalem, the City of David. Further south is the land of the Rephaim.

¹² Gehenna will occur in the valley of Hinnom, but there is no eternal hell. Forget about that fallacy.

[NOTE: The marriages or matings of the Sons of God and the daughters of *adam* need not have continued. Not all Anakim were killed during Joshua's time. The Bible shows that several must have fled from the area of Hebron south of Jebus (Jerusalem) to the Mediterranean coastal area of the Philistines near Ashdod, and Gath some 12 miles inland from the coast:

“And at that time came Joshua, and cut off the Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel: Joshua [and Caleb] destroyed them utterly with their cities.

There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.”

• *Joshua 11:21–22*

Therefore, the Anakim (who were working and fighting for the Philistines) continued to marry local women for several more generations up to the time of David and Goliath, about 1025 BC. God told Israel He would drive out the inhabitants from the land He promised to Israel, but they provoked God, were stubborn, rebelled, sinned, and broke their covenant with Him. Therefore God required Israel to drive out or kill the inhabitants (Deuteronomy 9:1–24). *DWS*

The Evidence Thus Far

What can we conclude from what has been presented? We have several groups: [1] the Nephilim, [2] the Anakim, [3] the Rephaim, and [4] the Emims, or Zamzummims who seem to be related to the Anakim.

- **Nephilim = Anakim**

This identification is very powerful (Numbers 13:33), as close to an identity as can be made:

“And there we saw the giants [Nephilim], the sons of Anak, which come of the giants [again, Nephilim¹³]: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.”

• *Numbers 13:33*

Note how the author of this verse (Moses, or later an authoritative editor such as Joshua or Samuel) surrounds the term Anakim between two uses of Nephilim to reduce ambiguity and make clear that there is a very close association between Nephilim and Anakim, even though they are separated in time.

- **Rephaim ARE LIKE the Anakim.**

This identification is not as powerful, but it is still strong. Terms of close comparison are used.

- **Nephilim ARE LIKE the Rephaim, Emims, or Zamzummims.**

These identifications are the weakest because the association to Nephilim comes through the identification with the Anakim.

We cannot make a precise identification of Nephilim with Rephaim and the others, but it certainly looks close. As we have seen before, the Rephaim are associated with the Anakim, but Anakim = Nephilim.

¹³ Some writers on this subject deny this association in Numbers 13:33 because it was said by the 10 rebellious Israelite spies and not by Joshua and Caleb. However, the factual statement of the reconnaissance of the spies includes their description of the “giants,” the Nephilim, which is not contradicted by Joshua or Caleb, or by God. The slander that God mentions in Numbers 14:36–38 has to do with the land (Numbers 13:32) and not specifically the giants. They said the land itself was evil and would devour the people of Israel. This meant that God brought Israel to the Promised Land to kill them. In response, God killed the 10 spies, while Joshua and Caleb lived.

As you read the texts, it seems the Rephaim were considered Nephilim, although this is not directly stated. Only Moses (of the several writers referring to giant people groups) equated Nephilim with the Anakim. The others used phrasing that pointed out similarities of one group being “like” another. There are gradations of “likeness”:

1. Two things can be like but almost identical.¹⁴
2. Two things can be like but similar.
3. Two things can be like but very different.

Other than the Anakim, the extent of similarity between Nephilim and the other giants cannot be determined from the texts.¹⁵

Dispersion of the Nations at Babel and the Old Gods

After the flood, at the city of Babel languages were confused. God also separated the nations. This event has significance to the Rephaim and the giant peoples that inhabited the Promised Land.

“So YHWH dispersed them [human beings] from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ... And from there YHWH dispersed them over the face of all the earth.”

• **Genesis 11:8–9**

Then look at a very interesting passage in Deuteronomy 32:8–9. This is straightforward narrative as Moses understood it. Remember, in Deuteronomy he is looking back, recalling and explaining all the events that happened, in this case from Babel up to the point just before Moses died.

“When the most High

- [1] **divided to the nations their inheritance,**
- [2] **when he separated the sons of Adam,**
- [3] **he set the bounds of the people [peoples, plural]**

according to the number of the CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.

For YHWH’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.”

• **Deuteronomy 32:8–9**

“According to the number of the children of Israel” does not make any sense. Now I will explain something which is somewhat technical. It is clear that “children of Israel” is *beni ysrael* in the Hebrew. However, the oldest Hebrew text of the Masoretic text that we have of Deuteronomy chapter 32 was copied in the 5th century AD. The Dead Sea Scrolls have this rendering:

“When the most High

- [1] **divided to the nations their inheritance,**
- [2] **when he separated the sons of Adam,**
- [3] **he set the bounds of the people [peoples, plural]**

according to the number of the SONS OF GOD.

For YHWH’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.”

• **Deuteronomy 32:8–9, DSS (see also Acts 17:26)**

¹⁴ Any time a comparison is made, the things being compared cannot, by definition, be identical.

¹⁵ Numbers 13:33 identifies Nephilim with Anakim. Moses related the term Nephilim specifically to the pre-flood world of Genesis 6:1–4, while the manifestation of the Anakim, who were large according to the observation of all 12 spies; they were the post-flood outbreak of these giants.

The nations were divided. How many nations were there? Well, Genesis chapter 10 lists the 70 nations.¹⁶ Were there 70 Sons of God? I do not know, but this makes sense. According to the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were written over time in the 4th century BC, many hundreds of years earlier than our oldest Hebrew manuscripts, also in Hebrew, and it uses the phrase *beni ha-Elohim*, just like Genesis 6:2 and 4. The Greek Septuagint has the phrase **“according to the number of the angels of God.”** I cannot explain the discrepancy between the Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls. These Sons of God were created, and they will die. They can and will die.

This **“Sons of God”** rendering changes the whole aspect of Deuteronomy chapter 32, and there are other elements of this in Deuteronomy that support this understanding, as well as in other parts of Scriptures. In Acts 17:26 it says God sets the boundaries of nations and determines where peoples will live. And He moves peoples around. That confirms what is being said in Deuteronomy 32:8–9.

“And has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.”

• **Acts 17:26**

I do not like denying the validity of the Hebrew Masoretic text at all. Yet almost universally, unless you are a “King James Only” person, technical scholars agree with the rendering of “Sons of God.” This makes sense in the text and the Dead Sea Scroll rendering is correct. There are some other Hebrew texts that say this *beni ha-Elohim*, but the apocryphal books like Enoch, Jasher, and Jubilees use the angelic rendering. I will show later that the angels were not involved at all, which goes against a great deal of current analysis about the Sons of God in Genesis chapter 6 and the Nephilim, going against Enoch, Jasher, and Jubilees.

The Old Gods and a Davidic Psalm

Most ancient religious traditions have a distinction between the “elder gods” (or “olden gods”) and later gods. Here are the older gods:

“For who in the heaven can be compared unto YHWH? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto YHWH?”

• **Psalm 89:6, KJV**

YHWH is an El. He is of the Elohim. He is THE God. He is the “El of Elohim.” He is even termed as “THE El of Elohim” with the definite article. This usage occurs several times and He said to the Israelites, you must worship me alone. The biblical model in my understanding is not Trinitarianism; it is not Monotheism. It is henotheism.

Henotheism is the belief that there is one God, the Creator, but other gods exist. Only the one God should be worshipped by Israel. The pagan nations could worship whatever they wanted. I mean that seriously. There was no prohibition for Gentiles, non-Israelites, to worship gods other than YHWH. Only Israel was prohibited from worshipping other Gods. Israel could only worship YHWH. This is why you have the Shema in Deuteronomy 6:4, which refers to the one God. It is talking about the one YHWH.

Elohim is a plural term. It means Disposer or powerful one. “Most High God” applies to YHWH. This is why descriptors modifying words are very important. Scripture is very precise, except in Deuteronomy chapter 32:8, unfortunately. Psalm 89:6 asks about **“the sons of the mighty,”** who can be equal to YHWH? The **“sons of the mighty”** in Hebrew is “sons of Elyon.” Elyon is another descriptor of YHWH.

“For who in the heaven can be compared unto YHWH? who among the Sons of God [Elyon] can be likened unto YHWH?”

• **Psalm 89:6, Hebrew**

¹⁶ One could count 72 nations, depending on the names.

Gods Can Die

Look at Psalm 82. It is eight verses long; we will cover only a few verses.

“God [elohim] stands in the assembly of El; in the midst of the gods [elohim] he renders judgment. He says, ‘How long will you make unjust legal decisions and show favoritism to the wicked?’”

• *Psalm 82:1–2, NET Bible*

What does this mean **“in the midst of the elohim”**? This second use of elohim is plural. El is holding what is called a Divine Council. These events occur several times in Scripture. The two heavenly scenes in Job chapters 1 and 2 are two examples. These assemblies of gods before El are very similar to Ugaritic descriptions of the gods holding meetings before their chief god “Il.” (Ugarit is an ancient city in Anatolia where a large number of writings were discovered.) I believe one Ugaritic writing in particular is a corrupt quote of Psalm 82. The wording of the Ugaritic is strikingly similar when you see them side by side.

So, **“God stands in the assembly of El, in the midst of the elohim.”** I know people who say that every time the Hebrew term Elohim is used, it always means the creator God. That is obviously not true and easily demonstrated. He says, **“How long will you [you Elohim] make unjust legal decisions and show favoritism to the wicked?”** These *elohim* were being judged and sentenced, but the punishment came later.

Psalm 82 is the judgment portion of what is called a *rîb*, which is a courtroom scene and there were certain steps in the courtroom procedure. This is the punishment phase of a larger courtroom procedure.¹⁷ This is acknowledged by scholars who recognize ancient law court proceedings.

Now we come to Psalm 82:6–8. It says in the Net Bible:

“I thought, ‘You are gods [elohim]; all of you are sons of the Most High [Elyon, Most High God].’ Yet you will die like men [adam]; you will fall like all the other rulers. Rise up, O God, and execute judgment on the earth! For you own all the nations.”

• *Psalm 82:6–8 NET Bible*

The rulers of Israel, the priests and Levites and the king all lived in a blood-cult society. The Levitical priests had to go into the Temple and they were killing sacrificial animals every day. During the feast days hundreds of animals were killed. They knew what death was like. You never find in the Hebrew Scriptures that these people ever thought that they were divine or that they were *elohim*. To say to a human being, “Oh, you will die like a man” makes no sense.

But if you are talking about the *elohim* and **“the Sons of Elyon”** in verses 1 and 6 respectively, the Sons of Elohim in Deuteronomy 32:8 and in Genesis chapter 6, who were the gods of the nations, dispensing legal decisions and showing favoritism to the wicked — all of this ties together.

Psalm 82 is a Psalm of David. This judgment was given in this Psalm during the days of David. The sentence of judgment was not fulfilled, I believe, until the time of Jeremiah, some 400 years later. There are passages, which I am still researching, where within a few words of each other idols are said to be captured along with “the *elohim*.” Are these verses talking about these entities, these “gods,” actually being captured when they are in some physical state? Well, when they are in the physical, they can be killed. We are told that in Psalm 82:7 where these *elohim* are told they will **“die like men.”**¹⁸ Men are physical.

Jesus Christ was originally an *elohim* who, by being born of Mary, He became flesh — and He died. Think of this possibility. Elohim can die. Angels can die. The Christian historian Eusebius cites a source who tells about **“the Great God Pan”** dying during the reign of the Roman Emperor Tiberius. When that

¹⁷ See my article [“Elohim and the Son of God - Part 1.”](#)

¹⁸ We know angels, who are spirits, can manifest themselves physically and eat like men (Genesis 18:2–10 and 19:1–3). These are probably the incidents the apostle Paul referred to when he said, **“some have entertained angels unawares”** (Hebrews 13:2). While angels are *elohim*, they are not Sons of God (Elohim) or Sons of Elyon. Nor is Christ an angel (Hebrews 1:5).

occurred, there was a great wailing among the spirits, even in Rome when the announcement was made there. Very strange. You can say, well, that is some fantasy story. But then you have to explain Psalm 82.

More on Dying Gods

Below is a passage from an article by Jonathan Smith, “Dying and Rising Gods” from the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, edited by Mircea Eliade (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1987), pp. 521–527. This is a wonderful encyclopedia, but it is not Christian. Smith says:

“Despite the shock this fact may deal to modern Western religious sensibilities, it is a commonplace within the history of religions that immortality is not a prime characteristic of divinity: GODS DIE. Nor is the concomitant of omnipresence a widespread requisite: GODS DISAPPEAR.”

• **Smith, “Dying and Rising Gods?” (underlines and caps are mine)**

There is a whole fantasy by many writers about dying and rising gods in ancient writings who supposedly are just like Christ. Well, there is a qualitative difference between Christ and the pagan gods, about the gods disappearing. Smith continues:

“Some of these divine figures simply disappear; some disappear only to return again in the near or distant future; some disappear and reappear with monotonous frequency.”

• **Smith, “Dying and Rising Gods?”**

Later on the Nephilim (which pagan traditions considered to be demi-gods) were thought to be placed in the celestials and they became gods. But during the time of Alexander the Great there is a historical record that he went to one of the major mystery temples in Egypt. Alexander the Great wrote a letter to his mother in Greece. He said the priests told him that all the gods were men.¹⁹ The priests and Alexander were incorrect to an extent, but he was correct about the demi-gods. They were all men, just as Joshua 14:15 tells us the Anakim were all men (of *adam*), and Numbers 13:33 identifies the “**sons of Anak**” with the Nephilim.

Regarding all the deities who have been identified as belonging to the class of dying and rising gods, Smith tells us:

“... some disappear and reappear with monotonous frequency. All the deities that have been identified as belonging to the class of dying and rising deities can be subsumed under the two larger classes [1] of disappearing deities or [2] dying deities.”

• **Smith, “Dying and Rising Gods?”**

The god Chronos in Greek mythology (Saturn in the Roman pantheon), was killed by Zeus. This is explained in Smith’s article. To summarize what has been presented so far:

- The lesser gods can die:
- Elohim can and do die
- ONLY YHWH and Christ are immortal. Christ has been immortal only since His resurrection.²⁰ If there are exceptions, they are unclear in Scripture.
- Angels are *elohim*. According to the Bible they shall die if they sin.²¹

¹⁹ See Dr. Martin’s article “[Origin and Goal of Western Civilization, Part 2.](#)”

²⁰ Christ, the Son of God, was created. He did not exist “in eternity past” as some traditional Christians beliefs have supposed. The other Sons of God were created. The angels were created. The spirits were created. The cherubim were created. The seraphim were created, and the elementals were created. You are created by birth, through Adam.

²¹ Regarding the immortality of angels, if there are exceptions and some of them are immortal, I need to see that in Scripture. I know word “eternal” does not occur in Hebrew or the Greek, but it occurs in the King James Version. That is easily shown.

I have my differences with other researchers. First of all, the Nephilim **ARE HUMAN**. They of *adam* (Joshua 14:15). Second, the Nephilim will be “saved” (like all mankind), but none will be in the first resurrection. It says this explicitly in Isaiah 26:14 that none of the Rephaim shall rise. There may be a distinction between the Rephaim and Nephilim. The Rephaim may refer to evil spirits that “inhabited” the Nephilim, the Anakim, the Emim, and the Zamzummims, so they were easily possessed and were allowed to be possessed by their fathers the Sons of God. Traditional Jewish scholarship and some Christian scholars believe that the evil spirits were the spirits of the Nephilim when they died. I do not believe that. I believe that the Nephilim (whatever name they have) were human, but they were possessed by the Repha spirits who then prompted them to do even greater evil.

Some believe it possible that hybrids are being produced today “**as in the days of Noah**” (Matthew 24:37 and Luke 17:26), and that hybrids (Nephilim) could pass among us unrecognized. Never underestimate the depravity and extent of evil. However, there is no evidence of this outside of Jesus’ statement in Matthew and Luke, and that is highly debatable.

Differing Worldviews

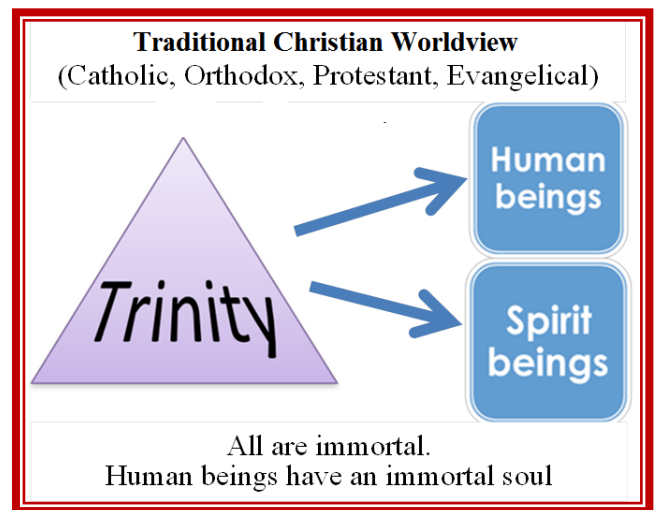
I want to present three charts on differing worldviews. First, there is the Christian worldview which includes Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Evangelical denominations and groups. There is the Trinity, then there are spirit beings, and there are human beings. This is pretty much their understanding. All beings within this system are immortal, everybody, even human beings have an “immortal soul.”

The Jewish worldview is similar. There is YHWH and then there are human beings. As for the Sons of God, they do not know who they are. Some believe they are humans, others believe they are angelic beings. Then there are immortal beings such as angels, spirits, Satan.

Few people know that there is a Talmudic understanding by several rabbis that there was a subordinate creator in the Old Testament. There is an excellent book by Alan Segal, titled *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism* (Baylor University Press, reprint 2012). It was originally published in 1977 and it is a classic book about rabbinic reports about Christianity and Gnosticism. From rabbinic writings Segal shows that the rabbis know there was a subordinate creator, like a prime contractor on a construction site, through which everything was created.

This is exactly what you have in the Gospel of John, chapter 1. This is exactly what you have elsewhere in Scripture. This is why plural verbs are used in Genesis chapter 1 with Elohim in creation. Elohim is used almost exclusively with singular verbs, but you can do the same with English words such as army, navy, family, company. You can use plural verbs or singular verbs with these nouns and you will be grammatically correct. In England plural or singular verbs are used with compound nouns more often than in America. Elohim, even when used with a singular verb, can refer to a group. We saw that in Psalm 82 even though a singular unit, “**sons of Elyon**” is being discussed.

My understanding of the biblical worldview is this: There was YHWH. He created Christ. The two collaborated and through Christ were created spirit beings. The Sons of God are spirit beings, but they are a different class of beings from angels who were created later. Then human beings were created. That is my take on it.²²

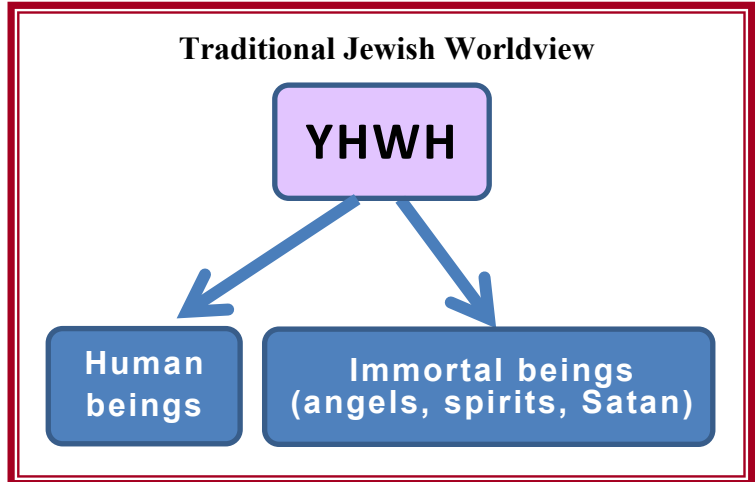


²² This why YHWH asked in Job 38:4, 7 about the time the earth was created:

YHWH is the only true creator and every-one and everything else is a creation of His. There is only one God (1 Corinthians 8:6). Right now, just YHWH and Christ (by virtue of His spiritual resurrection) have immortality. The rest are mortal.

Relationships

So, what is the relationship of Nephilim to UFOs and other non-physical entities? One of my favorite authors on this subject was John Keel. He wrote a fascinating book called *Our Haunted Planet*. It was first published in 1971. It is available online as a PDF file. Keel says:



“The mating of ordinary women with supernatural beings is an integral part of all religious lore. It is emphasized in the Bible.”

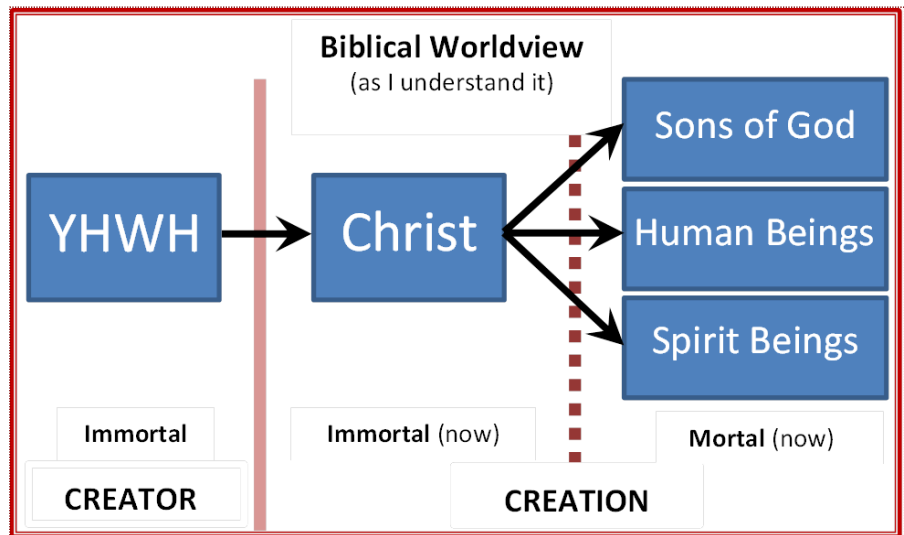
• John Keel (1930–1999), [Our Haunted Planet](#), 1971.²³

Going on in Keel’s book in a chapter titled “The Demise of the Gods”:

“The startling truth, as carefully recorded by the ancient historians, is that the ULTRATER-RESRIALS have always been in direct contact with millions of individuals and that THEY ACTUALLY RULED DIRECTLY OVER MANKIND FOR MANY YEARS.”²⁴ In recent centuries their influence has become more subtle, but it is always there.”

• Keel, *Haunted Planet*, Chapter 12, “The Demise of the Gods”

This may be the basis for most conspiracy theories, if these entities have been influencing, ruling, or been closely involved with mankind, or whole nations in post-flood history, mostly through their rulers. The purpose of man’s religion is to contact God on man’s terms. Do you really think the pagan religions performed their rituals and sacrifices without getting a response from the gods? If “yes” is your answer, then you think ancient people were stupid or deluded. They were neither.



“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if you have understanding. ... When the morning stars [angels] sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

²³ Keel is a very incisive writer, but I do not endorse everything he writes. Another interesting book by Jacques Vallee, *Messengers of Deception: UFO Contacts and Cults* (Daily Grail Publishing, 2008) analyzes the messages which so-called “aliens” supposedly tell people. These spirit entities are not our friends. See also Vallee’s *Passport to Magonia: on UFOs, Folklores, and Parallel Worlds* which points out similarities of contacts with spirits with supposed UFO alien contacts.

²⁴ This is exactly what Deuteronomy 32:8 and Psalm 82 say, but Keel does not draw his conclusions only from biblical texts.

There is a very interesting book by Plutarch,²⁵ a priest of Delphi in Greece, titled *On the Cessation of the Oracles*. He wrote this book after the time of Christ, during the later apostolic period. He noted that the major pagan oracles slowly stopped responding to petitioners. His book attempted to explain why this was happening. Apparently, all the pagan religions had this difficulty. Something was going on, but Plutarch had no real idea what caused the cessation of the oracles.

Later, these same entities became “saints” of the Catholic and Orthodox churches. Keel says:

“The record shows that the ultraterrestrials have a need for physical human beings. Once they were quite open in demanding specimens to serve that need.²⁶ ... They once exploited the human race in the guise of benevolent gods living on hilltops; they now exploit us through the modern myth of extraterrestrial visitors from distant stars.”

• *Our Haunted Planet, Chapter 15, “Where Is Everybody Going”*

I have a friend whose mother is 90+ years old. She grew up in what is now the Czech Republic. She told me when she was a girl, every year during a certain saint’s day, in the middle of the night, a supposed female saint visited her town. The “saint” would come down a hillside and move through the town as a bright light. Nothing was guiding the light, no form would appear, just the light would pass through, and then disappear. This is similar to the type of event that Keel describes. Similar things are described during ancient pagan rituals. The gods responded to their worshippers, so did evil spirits. They do so today.

If you do a satanic rite or magic, to be effective you must cooperate with spirits to get results. This is why there is a strong biblical prohibition against such practices. The UFO story is similar. In another book by John Keel, *Operation Trojan Horse*, the UFOs present themselves as something they are not.

“The real UFO story must encompass ALL of the many manifestations being observed. It is a story of ghosts and phantoms and strange mental aberrations; of an invisible world that surrounds us and occasionally engulfs us; of prophets and prophecies, and gods and demons.”

• [Operation Trojan Horse, John Keel, 1970](#)²⁷

I agree: All phenomena must fit the worldview that you believe in. Not some of it, all of it. The spirit beings have nothing on you. In fact, they fear you because of what you will become when you enter the Kingdom of God. You shall judge angels (good and bad, 1 Corinthians 6:3). They especially fear you if you have proper knowledge of them. They seem to be superior beings because they are invisible and they can come through walls and appear. Big deal.

The earth is here for a reason. You are here for a reason. One of those reasons is because this is where everything important is happening. Revelation chapter 21 says there will be a new heaven and a new earth and God the Father (YHWH) will come to live here. Once the whole plan of God is done, you will see Christ face to face as an individual, and you will see God the Father as an individual.

Keel is saying there is something going on here, and he does not believe what I believe. Jacques Vallee wrote a wonderful book called *The Messengers of Deception* about UFOs. The title speaks for itself, and that is what the book is about, the UFO phenomena is a deliberate deception. Vallee wrote an earlier book titled *Passport to Magonia: on UFOs, Folklore and Parallel Worlds*. It tells about mass sightings in history, from ancient times up to the 1800s, of things in the sky and strange events going on, like the “saint” coming through the village, except these were things written and reported by multiple witnesses. We live in a very busy universe. God’s creation is very complex.

²⁵ Plutarch, 46–120 AD, was a Greek historian, biographer, and essayist best known for his work *Plutarch’s Lives*.

²⁶ Whether this was physical sacrifice or abduction, or having what is called a “wedding of the gods” in which women within a pagan temple would go and have sex with the “god.” They would be impregnated. In other instances priestesses would prostitute themselves to men in the temples.

²⁷ This book can be downloaded free as a PDF or as an e-book.

Some Conclusions about the Sons of God

First, the Sons of God are **NOT** angels:

“For unto which of the angels said he at any time, ‘You are my Son, this day have I begotten you? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?’”

• *Hebrews 1:5*

Paul asks two rhetorical questions (using Psalm 2:7 and 2 Samuel 7:14 as sources), both requiring the same answer, that angels are never called sons.

Next, the Sons of God are **NOT** human (Job 38:7). The Nephilim are human, but not the Sons of God. The Sons of God can certainly breed. The Sons of God are a class of beings distinct from other spirit entities. The Sons of God are the fathers of the Nephilim, who are their offspring. Finally, the Sons of God can **“die like men”** (Psalm 82:6–7), even though they are spirit beings. The Sons of God have an ability to become physical. They can do it easier than angels and other spirits. They have more power.

We have in Genesis, in the time of Abraham, that YHWH, who was probably the Angel of YHWH, which is another subject, he came with two angels. They subsequently went to Sodom and Gomorrah to destroy those cities. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah wanted to have sex with those entities. They knew they were angels. They knew they could have sex with spiritual beings, albeit homosexual sex. How did they know that? It is not explained in the text, but the time of Abraham comes after the time **“and after that”** (Genesis 6:4). Jesus tells us:

“But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, MARRYING AND GIVING IN MARRIAGE, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

• *Matthew 24:37–39 (also Luke 17:26–27, 30)*

This passage shows us several things. First, life will have regularity before Jesus returns. Second, in Genesis, the only reference to marriage before the flood resulted in hybrid offspring, the Nephilim. Will the Sons of God breed again with the daughters of men? Some believe this has been going on for decades. I tend to agree, but the offspring are no longer giants — and the Anakim are of *adam* as Joshua 14:15 tells us.

Points to Consider

The account of Genesis chapter 6 states the **“Sons of God”** successfully bred with the **“daughters of adam.”** This was because humans were created **“a little lower than Elohim”** (Psalm 8:5). Who are the Nephilim? They are human like you and me, however strange they may be. All human beings (children of *adam*) are destined to have dominion over all creation, to become **“children of God”** (Psalm 8:6). All intelligent beings will be reconciled to God (Colossians 1:20, Ephesians 1:10; Philippians 2:10–11; 1 Corinthians 15:22–28). **“I will remember the works of YHWH: surely I will remember your wonders of old”** (Psalm 77:11).

David Sielaff

Additional Study

DVD: [“Elohim and The Son of God.”](#) \$10.00. This 89-minute PowerPoint presentation before a “One God Conference” audience gives a biblical understanding of the nature of God the Father (YHWH), Christ, other Sons of God, other spiritual beings and mankind.

Articles: [“Elohim and the Son of God Part 1”](#) and [“Elohim and the Son of God Part 2.”](#) (free online) These articles contain the text of the DVD.

[“Elohim and the Son of God Part 3.”](#) (free online) This article contains the question/answer portion of the lecture.

NOTE: This material is not on the DVD.

[“Idolatry and the Sons of God.”](#) (free online) This article has additional material from the above three presentations.

[“Idolatry and God's Punishment.”](#) (free online) This article analyzes Psalm 82 with additional information.