

Who Were the Nephilim of Genesis 6?

James Smyda

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If you've ever studied the Bible to any degree at all, you're probably at least relatively familiar with the story of Noah's flood. You're probably familiar with the fact that in the book of Genesis it gives us the account that the earth became so corrupt, so morally degenerate, that God just basically decided He needed to start over. To just wipe mankind out with a flood and repopulate the earth through Noah and his immediate family.

Well, Genesis 6 gives us the brief overview of the account of how the earth's population became so corrupt that God decided He needed to do this. In the process of telling us this brief account, in verse 4 of chapter 6, it makes a brief reference to a group that's oftentimes referred to as the "Nephilim". Now most English translations of the Bible actually use the word "giants" in that verse but the Hebrew there is the word "Nephilim". However, there's just a very brief reference to this group. And because of the fact that this word "Nephilim" is only used three times in the Bible, and it doesn't really tell us that much about them -- and there's other terminology used in this verse that's oftentimes misunderstood -- this oftentimes results in some rather sensational theories related to who this group called the "Nephilim" are.

Just to give you a brief example, probably one of the more sensational theories as to who the Nephilim of Genesis 6 are, is the idea that they're the offspring of fallen angels. The angels that wound up following Satan and his rebellion and later became demons. Well, these demons somehow mated with human women, and this resulted in offspring that were kind of half spirit being and half human beings and these creatures were this group called the "Nephilim".

But as you can imagine that's a rather sensational theory. And this is among several sensational theories that are oftentimes associated with this group called the "Nephilim". What we're going to do today in the sermon is to take a closer look at this to see who exactly is this group that's being referred to in Genesis 6. So, if you'd like a title for this sermon, it's:

Who Were the Nephilim of Genesis 6?

So, to start off with, if you'll turn over to Genesis 6, the first thing we're going to do here is read the first eight verses of this chapter. Not only to read the verse where this is mentioned, but let's also pay important attention to the context of what's being addressed here. Because oftentimes what happens when people establish a lot of rather creative theories around verse 4 is they really kind of ignore the whole context here. And the fact that we need to read this in context and how we interpret verse 4 needs to make sense in the context of what's being addressed here.

Because just like any verse or any conversation or statements of individuals that they make, you always want to view them in context. You don't want to take a sound bite of something someone said and ignore everything else around it and then create theories and characterizations about what that person was saying, ignoring everything else around the context of what they were saying. That's just kind of common sense. So, let's start off here reading through Genesis 6, and let's just start in verse 1.

Gen 6:1 *"Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, 2) that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. 3) And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." 4) There were giants 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 were of old, men of renown. 5) Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6) And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7) So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8) But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."* (NKJV)

Now you can see the whole context of the discussion here is all about the moral decline of the whole society prior to the flood. Society becoming so morally corrupt that God just decided He just has to wipe them out and start over. Now if we consider that context and then look at verse 4. Now the first red flag that should jump out at us here is -- as I mentioned, the New King James that I just read from, and many English translations, use the word "giants" here. Now when we think about the English word "giants", the way we normally interpret that is someone who's abnormally physically large. Someone who's just significantly larger than the average human being.

Now think of this in the context. If you're discussing the moral decline of the society and how they declined to the point that God needed to destroy them -- making a brief reference that there were also physically large individuals. Larger than the average person existing at that time. How does that connect with the moral decline of society? Why would it make sense? Why would you make that reference and how would it connect? What relevance would it have with anything that's being discussed? See, it seems just kind of an off the wall irrelevant statement to make. And see, that's an immediate red flag that maybe we need to dig deeper because we're missing something here. Maybe this isn't a correct translation because it doesn't really make a lot of sense. Now we're going to dig deeper into this word "Nephilim" here in a minute. Because that's actually the Hebrew word that's used for the English word "giant" here.

But let's make another observation here. Now, as I mentioned, one of the more, we might say, sensational theories as to who the Nephilim is, is this idea that it was demons and they were mating with human women and the offspring was this group

called the Nephilim. Now, that's based on the assumption that what verse 4 here is saying to us is that this reference to the "sons of God" and the "daughters of men" getting together and marrying one another and having children. And we're going to look at how we should understand this phrase, "sons of God" a little bit later in the sermon. Because that's an oftentimes misunderstood statement as well. But let's just first of all notice that this verse is NOT telling us that the Nephilim are the children of these marriages. What it's talking about is two distinctly separate concepts that are happening in a similar time frame. *It's making a time reference here*. And we have to just factually acknowledge this. Because once we see that it's NOT saying that they're the children, *we have to realize that that is a logical leap that this verse just simply DOES NOT say*. Now let's pay attention to the wording here in verse 4.

Gen 6:4 “*There were giants on the earth in those days,...*” (NKJV)

Now if we keep reading here, we'll see the definition of "those days" but notice *it's a time reference*. And then continue in verse 4.

“*...and also afterward,...*” (NKJV)

In other words, in this time frame it's referring to as "those days", and even after "those days". Continuing on in time after that is what we're talking about. *It's a timing reference*. Now what's the definition of "those days"? Continue in verse 4.

“*...when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them....*” (NKJV)

So, see, it's talking about these marriages between the "sons of God" and the "daughters of men" and them having children. You might say that that's A and B is the Nephilim -- what it's calling "giants" here. Well, both A and B existed in a similar time frame referred to as "those days". That's what it's saying. *It is simply NOT saying that the Nephilim are the children that resulted from those marriages*. That's a logical leap that is simply NOT stated. So, you have to realize that the whole concept that the Nephilim are the children there, and the theories based upon that, that's just based on making a false assumption and a logical leap that is simply NOT stated here. So, first of all we just have to just factually acknowledge that.

Now as I also mentioned before, this word "giants" here in English, does it really make logical sense in the context here? Because again, you have to ask the question, if you're talking about the moral decline of society, and it declines to the point and gets degenerate to the point that God decides He just has to wipe out mankind and start over, why is being physically large a relevant subject? How does that fit? *Well, logically, it doesn't really make a lot of sense*.

Now there are references in the Bible where this particular word is used where being abnormally physically large is obviously the intended meaning. Because this Hebrew word "Nephilim" is used three times in the Bible. It's only used once here in Genesis, but

it's used twice in the book of Numbers. So, keep your finger here in Genesis because we're going to come right back. Turn over to Numbers 13, and we'll see here where this word is used twice. And all the context around it makes it obvious that the concept of being abnormally physically large is obviously the intended concept and meaning that it's trying to convey to us here.

Now, I'm going to skip through most of the chapter here, and we're going to just pick up the last couple of verses in this chapter. But the whole context here is basically addressing the spies that were sent from the Israelites to spy out the Promised Land before they were going to initially attempt to go in and conquer the Promised Land. This is before the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, when Moses first led the nation of Israel up to the edge of the Promised Land. Well, they decided to do some reconnaissance. And they picked twelve men and they send them in to basically spy out the land to kind of get a feel for what they're about to face when they go in.

Well, if you're familiar with the story, the twelve guys come back. Only Joshua and Caleb gave a positive report and say, "God's on our side, and He's going to take care of us. Let's just go in and do as He has said and take over the land and follow His instructions." The other 10 guys come back with basically a catastrophic sounding report. They have a very negative view of things and to kind of sum up their view, "We're all going to die. It's all going to end catastrophically. We're all going to get destroyed. We're all going to die."

They have a very pessimistic, negative, catastrophic view of things. And you'll understand in a minute why I'm emphasizing their "catastrophic view". Because that's also important in understanding their statements here. But let's pick up here in verse 31. As we'll notice here there are a couple of verses where this word "Nephilim" is used a couple of times. And again, it does obviously mean the concept of very physically large, a giant. That is the concept of what's being expressed here.

Num 13:31 *"But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." 32) And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. 33) There we saw the giants..."* (NKJV)

And again, that's the Hebrew word "Nephilim".

"...(the descendants of Anak came from the giants);..." (NKJV)

Again, another use of "Nephilim".

"...and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight." (NKJV)

So, you can see they're obviously saying, "These people are so much bigger and stronger than us, they'll just wipe us out like we're grasshoppers." So, obviously the meaning of "giants", that's an accurate translation here. Now we're going to see here in a minute this word "Nephilim" can have other meanings and we're going to need to explore that to understand Genesis 6. But let's also just take a moment to notice something else here. Because you notice here when they're saying, "We were like grasshoppers in their sight." Now keep in mind, these are men who are having a very negative, pessimistic, catastrophic view of things, and they're exaggerating. And the reason I say that is don't just focus on this one verse. Keep the whole Bible and the whole story in mind.

Now as you know, they don't go into the Promised Land at this point. They end up spending 40 years wandering in the wilderness. But then later, Joshua then leads the Israelites into the Promised Land, and they conquer and take over a lot of the Promised Land and they lived there for many years. Well, if you'll notice through that story -- if you follow the rest of it -- there's no account of them facing individuals so large that the Israelites are like grasshoppers to them. Where the size difference is that dramatic. Now, you do have accounts of individuals like Goliath.

You're probably familiar with the story of David and Goliath where he fights him and David kills the giant with a slingshot. But how does it describe the giant? It actually gives us measurements of how large he was. He was a little over 9 ft tall. So yes, he would be considered a giant to the average man. Even the average American today. A lot of American men are 6 ft or taller. Large compared to a lot of cultures. But someone who is 9 ft or more, that would be considered a giant even by those standards. But notice, it's not so much that they're going to see the average human as a grasshopper and just step on him and squash them.

Now the reason I mention that is, there are times you'll see on the internet these obviously photoshopped images of this enormously large skeleton and this human being standing next to it and they literally look like a grasshopper in comparison. And then people will try to connect this with the Bible and say, "See, this is the Nephilim. They're so large that humans look like grasshoppers in their sight." Obviously, this is an exaggeration. So, when you see these obviously photoshopped pictures, don't be deceived in reading this and take this literally and not realize that these are men that are exaggerating.

I'm sure you've heard the expression of "making a mountain out of a molehill". Where you look at a problem in your life, but you're thinking very negatively and you're emotional at the time, and you make a small problem ten times bigger than it really was. And maybe it's a real problem. It's a real obstacle to face, but you make it just substantially larger than it really is in your mind because you're "making a mountain out of a molehill". That's what these guys were doing in their description of "we're grasshoppers in their sight." That's what was actually taking place there.

But now with that in mind turn back over to Genesis 6. Because as we can see here, obviously there are times where the word “Nephilim” can correctly mean “giant”. Because in Numbers 13, that's obviously what the context is referring to. But as we've already seen here in Genesis 6, referring to someone abnormally physically large, what relevance does that have with the moral decline of society? It doesn't really make a lot of sense. Well, that's a red flag that tells us we need to dig a little deeper here and see, can this word mean something else? Is there something else that would make more sense and that would fit into the context here that we need to discover?

Well first of all, let me just note here, in my New King James, next to the word “giants”, it has a little number “1”. And if you read the margin, it says “Hebrew Nephilim, fallen or mighty ones”. So, you can see it can be the “fallen ones” or the “mighty ones”. Ok, well that's starting to make a little more sense in the context rather than just the “abnormally physically large”. Now to expand on this some more, this Hebrew word “Nephilim”, Strong's Concordance transliterates this word into English as “nphiyl”. It's Strong's # 5303. And I'm just going to read to you the definition that Strong's Concordance gives it.

“...a bully or tyrant:—giant.”

They acknowledge it can mean a “giant”, one that is abnormally physically large. But it can also mean “a bully or a tyrant”. Now, we're talking about a meaning that would make a whole lot more sense in the context of Genesis 6. Because “abnormally physically large” doesn't really make a lot of sense in the context. But let's also dig a little deeper. Now according to Strong's, the root word -- basically the Hebrew root where this word “Nephilim” comes from -- is the Hebrew word “naphal”. It's Strong's # 5307. And they define this as:

“a primitive root; to fall, in a great variety of applications (intransitive or causative, literal or figurative)...”

Now if it means “to fall” from a causative standpoint. That would suggest “causes to fall”. Now think about this again in the context of Genesis 6. If it can mean a “bully or tyrant” or “one that causes to fall”, now that makes a whole lot more sense in the context of the moral decline of the civilization. Now let's read through Genesis 6 verse 4 inserting this idea, and again not the “physically large individuals” concept.

Gen 6:4 *“There were giants...”* (NKJV)

Or we could say “bullies or tyrants”.

“...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 were of old, men of renown.” (NKJV)

So, you can see the concept of “bully or tyrant” or “one who causes others to fall” makes a lot more logical sense there. And let's also notice the latter part of verse 4. That last sentence, where it refers to:

“...Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.” (NKJV)

Now, next I want to read to you several other translations of this exact same verse. Because what I want you to see is the concept that last sentence is getting at is these were individuals that the society held up as their heroes. As you might say, the celebrities and the people they wanted to look to as their leaders and their heroes. Because again, if you think of it in this context, that would directly tie to the moral decline of the society.

And also notice as we read through all of these other translations, notice when I pointed out earlier that verse 4 was not saying that the Nephilim were the children of these marriages between the “sons of God” and the “daughters of men”, that it was simply a time reference of two separate concepts that existed in a similar time frame. Notice that every one of these translations words it like that as well. Now the first translation I'm going to read from is Young's Literal Translation. And these are all of Genesis 6 verse 4. Now Young's Literal defines it like this.

Gen 6:4 *“The fallen ones were in the earth in those days, and even afterwards when sons of God come in unto daughters of men, and they have borne to them — they [are] the heroes, who, from of old, [are] the men of name.”* (YLT)

Notice again, they're the heroes, they're the people that are idealized and held up as examples. Now from the Complete Jewish Bible.

Gen 6:4 *“The N'filim were on the earth in those days, and also afterwards, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; these were the ancient heroes, men of renown.”* (CJB)

And also, from the Holman Christian Standard Bible.

Gen 6:4 *“The Nephilim were on the earth both in those days and afterward, when the sons of God came to the daughters of mankind, who bore children to them. They were the powerful men of old, the famous men.”* (HCSB)

So, you can see that “Nephilim” can mean again “bullies or tyrants” or “one that causes to fall”. This was a society that held these individuals up as the celebrities, the ones to idolize, and the leaders, and the ones you want to be like. You can see how that would directly contribute to the moral degeneration of the society, and it becoming so evil that God had to wipe them out. It totally fits the context. Whereas “abnormally physically large” is just kind of an irrelevant statement that doesn't fit anything. So, you can see this makes much more sense.

But now how are we to understand what it's referring to when it talks about the "sons of God" marrying the "daughters of men"? Because again as I mentioned before, one of the more sensational theories that comes from Genesis 6 verse 4 is the idea that the Nephilim -- this is fallen angels. This is demons that came to the earth and they're mating with human women, and these offspring become these half-spirit being, half-human being, mongrel creatures known as the Nephilim.

Well, this comes from not only ignoring the whole context of what's being discussed in Genesis 6 but also ignoring how the rest of the Bible uses the phrase "sons of God". Because again, you can't just take a phrase like that and just kind of make up your own definition for it. When a phrase like this is used ten times in the Bible, which is what we're about to see is the case with this phrase. It's used five times in the Old Testament and five times in the New Testament, and we're about to look at every single reference. And when you look at all of these references and put them together, there's an obvious theme that you can see from this.

And I'll just give you the preview of where we're about to go. You're going to see that "sons of God", it can refer to angels. But it's going to exclusively refer to righteous angels. And it's going to exclude the demons. Satan himself and the demons who followed him. It can refer to human beings, but it's going to be specifically referring to righteous human beings. Those who are led by the Spirit of God, or those who are emulating the fruits of the Spirit, and who are obedient to God. It's going to specifically refer to them and it's going to exclude the rebellious.

And we're even going to see a reference where Christ is going to apply the term to those who make it in the Kingdom of God. Those who are in the resurrection of the Firstfruits and who make it into God's Kingdom. But it's going to contrast the "sons of God" with the "sons of this age". See, it's always going to refer to those who are obedient and who are following God and in line with His will, and it's going to exclude those who rebel.

So, we're going to see the very idea that this is referring to demons who are mating with human women is not even a possibility because demons are excluded from the definition of "sons of God". Now as I mentioned, this is a term used five times in the Old Testament and five times in the New Testament. Now we've already read through two of the references of sons of God here in Genesis 6. Now the other three references in the Old Testament are found in the book of Job. So, turn over to the book of Job and we'll look at the references here. We'll start here in Job 1.

Now if you've read through the book of Job, you're probably familiar with the fact that the first two chapters of the book of Job are basically the behind the scenes account of Job's life. It's basically the interaction that God has with Satan, basically challenging him, "Have you seen my servant Job?" And basically, challenging Satan to take on Job, and then placing the restrictions on how far He's willing to let Satan go. But let's just notice a couple of references here where we're going to see that the "sons of God"

specifically refers to the righteous angels and Satan who rebelled against God is excluded from that definition because he's separate from it. This is Job 1 in verse 6.

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

Notice there's the “sons of God” and then there's Satan because he's separate from the definition of “sons of God”. He is excluded from that. That's why he has to be mentioned separately because “sons of God” are the righteous angels and Satan “also” came. Now just jump over to chapter 2 in verse 1. We'll see this stated again.

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.”* (NKJV)

Notice once again, the “sons of God” came, and Satan came “also” because he is not included in the definition of “sons of God”. Because “sons of God” specifically refers to those who are righteous and who are following God. And this becomes even more clear when we start looking at the New Testament references.

Turn over to Matthew 9. Because repeatedly we're going to see in the New Testament where it refers to either physical human beings who are still living out their Christian life on earth, or we're going to see one reference where Christ refers to those who actually make it into the Kingdom of God. But it's always going to contrast this and exclusively refer to the “sons of God” being the righteous.

And we're also going to see here how the Bible talks about the “children of God” and the “children of Satan”. And it's got nothing to do with demons mating with human women and having offspring. This is going to be about one's behavior. Whether they're following God's direction and following His spirit and trying to live a life of righteousness or if they're just following Satan's way in a life of sin. And that's going to be the distinguishing factor between the “children of God” and the “children of Satan”. It's got nothing to do with their DNA. Now notice here in Matthew 5 in verse 9.

Matt 5:9 *“Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.”* (NKJV)

Now if it's specifically the peacemakers who are called the “sons of God”, logically, that automatically excludes those who are the divisive, contentious, just looking for a fight. Individuals who are the opposite of peacemakers. Well, they'd obviously not be called the “sons of God”, because again, we're exclusively referring to those who were trying to live in obedience to God.

Now, turn over to Luke 20. And we'll see here the reference where Christ is answering a question, and He makes a reference to those who actually make it into the Kingdom. He's going to use the phrase “sons of God” here but notice how He contrasts it with the

“sons of this age”. It's exclusively the righteous who make it into the Kingdom that He's applying this term to. This is Luke 20 in verse 34.

Luke 20:34 *“Jesus answered and said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. 35) But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; 36) nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”* (NKJV)

Again, He is looking forward to a point when they're going to be spirit beings but notice He's specifically referring to the righteous. He is excluding the evil from the definition. And again, this even becomes more clear. Just turn over to Romans 8. We'll notice here, specifically it's going to tell us it's those who are led by the Spirit of God who are referred to as “sons of God”. So, obviously those not led by the Spirit, those who are in rebellion against God, they wouldn't meet the definition. This is Romans 8 in verse 14.

Rom 8:14 *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15) For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” 16) The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17) and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18) For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19) For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.”* (NKJV)

Notice again, we're specifically, consistently using this term “sons of God” to refer to the righteous. And it's always excluding those who are in rebellion against God. So, you obviously can't apply this term to demons who are in rebellion against God. But just turn over to Galatians 3. We'll notice this again. We'll start reading in verse 26.

Gal 3:26 *“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27) For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29) And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”* (NKJV)

Notice it's through faith in Christ you become considered a “son of God”. Well, obviously if you're in blatant rebellion against God, you wouldn't be considered a “son of God”. Again, this has nothing to do with who created them. This is not saying that individuals who are in rebellion against God weren't created by God and they were created by Satan or created by somebody else. That's not what this is referring to. It's not referring to spirit beings mating with human beings and who's their genetic father. That's not what's being addressed at all.

You see, when the Bible talks about the “sons of God” or the “children of God” versus the “children of Satan” it has nothing to do with their DNA and their genetics. It's a sin versus righteousness issue. Because let's notice that several times the Bible refers to “children of Satan”. And again, this isn't the result of Satan or demons mating with human women and having these mongrel offspring. That's NOT what's being referred to. It's referring to pursuing the way of sin and emulating Satan's behavior. That is what qualifies someone as a “child of Satan”. And to notice this, turn over to John 8. We'll start reading in verse 42.

John 8:42 “Jesus said to them, “*If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.* 43) *Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.* 44) *You are of your father the devil,...*” (NKJV)

See, He's telling them they're “children of Satan”. This doesn't mean Satan created them. He's referring to their behavior. And keep reading here in verse 44.

“*...and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.* 45) *But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.* 46) *Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?* 47) *He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.*” (NKJV)

He is telling them, “You're not children of God. You're children of Satan.” And again, that's referring to their behavior, not their genetics. You'll notice this again over in Matthew 13. Now we're going to pick up in the latter part of the chapter here in verse 36. We're going to read basically the explanation of the Parable of the Tares. Now earlier in this chapter Christ gives the Parable of the Tares. We're going to skip over that part and just read His explanation because that's going to speak to the issue we're addressing here. But pick up here in verse 36.

Matt 13:36 “*Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.”* 37) *He answered and said to them: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.* 38) *The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.”* (NKJV)

In other words, the “sons of Satan”. Continue in verse 39.

“39) *The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.* 40) *Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.* 41) *The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,* 42) *and will cast them into the*

furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43) Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (NKJV)

Notice, we're consistently seeing the "sons of God" or the "children of God" contrasted with the "children of Satan". And again, it has nothing to do with spirit beings mating with human beings. It's just referring to one's behavior. Whether they're in obedience to God and following His way, or if they're rebelling and following Satan. That's the contrast here. And we're going to see as we dig deeper into this that that's what "sons of God" and the "daughters of men" -- that's the concept it's getting at.

But just to notice this same contrast made one more time. Turn over to 1 John 3. And what I want you to particularly notice as we read through this account is it's again going to make this contrast between the "children of God" and the "children of Satan". Which again is a sin versus righteousness issue. It has nothing to do with your genetics or your DNA, or spirit beings mating with human beings. It has nothing to do with any of that.

But also notice when it sums up this discussion. It's going to use the example of Cain and Abel as basically examples to illustrate this concept. And that's going to bring us back to Genesis and help clarify what's being talked about in Genesis 6. But just notice here in 1 John 3, and we'll start in verse 1.

1 John 3:1 *"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2) Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3) And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 4) Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. 5) And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. 6) Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. 7) Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8) He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9) Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. 10) In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother." (NKJV)*

Now, notice here, it just contrasted the "children of God" and the "children of the devil". And again, it's has nothing to do with genetics or DNA. It's about whether they're pursuing righteousness and obedience to God, or they're living the way of sin. But let's notice in the next two verses here how it specifically uses the example of Cain and Abel to illustrate this concept because that's going to tie us back to the context of what Genesis is talking about. And pick up here in verse 11.

“11) For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, 12) not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother’s righteous. 13) Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.”
(NKJV)

Notice here again, it contrasted the “children of God” and the “children of Satan”, and it particularly used the example of Cain and Abel to illustrate this point. And this is going to really help clarify the context of why Genesis 6 talks about the “sons of God” and the “daughters of men”.

Now, turn back over to Genesis 4. Because we'll see here the context that leads up to Genesis 6. Because we always want to consider statements in the context in which they're made. Now in Genesis 4, the first half of the chapter deals with Cain killing Abel as we've already mentioned. Cain obviously followed the way of Satan, as we just read, by committing murder and killing his brother. Now as we're also going to see as we read through the rest of the account, there's nothing in Cain's story that indicates to us that there was a point where Cain had a change of heart and repented of his actions and turned around and started obeying God. In fact, the fact that the New Testament uses him as this personification of the negative example indicates for us that's how the rest of his life went. But just to see this, pick up here in verse 9. This is right after the account where Cain has killed Abel. This is where God is giving him his punishment.

Gen 4:9 *“Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” 10) And He said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries out to Me from the ground. 11) So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. 12) When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth.”*
13) And Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is greater than I can bear! 14) Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me.” 15) And the LORD said to him, “Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.” (NKJV)

Now notice here, Cain at no point takes accountability for his actions and says he's sorry and seems to repent. No, he plays the victim and basically just says, "I'm being persecuted because I'm being held accountable for my actions." So, there's nothing here to indicate that he's turned from his sinful behavior. But now, notice verse 16 here.

“16) Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.” (NKJV)

Now notice here, Cain is basically being evicted. He's basically being kicked out. It says he left, but he just didn't leave by choice here. He's being exiled. He's sent out to be a

“fugitive and a vagabond”. He's basically getting kicked out. Now what I want you to notice here is this phrase “the presence of the LORD”. The presence of Yehovah. Now that phrase, if you follow that through the Bible, can be used in a couple of ways.

Now we looked previously at the example in the book of Job where it says the “sons of God” came before the Father's throne and Satan came also. So, we saw Satan was not included in the definition of “sons of God”. Well, if you read through those accounts, it also mentions when the exchange is done that Satan goes “out from the presence of the LORD”. He's there at God's throne and he's basically leaving. It's a proximity reference. He's leaving away from where the Father's throne was. Now the phrase can be used like that, and it can also be used in reference to a relationship with God.

And what I want you to see is I think we can apply both concepts here. Now to see a reference where this can be used as a relationship with Him and particularly being cast out of a relationship with Him and being sent away because God's tired of your sins, turn over to the book of 2 Kings 13. We're going to see a couple of references here where this is used in reference to ancient Israel. And again, we'll see the first time where God is merciful to them and says He's not going to cast them out of His presence. And later when He gets tired of their sins, and He casts them out of His presence. What I want you to see here is this phrase “presence of the LORD”, again, it's not just a proximity issue. I think in Cain's case here it's a relationship. He's basically being cast out because of his evil ways. Pick up in verse 22 here of 2 Kings 13.

2 Kings 13:22 *“And Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. 23) But the LORD was gracious to them, had compassion on them, and regarded them, because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not yet destroy them or cast them from His presence.”* (NKJV)

Notice “His presence”, He's not going to cast them out. That's not a proximity reference of them leaving away from the proximity of His throne. That's a relationship with them. He's not cutting them off at this point. He's going to show mercy to them. But let's pick up the story now in chapter 24. We'll see here in 2 Kings 24 where He reaches the point where He's had enough and He's tired of their sins. We'll pick up in verse 17.

2 Kings 24:17 *“Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah. 18) Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 19) He also did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. 20) For because of the anger of the LORD this happened in Jerusalem and Judah, that He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.”* (NKJV)

See, here He says, “I've had enough of your sins and now I'm casting you out of My presence.” So, if we turn back over to Genesis 4, you can notice here in verse 16 when it refers to Cain going out “from the presence of the LORD”. It's not just that he was

leaving the proximity or the area around Eden. It's a statement that God's had enough of his sins and he exiles him away. Well as you can see here, if you read through the next about eight verses here in chapter 4 -- which we won't take the time to read. It refers to the lineage of Cain. And there's nothing here that suggests that he or any of his descendants in his immediate line have a change of heart and turn back to being repentant and start being obedient to God.

In fact, verses 23 and 24 refer to Lamech, which is about four generations down in Cain's line. We won't take the time to read the verses there, but it's just referring to how arrogant and boastful and proud this guy was. Again, nothing here suggests that there was any change of heart and any obedience to God. But what I want you to see here is the contrast between the line of Cain and the line of Seth. Because remember, Abel was killed. Now, we know earlier in chapter 4, Cain murders Abel.

Now, we know Abel was a righteous man because in the New Testament Christ Himself refers to Abel as "righteous Abel". Abel is also referenced in Hebrews 11. And he is included in the list of people that the latter part of Hebrews 11 tells us are going to be in the Kingdom of God. They're going to rise in the first resurrection with the Firstfruits and make it into the Kingdom of God. So, we know Abel was a righteous man who followed God by virtue of the fact he's included in that list in Hebrews 11. And again, Christ Himself refers to him as a righteous man. But obviously there was a gap in anyone on the earth being a righteous person following God between the death of Abel and until Seth comes on the scene. And we can see that by picking up in verse 25 of chapter 4.

Gen 4:25 *"And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, "For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed." 26) And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the LORD."* (NKJV)

Notice, they "began to call on the name of the LORD". That statement's only significant if there had been a period of time here where nobody was doing that. And it was noteworthy when Seth's line comes on the scene. People are now calling upon the name of the LORD. They're actually having a positive relationship with God. You can see, what you've got here now is a contrast between those who are following Cain's example of just being rebellious against God and those who are following Seth's example in his line with Enosh and now they're being obedient and righteous and following God.

See, now you can see what's being talked about here with the "sons of God" -- those who were being righteous and following God -- and the "daughters of men". These were women who were basically pagan women who were just following the way of sin. And what's happening is now there's marriages between them.

As we're about to see, God repeatedly warned the Israelites not to do this very thing because it always ends badly. But let's also just briefly notice, if we read through Genesis 6, and now let's just read through these first eight verses with the

understanding of what the term “sons of God” and “daughters of men” are referring to. And the Nephilim, again, these are the bullies, the tyrants. These are not the physically large individuals.

Gen 6:1 “Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, 2) that the sons of God...” (NKJV)

Those who were righteous, following Seth's example.

“...saw the daughters of men,...” (NKJV)

Pagan women who were following Cain's example.

“...that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. 3) And the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.” 4) There were giants...” (NKJV)

Tyrants or bullies. Those who “cause to fall”.

“...on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God...” (NKJV)

The righteous men who were trying to follow Seth's example.

“...came in to the daughters of men...” (NKJV)

Pagan women who were following Cain's example.

“...and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.” (NKJV)

These were the heroes that they looked up to and made their leaders, that helped morally corrupt the society. And as you can see, then it makes sense reading the next couple of verses.

“5) Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6) And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7) So the LORD said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.” 8) But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.” (NKJV)

And to see why it's significant to mention that the “sons of God” -- those men that were trying to follow the righteous path -- marrying pagan women -- the “daughters of men”

who are following Cain's example -- why that is specifically relevant to the moral decline of the society, you just have to look at the warnings that God gave Israel on this very subject. So, turn over to Deuteronomy 7. We'll notice here that Moses specifically warned the Israelites that when they went into the Promised Land and they dealt with the pagan cultures there, "Don't make marriages with them because it's going to morally corrupt the society and it's going to trainwreck the nation." Deuteronomy 7, and we'll start in verse 1.

Deu 7:1 *"When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, 2) and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. 3) Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. 4) For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. 5) But thus you shall deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire. 6) "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth." (NKJV)*

And see, Joshua warned the people of this very thing as well. Turn over to Joshua 23 and we'll pick up in verse 11.

Josh 23:11 *"Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God. 12) Or else, if indeed you do go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations—these that remain among you—and make marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you, 13) know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you." (NKJV)*

Notice he specifically mentioned marrying among pagans. What's going to happen? The long-term effect is going to be the moral corruption of the nation, and it's going to lead to your destruction. See, that's why this is mentioned in Genesis 6. Because it's directly relevant to why the earth became so corrupt that there was no one left that was righteous, and God had to destroy everything and everyone but Noah and his family. Because even those who were trying to follow God, who were considered the "sons of God", these marriages corrupted them. And then it wound up that Noah was the only righteous man left. The rest of his family got saved simply because they were connected with him, and God needed to repopulate the earth.

In fact, this very issue became the stumbling block for even the wisest man who ever lived. Turn over to 1 Kings, and we'll see the example of Solomon. Because Solomon didn't heed this very warning, and in spite of all the incredible wisdom that he had, this corrupted him and ruined his life. This wound up taking away the kingdom from his lineage. And this is what caused the split between Israel and Judah and caused all the northern tribes to break off and only a small portion of what had been the united kingdom of Israel staying under the lineage of Solomon. And if you'll pick up here in 1 Kings 11 in verse 1.

1 Kings 11:1 *"But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites— 2) from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, "You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. 3) And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. 4) For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. 5) For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 6) Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as did his father David. 7) Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. 8) And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. 9) So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, 10) and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded. 11) Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. 12) Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13) However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."* (NKJV)

So, you can see here this was even the undoing of the wisest man who ever lived. So, you can certainly see how this would play a major role in the corruption of the society and all of the whole civilization prior to the flood.

So, see, if we then read Genesis 6 with this in mind, again, keeping in mind the context of what's being discussed. As we saw earlier, the whole context of verses 1 through 8, it's all discussing the moral decline of the civilization. So, as we can see there, the word "giant", physically large, abnormally tall and big individuals, doesn't make any sense. It's an obscure reference that doesn't fit into the context.

But if we then look deeper into what the Nephilim can mean, it can mean more than just the physically large. It can mean “bully” or “tyrants” or “one who causes to fall”. Well, once we realize that the culture at that time was heroizing the bullies and the tyrants which helped the society to fall. And even the righteous, those referred to as the “sons of God”, were marrying pagan women, the “daughters of men”. And this, just like Solomon, was corrupting their hearts and pulling them away from God. Then we can see why all of that is relevant and why verse 4 in chapter 6 makes perfect sense in the context because it's all about the moral decline of the society.

It's not about obscure theories. Photoshopped pictures of abnormally giant individuals or mongrel creatures that are half-demon and half-human. These are all crazy theories that come from not reading scripture in context and not considering the whole Bible.

So, brethren, as we go forward from this Sabbath, some of the bigger lessons that we can even learn from this is when we read a particular scripture that may be difficult to understand and may be a head-scratcher, we need to take a step back. Dig deeper into what a particular term might mean. Consider the context. And when we see phrases like “sons of God”, do a word search and you'll discover things like it's used ten times throughout the Bible. What's the trend? See the trend that's expressed throughout the Bible and then use that as a guide to help you understand what it is saying.

See, if we take these things into consideration, then we can understand verses like Genesis 6:4 and understand what's really being discussed there and the relevant points for us to learn. And then we won't get misled by wild theories that we read on the internet.