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WERE THERE GIANTS ON EARTH BEFORE NOAH'S FLOOD AND WHO WERE 'THE SONS OF GOD'?

We are all familiar with Genesis 6:4, which reads:

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.

So were there really "GIANTS" on the earth before the flood?

Let me ask you another question: How many different ways can you say "giants" in the English language? Actually we have *only one word in English* to refer to "giants". Oh yes, we have accepted words from other languages into English, which words can also convey this idea of "giants". For example, from the Greek language we have accepted the word "COLOSSUS", in reference to the giant statue of the Greek god Apollo which had anciently been built at the harbor of Rhodes. Likewise, also from the Greek language we have accepted the word "TITAN", in reference to the twelve mythological children of the Greek gods for heaven (i.e. Uranus) and earth (i.e. Gaea). And from biblical Hebrew we have accepted the word "BEHEMOTH" (see Job 40:15), in reference to a huge animal. And these nouns (colossus, titan, behemoth) could certainly be used to convey the concept of huge size, but their origins clearly refer to either a huge animal (behemoth) or else to some aspect of Greek culture and mythology.

If in English we want to express the concept of "a 10-foot tall man" without references to mythology or to traditions of other nations, then we are basically limited to saying "a giant of a man". We don't really have three or four different nouns to convey this picture of such a huge man.

[COMMENT: Even our English word "giant" itself is derived from the LXX Greek translation of the Hebrew word used in Genesis 6:4. The Greek word "gigantes", used in that verse, is a compound word formed from the two Greek words "ge" (earth) and "genes" (to be born), and "gigantes" literally meant "born of the earth". English translators, following the meaning assigned to this word "gigantes" in Jerome's Latin Vulgate translation, took for granted that this was a reference to men of huge stature. Thus our English word "giant" has the meaning of "someone who is of great size", without reference to mythology or to any other creature; even though the Greek origin of our word "giant" (i.e. gigantes) strictly speaking does not refer to large size at all. The term "born of the earth" itself does not give any clues as to whether this meant "small" or "average" or "large", as far as size is concerned.]

The same point, that in English we really only have one noun to express the concept of "a giant", is also true for other languages like Latin, German, Dutch, etc.

So here is a question we should ask:

JUST HOW MANY DIFFERENT NOUNS SHOULD WE EXPECT BIBLICAL HEBREW TO HAVE TO EXPRESS THIS IDEA OF "GIANTS"?

Does it really make sense to expect biblical Hebrew, with its small vocabulary and without borrowing

words from other languages, to have two or three *different* words to express this concept of "giants"? WHY would Hebrew possibly have several different words to express this one concept of "a giant"?

I ask these questions because there are actually *three* different Hebrew nouns in the Old Testament, which the KJV English translators have translated into English as "giant" or "giants". But while the English KJV translators felt justified in using the word "giants" to sometimes translate all three of these Hebrew words, these three Hebrew words themselves were clearly *not* identical in meaning to one another. These three completely different Hebrew words are not somehow synonyms, all basically meaning the same thing. It should be clear that *only one* of these three Hebrew words really means "giants", and that the other two words must have some other meanings, even if our translators at times erroneously ascribed the meaning of "giants" to these words.

So before we look at Genesis 6:4 more closely, let's first examine the different Hebrew words that are involved in this question.

THREE DIFFERENT HEBREW WORDS

To give us the clear meaning of these words, we may need to examine the contexts within which they are used. And when the context clearly identifies a man of immense stature, then we can know that we are dealing with "a giant".

Here is the first Hebrew word to consider:

RAPHA (plural REPHAIM): This word is used, for example, in Deuteronomy 3:11, which reads:

For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of GIANTS (Hebrew "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.

This verse describes king Og's stature by telling us that his bed was about 13 feet 6 inches long (i.e. 9 cubits) and about 6 feet wide (i.e. 4 cubits). Without giving us the exact height of king Og himself, he might have been from 10 feet to 12 feet tall. So it is clear that THIS WORD "rapha" refers to a man we in English would call "a giant".

While not using the word "rapha" to describe Goliath, the Bible does tell us in 1 Samuel 17:4 that Goliath was over 9 feet tall, thus clearly "a giant". And later on in the account some relatives of Goliath are designated with the term "rapha".

In 2 Samuel chapter 21 we are told that David's servants killed four more giants, who were all related to Goliath. Each of those four men is described as a giant by the enormous size of his weapons. Notice the summary statement:

These four were born to THE GIANT (Hebrew "rapha") in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants. (2 Samuel 21:22)

The first of these four giants is mentioned in verse 16.

And Ishbibenob, which [was] of the sons of THE GIANT (Hebrew "rapha"), the weight of whose spear [weighed] three hundred [shekels] of brass in weight, he being girded with a new [sword],

thought to have slain David. (2 Samuel 21:16)

The second giant is mentioned in verse 18.

And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: then Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, which [was] of the sons of THE GIANT (Hebrew "rapha"). (2 Samuel 21:18)

The third giant is mentioned in verse 19.

And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim, a Bethlehemite, slew [THE BROTHER OF] GOLIATH the Gittite, the staff of whose spear [was] like a weaver's beam. (2 Samuel 21:19)

And the fourth giant is mentioned in verse 20.

And there was yet a battle in Gath, where was A MAN OF [GREAT] STATURE, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to THE GIANT (Hebrew "rapha"). (2 Samuel 21:20)

To summarize this Hebrew word: "Rapha" (or "rephaim") is used 25 times in the Old Testament. In the KJV it is translated 17 times as "giant"; and in 8 more places it was left untranslated as the noun "Rephaim". The first time this Hebrew word is used is in Genesis 14:5, during the time of Abraham.

Of note is that this word, which is the correct Hebrew word for "giant", is *never used* for anyone *before the flood*. Specifically, this word is *not* used in Genesis 6:4.

So while the Bible makes clear that there were indeed "giants" (rephaim) at some point in the past, the word "rephaim" is never employed for any people before the flood.

Let's now look at the next Hebrew word, which in the KJV is also translated as "giant".

GIBBOR (plural GIBBORIM): This Hebrew word is used in Job 16:14, which reads:

He breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me LIKE A GIANT (Hebrew "gibbor").

This Hebrew word is used 158 times in the Old Testament, and Job 16:14 is the only place where in the KJV it is translated as "giant". That should already tell us that we are dealing with a mistranslation. And that is indeed the case. This noun is formed from the primitive root verb "gabar", which means "to strengthen, to prevail, to have strength", etc. And so the noun "gibbor" is appropriately translated 63 times as "mighty", 68 times as "mighty man / men", 4 times as "strong", 3 times as "valiant", 3 times as "mighty ones", etc.

Now certainly, giants can also be described as being "mighty men", or as "having great strength", or as "being valiant", etc. But then men of average stature, or even of small stature, can *also* be strong and valiant and become mighty men. King David was a man of average stature, yet he was without doubt "a mighty man", having killed the giant Goliath.

In 2 Samuel 23:8-39 we are given a list of over 30 servants of David, who are all described as "mighty men" (Hebrew "gibborim"), yet none of them were "giants" in stature.

The point is that the Hebrew word "gibbor" does NOT mean "giant", and in Job 16:14 we are definitely dealing with a mistranslation. This is well-known, and so many of the older translations have rendered this expression as "like a mighty man" (e.g. Leeser's O.T., Rotherham, Young and Darby), while many of the more recent translations, including the NKJV, have rendered this as "like a warrior" (e.g. RSV, NRSV, NIV, Green's Literal Translation, NAS of 1995, etc.).

We should also note that this Hebrew word "gibbor" (or "gibborim") is used both, for men who lived before the flood, and also for men who lived after the flood. In fact, this word "gibborim" is actually used in Genesis 6:4, where it is translated as "mighty men". And while this word can reflect the attributes of strength and courage, it tells us nothing about the actual size (small, average or very large) of the men involved.

Let's now look at the third Hebrew word, which in the KJV is also translated as "giants".

NEPHIL (plural NEPHILIM): This is the word which is used in Genesis 6:4, where it is translated as "giants".

The word nephilim is used only 3 times in two different verses in the O.T.: once here in Genesis 6:4 and twice in Numbers 13:33, where it is also translated as "giants". It is never used in the singular. With only two verses to look at, the noun "nephilim" does not provide us with much contextual evidence as to its intended meaning. But this noun "nephilim" is derived from the Hebrew verb "naphal", and this verb "naphal" is used 434 times throughout the Old Testament, thus giving us an extensive picture for the meaning of this verb.

The Hebrew verb "naphal" means "*to fall*". This applies to falling both literally, and also figuratively or idiomatically. Examples of where this verb applies to "literally falling" are where king Ahaziah fell through a lattice (2 Kings 1:2), and where a wall is ready to fall down (Isaiah 30:13). Other examples of this verb refer to people felling trees (2 Kings 3:19), a woman falling at the feet of Elisha (2 Kings 4:37), God saying that the king of Assyria would fall by the sword (2 Kings 19:7), and fugitives "falling away" to the king of Babylon (2 Kings 25:11). An example of where this verb refers to men "falling in battle" is Judges 20:44. An example of where this verb refers to "falling into the hands of an enemy" is Lamentations 1:7. While the following is certainly not always the case, a very common accompaniment of the verb "naphal" is *damage, death or destruction*.

And so a correct translation of the Hebrew noun "nephilim" is "*the fallen ones*", or "*those who have fallen*". We should note that this expression "the fallen ones" itself does not reveal any clues or hints as to the physical stature of the individuals involved. Thus: "the fallen ones" could be small, average or very large in stature; they could be weak or strong and mighty; intellectually they could be brilliant or only quite mediocre. *The only clue* that the word "nephilim" gives us is that their fall, while not causing immediate death, very likely involved creating damage and destruction.

To make this quite plain: the word "nephilim" does *not* mean "GIANTS", even though "nephilim" could perhaps involve rather large individuals; but "nephilim" could equally well refer to men of small stature. "Giants" is a mistranslation of this Hebrew word, a fact that is also indicated in the THEOLOGICAL WORDBOOK OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, which under the entry for "nephilim" states:

"ACTUALLY, THE TRANSLATION "GIANTS" IS SUPPORTED MAINLY BY THE LXX AND MAY BE QUITE MISLEADING."

That is exactly right! The translation "giants" in Genesis 6:4 is quite misleading!

This fact has also been recognized by the authors of the JAMIESON, FAUSSET AND BROWN COMMENTARY, whose comment on this word "nephilim" in Genesis 6:4 states:

"The term in Hebrew IMPLIES NOT SO MUCH THE IDEA OF GREAT STATURE as of reckless ferocity, impious and daring characters, who spread devastation and carnage far and wide."

What Moses wrote here in Genesis 6:4 should correctly read:

"In those days there were in the earth *fallen ones*; and also after that when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men"

Before continuing with an examination of what this verse really does mean, let's look more closely at how this word "giants" ended up here in our English translations of Genesis 6:4.

ORIGIN OF THE WORD "GIANTS" IN THIS VERSE:

The Greek language LXX translated the Hebrew for "there were 'nephilim' in the earth" as "*oi de gigantes*," where the word "gigantes" is made up of "ge" (the earth) + "genes" (to be born). Thus the LXX rendered "*the fallen ones in the earth*" as "*those who are born of the earth*". This represented a *shift in focus*, since the Hebrew in this particular expression made no reference to "birth" one way or the other. But it "set up" the connection to "births" which are referred to later in this verse. This "set up" is not justified. Also, the focus in the LXX had changed from "IN the earth" to "OF the earth". However, at least this Greek translation did not yet imply anything out of the ordinary, as far as size is concerned, as is, for example, the case with our English word "giants".

But the Greek LXX had certainly "set up" this verse for being misunderstood and mistranslated.

After Origen's Greek language LXX, along came Jerome with his Latin Vulgate translation, commissioned by Pope Damasus I. In his Latin translation of Genesis 6:4 Jerome didn't really translate the Hebrew "nephilim" into Latin at all. Instead he simply kept the LXX Greek word "gigantes" in his Latin language translation. And so the Latin Vulgate translation of the relevant expression in this verse reads:

"*gigantes autem erant super terram*" (literally: giants moreover were upon the earth).

The LXX Greek word "gigantes" had found its way into the Latin version. But notice that Jerome had again shifted the focus of this verse back to the original focus of the Hebrew text, *but with one major alteration*. Let's notice this carefully:

A) The Hebrew text contains a word for "fallen ones" (Hebrew "nephilim") and another word for "earth" (Hebrew "erets").

B) The Greek LXX text had *combined* these *two words into the one word* "gigantes". Because the word "gigantes" contains the word for "earth", therefore the Greek LXX text did NOT contain an additional word for "earth". Two Hebrew words had been combined (wrongly so) into one Greek word.

C) The Latin Vulgate then retained the Greek word "gigantes" as a translation for *the one Hebrew word* "nephilim" and then *added* a translation for the word "earth" (Latin "terram" in this verse). So instead of

recognizing that the word "gigantes" in the Greek LXX was an amalgamated (and incorrect) translation of the two Hebrew words "nephilim" and "erets", Jerome's Latin translation *changed* "gigantes" into being exclusively the supposed translation of the one Hebrew word "nephilim". Jerome then correctly translated the Hebrew for "in the earth" into the Latin equivalent of "in or upon the earth". So in this way Jerome restored the original focus of the Hebrew text of "certain individuals" being upon the earth, away from the wrong LXX focus upon the birth of those "certain individuals". BUT in switching back to the original focus, it enabled Jerome to change the identity of those individuals from being "fallen ones" to supposedly being "giants".

So there were *two steps* in changing the meaning of "nephilim" from "fallen ones" to "giants".

Later, the English translators (KJV, etc.) also did not translate the Hebrew "nephilim" into English. They simply anglicized the word "gigantes" (from the Latin Vulgate, NOT from the Greek LXX text) into "giants", thereby retaining the two step mistranslation that is found in the Vulgate translation. Where the Greek word "gigantes" had meant "born of the earth", the Latin word "gigantes" had acquired the meaning of "giants", even while the translators were aware of the meanings of the two root words involved.

And that is how we ended up having the word "giants" in our English translations of Genesis 6:4.

From the original meaning of the Hebrew word "nephilim" being "fallen ones", this had first been altered to a focus on the birth process by the Greek word "gigantes", which meant "born of the earth". The subsequent Latin word "gigantes" added the element of "large in stature" to this meaning of "born of the earth", something that the original Hebrew word "nephilim" in this verse had not implied at all.

So yes, the Bible certainly does refer to "giants" *after the flood*; but without this mistranslation here in Genesis 6:4 there is no indication at all in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament that there were any giants prior to the flood.

We should now also examine the only other verse in the Old Testament, where the Hebrew word "nephilim" is used.

A CLOSER LOOK AT NUMBERS 13:33

This verse reads as follows in the KJV:

And there we saw the GIANTS (Hebrew "nephilim", fallen ones), the sons of Anak, [which come] of the GIANTS (Hebrew "nephilim"): and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

We have now considered the only two verses in the Bible where the Hebrew word "nephilim" is used. Here in this verse the context allowed the translators to assume that the word "nephilim" must mean "giants", even though it really means "fallen ones". But let's notice the following things.

This verse is in the context of the 12 spies reporting back to Moses. Ten of those spies were extremely fearful, and they had decided that it would be a bad idea for the Israelites to enter the Promised Land and to challenge the local inhabitants for possession of the land. So *they slanted their report* towards their faithless goal.

In Numbers 13:27 they reported back as follows:

And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely *it floweth with milk and honey*; and this [is] the fruit of it.

They said: Yes, it is a great and very productive land. Then these 10 spies brought up an objection to entering into the land. They said:

Nevertheless THE PEOPLE [BE] STRONG that dwell in the land, and THE CITIES [ARE] WALLED, [and] very great: and moreover we saw THE CHILDREN OF ANAK there. (Numbers 13:28)

The main objections these ten evil spies presented were A) that the people were *strong*, and B) that the cities were *securely defended by high walls*. As a third deterrent to attacking the land they mentioned that they also saw "the children of Anak" there. This was a reference to THREE specific men, who were identified in Numbers 13:22 as Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmi, all three of whom were 40 years later driven out of the land by Caleb, himself one of those 12 spies in Numbers chapter 13. So in the end those three sons of Anak didn't turn out to be a big deal at all; they readily fled when Caleb said "boo" (see Joshua 15:14). It follows that they hardly warranted a mention in this report back to Moses and to the people.

Anyway, Caleb immediately saw through this distorted report of his fellow spies; and the three sons of Anak and any other Anakim he had seen had not in any way intimidated Caleb. So Caleb calmed the people down and gave a far more balanced and realistic report to the people. Caleb summed up his report with the statement:

"Let us go up *at once and possess it*, for we are *well able to overcome it*." (Numbers 13:30).

Caleb contradicted the report of the ten evil spies. They had distorted the facts. And they continued to present a distorted report. They flatly opposed Caleb's report. Verse 31 states:

But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for *they [are] stronger than we*. (Numbers 13:31)

And in Numbers 13:32-33 the ten evil spies really distorted the facts and resorted to gross exaggerations, in order to convince the people of their point of view. For these lies *all ten of them died shortly afterwards* (see Numbers 14:37).

Notice Numbers 13:32.

And they brought up *an evil report* of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, [is] *a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof*; and *all the people that we saw in it [are] men of a great stature*.

It was simply not true that the land "devoured its inhabitants". This was a blatant lie! Earlier they had acknowledged that the land "flowed with milk and honey", that it was extremely productive.

As a matter of interest, the evil spies did not use the word "great". The Hebrew text simply states: "and all the people whom we saw in its midst are men of stature", which is also how this verse is rendered in Young's Literal Translation (YLT). However, it is fair to say that these evil spies almost certainly intended

to imply "of *great* stature", even if they didn't use the word "great". They were exaggerating all the things they perceived as problems, and in the next verse we see their exaggerations reaching "new heights".

Notice the next statement these evil spies made:

And there we saw the giants (Hebrew NEPHILIM), the sons of Anak, [which come] of the giants (Hebrew NEPHILIM): and WE WERE IN OUR OWN SIGHT AS GRASSHOPPERS, and so we were in their sight. (Numbers 13:33)

The exaggeration here is totally absurd!

A grasshopper of about two inches in height is more than 35 times smaller in height than a six foot tall man. The exaggeration in this statement here is absurd, aimed at instilling fear in the people. The few giants they had seen were in the region of 9 - 12 feet tall, at the very most, thus less than twice the height of some of the taller Israelites. And seasoned warriors like Joshua and Caleb weren't in the least bit intimidated by this large size.

Next, the Israelite spies had seen *a few large men* scattered around the land. The most prominent of those giants were the *three* sons of Anak (hardly a large number), and 40 years later those three sons of Anak didn't even stand up to one Israelite, Caleb, but were driven out by Caleb (Joshua 15:13-14; Judges 1:10,20). At that same time (i.e. 40 years after this account here) Joshua also cut off all the remaining other Anakim (Joshua 11:21-22), except for a few that lived in the land of the Philistines, from where a few centuries later the giant Goliath and his relatives came.

Deuteronomy 2:10-11 tells us the following:

The Emims dwelt therein *in times past*, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; Which also *were accounted giants* (Hebrew *rephaim*), as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims.

So before the time of the exodus there had been many Anakim in that area, whom the Moabites referred to as "Emim", and these Anakim were considered to be giants (*rephaim*, the correct Hebrew word for "giants"). By referring to "in times past", this account implies that their numbers had already begun to decrease by the time when Moses was writing this, shortly before the end of the 40 years of wandering.

Deuteronomy 2:16 refers to all the men of war who died during the 40 years of wandering in the desert. Then from verse 17 onwards Moses records what GOD had told him at that time. Notice:

And [when] thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon [any] possession; because *I have given it unto the children of Lot* [for] a possession. (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 *the LORD destroyed them before them*; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead: (Deuteronomy 2:19-21)

Those who were really tall and considered to be giants (*rephaim*) were by the Israelites called "Anakim", and by the Moabites they were called "Emim", and by the Ammonites they were called "Zamzummim" (or "Zuzim"). Back in the days of Abraham and Lot God had already decided to give a certain part of the land in which these giants lived to the children of Lot. And so we are told that GOD "destroyed them (the

Zamzummim) before them (the Ammonites)". So with God's help the Ammonites had also been able to defeat giants.

In fact, Genesis 14:5 tells us that Chedorlaomer, king of Elam in the days of Abraham, defeated all three of these groups of giants (i.e. rephaim, emim and zuzim). Notice:

And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that [were] with him, and smote THE REPHAIMS in Ashteroth Karnaim, and THE ZUZIMS in Ham, and THE EMIMS in Shaveh Kiriathaim, (Genesis 14:5)

If Chedorlaomer with his relatively small army (he had a few city-kings as allies, and Abraham's army of less than 1000 men later defeated him) could defeat all three groups of giants, how much of a problem were these giants really?

The point is that here in Numbers 13 the ten spies gave "an EVIL report", by grossly exaggerating the problems that Israel would supposedly encounter in trying to conquer the land. And in that context the three sons of Anak were known giants.

However, the ten evil spies did NOT use the word "rephaim" to describe these sons of Anak, the correct Hebrew word for "giants", and the word we should have expected them to use in describing the giants they had seen. Instead, they referred to these sons of Anak as "*the fallen ones*" (nephilim).

So the question is: WHY did the evil spies use the word "nephilim" instead of the correct word "rephaim" in reference to the giants they had seen? Consider the following things:

1) Moses wrote all the books from Genesis to Deuteronomy. At the time when the 12 spies were sent out, the Israelites had already become familiar with the story of the creation and the events before and after the flood. They knew about the "nephilim" before the flood.

2) Now Moses himself used the word "nephilim" *only once*. That was to record *the identity* of the people who were *primarily responsible* for God having brought on the worldwide flood. The word "nephilim" was clearly associated with people who rebelled against God and who "*filled the earth with violence*" (see Genesis 6:11). The word "nephilim" really amounted to *the worst possible classification* to which any human being could possibly be assigned.

3) Now after Genesis 6:4 Moses himself *never* used the word "nephilim" again. Specifically, Moses himself *never* designated any people after the flood as "nephilim".

WHY did Moses himself never use the word "nephilim" again? After the flood were there really at any time any people who were again known by the pre-flood term "nephilim"?

4) The 10 spies brought "*an evil report*" (Numbers 13:32), and the Hebrew word translated as "evil report" here refers to slander and defamation. In other words, the ten evil spies *lied* in some ways or other. What they were saying was simply *not true*; that is what the words "evil report" imply.

5) The only other time the word "nephilim" is used in the entire Old Testament is in this lying report of the ten evil spies. These ten spies were *obviously* lying when they compared themselves to grasshoppers in the sight of the local population. And they were obviously lying when they claimed that the land devoured its inhabitants. And they were *also lying* (note!) when they referred to the few giants they had seen as "nephilim"! They correctly should have referred to those few giants as "rephaim"! But to further exaggerate the terrors that (supposedly) awaited the Israelites on the other side of the Jordan, they

referred to those "*tall men*" as "nephilim".

6) Notice that GOD Himself later simply referred to those men as "*tall*", but without using the word "nephilim". Notice what God said in Amos 2:9.

Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, WHOSE HEIGHT [WAS] LIKE THE HEIGHT OF THE CEDARS, AND HE [WAS] STRONG AS THE OAKS; yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath.

God did *not* use the word "nephilim" to describe these tall and strong people.

7) Likewise, Moses referred to these tall people as "rephaim", and NOT as "nephilim". Notice:

Which also WERE ACCOUNTED GIANTS (Hebrew "rephaim"), as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims. (Deuteronomy 2:11)

A few verses later Moses again spelled out that he was speaking about "giants".

That also was accounted A LAND OF GIANTS (Hebrew "rephaim"): GIANTS (Hebrew "rephaim") dwelt therein in old time; and the Ammonites call them Zamzummims; A PEOPLE GREAT, AND MANY, AND TALL, as the Anakims; but the LORD destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead: (Deuteronomy 2:20-21)

8) So neither God nor Moses ever used the word "nephilim" to describe any people after the flood. The only reference to "nephilim" after the flood is in the *evil report* of the ten *lying* spies. These ten evil spies had never in their lives even seen "nephilim"; they had no idea what "nephilim" were supposed to look like. Nor did any other Israelite really know for sure what those "nephilim" before the flood had looked like (i.e. had they been huge or had they been of just ordinary stature?).

All they knew is that the "nephilim", the fallen ones, had been *extremely evil and violent*, to the point of causing God to bring a flood upon the earth. It followed that any reference to "nephilim" was enough to strike terror in the hearts of the ancient Israelites, which was *exactly* what the ten evil spies wanted to achieve with their evil report! In the process of going through the land the twelve spies had seen the three sons of Anak and also a few other giants, who were perhaps 9 -12 feet tall. And while ten of those spies had been filled with fear at the sight of those few giants, two of the spies (i.e. Joshua and Caleb) had not been perturbed at all by the presence of a few giants.

9) Note that it was *after* Caleb had managed to calm people down somewhat, and had presented a far less intimidating picture that these ten evil spies really resorted to lies and to gross exaggerations. It was then that they claimed that the giants they had seen were not merely ordinary "giants" (i.e. rephaim); no, they were much worse than that. Those giants were actually (so the evil spies falsely claimed) NEPHILIM OF ABSOLUTELY ENORMOUS SIZE (the man to grasshopper comparison).

10) With this description the evil spies had managed to scare people almost to death, and people were crying for fear. The lying description of the supposed staggeringly huge nephilim had created terror in the people of Israel.

To summarize this section: I believe that the ten evil spies were LYING when they referred to the giants they had seen as "nephilim". I don't believe that since the end of the flood God has referred to any

people as "nephilim". The word "nephilim" describes *an attitude towards God* amongst a certain group of people before the flood, independent of the physical stature (small, average or large) of the individuals involved. And there was no justification whatsoever for the ten evil spies to label the few giants they had seen as "nephilim"! The people to whom the evil spies were referring in Numbers 13:33 should correctly have been called "rephaim"; and the use of the word "nephilim" here was a deliberate exaggeration designed to instill fear and terror in the people.

Now let's take a look at the context of Genesis chapter 6.

GENESIS 6:1

Let's look at this chapter more closely. Here is verse 1.

And it came to pass, when men (Hebrew here is "Adam") began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them (Genesis 6:1)

A literal translation of the Hebrew text here reads:

"And it was when ADAM began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born"

The words "unto them" are not in the original text. These words were provided by the translators. However, the real implication in *this* verse is that daughters were born "*unto him*", i.e. unto Adam, rather than "unto them".

In plain language: After having given us an overview of the development of Adam's family line through Cain in chapter 4 and through Seth in chapter 5, with the start of chapter 6 the account now *backtracks* to the early years in Adam's life, even before the time when Cain killed Abel. This backtracking is for the explicit purpose of filling in some very relevant details that were not appropriate to include in the chronological accounts of the previous two chapters.

This backtracking is not generally understood. But it is *precisely the same thing* that we have already seen in chapters one and two (with an inappropriate chapter break there). From Genesis 1:3 down to Genesis 2:3 we have a strict chronological progression through the 7 successive days of the re-creation week. *Then* the account backtracks to specific events that took place on Day 6. Those specific events, which all took place *before* the Sabbath in Genesis 2:2-3, were: details relating to Adam's creation, God's instructions to Adam regarding the tree of the perception of good and evil, Adam giving names to all the animals, and the creation of Adam's wife Eve.

So note! Even though Genesis 2:2-3 had clearly discussed that first Sabbath day, yet Genesis 2:5-25 equally clearly discusses things that took place *before* that first Sabbath day. That is simply the most logical way to present information of this type: first present a general chronological overview, and *then backtrack* and fill in some of the details within that chronological framework.

WE HAVE EXACTLY THE SAME SITUATION IN GENESIS CHAPTERS 4 - 6.

Genesis 4:16-24 presents a chronological overview of Adam's descendants through the line of Cain. Then Genesis 4:25-26 backtracks to a time before the previous verse, by discussing the birth of Seth. Genesis chapter 5 then presents a chronological overview of Adam's descendants through the line of Seth, up to the time of the people who feature in the flood (i.e. Noah and his three sons Shem, Ham and Japheth). With the chronological overview now completed, *chapter 6 backtracks again* to the time when

Adam first began to multiply by having both sons and daughters.

It is important to grasp that Genesis 6:1 is telling us *the start* of the story that leads up to God bringing on the flood. It is telling us about *the start of the real problem* after Adam and Eve's initial sin.

The problem started when Adam and Eve began to have many sons and daughters. While this is not recorded here, it is quite clear to me that *at that point in time* God also gave Adam and Eve and all their children *specific guidelines* as to how Adam's children should form new family units to ensure the development of humanity along the lines that God intended, by explaining which son should marry which daughter.

God had created Adam and Eve with the potential to have children with widely differing racial characteristics, including racial traits that Adam and Eve themselves did not exhibit. By creating this potential to produce enormous variety amongst their children, God obviously had a purpose for this variety: God wanted that variety to be nurtured and then to become established.

In order to achieve God's intention of establishing racial variety amongst human beings, it required all of Adam's sons with their specific racial traits to marry sisters who exhibited *the same racial traits*; i.e. Adam's sons who were "whites" were to marry sisters who were also "whites", Adam's sons who were "blacks" were to marry sisters who were also "blacks", Adam's sons who displayed "oriental features" were to marry sisters who also had those "oriental features", etc. There is no way of knowing how many major different racial groups God actually intended to establish. But however many different races God intended to establish, *it required man's active cooperation!*

The establishment of different racial groups *absolutely required Adam's own sons* (that first generation of children) *to marry exactly that specific sister that God had "provided" for each one of them!* We today tend to think in terms of *three* major racial groups, but who is to know that at the time of Adam's and Eve's creation God did not have 20 or even 50 different racial groups in mind, when we consider the vast scope of variety within the rest of God's creation?

God had created a specific wife for Adam; God had not given Adam any choice whatsoever as to whom Adam could marry. And I believe that God *also* "provided" one specific wife for each of Adam's sons, by giving Adam and Eve one daughter for every son God gave them. If all of Adam's children had complied with God's intentions for them, there would not have been any "bachelors" or "spinsters" amongst Adam's children; every son of Adam would have had a sister with the same racial features available as a wife.

[COMMENT: In this regard it is interesting to note that Eve very clearly viewed her son Seth "as a replacement for Abel" (see Genesis 4:25). When Seth was born, Adam and Eve were both already 130 years old, and they had already had *many* children before Seth was born, and they continued to have *many* children after the birth of Seth (see Genesis 5:4). As the mother of, very likely, more than 50 children during her lifetime, *why* was it important to Eve that God had "appointed her another seed *instead of Abel*", meaning "as a *replacement for Abel*"? It is not as if Eve had been barren after giving birth to Cain and Abel; she had already given birth to very many sons after the birth of Cain and Abel. So *why* did Eve feel that Abel needed to somehow "be replaced by another new son"? Did Eve know something that is not clearly spelled out in this account? Did Eve understand that it was imperative for another *son* to be there, so that one specific racial line, the one that would have come from Abel, could be developed? Had it been God's intention that the Caucasian racial line would come through Abel, and had Satan wanted to thwart the development of that particular racial line by stirring up Cain to kill Abel? In providing Seth as a replacement for Abel, was God ensuring that the Caucasian race would also develop? The fact that Eve saw the need for "a replacement" for Abel is a strong suggestion to me that Eve was aware of God's intention for her sons to each marry a specific sister with the same racial

characteristics, and that without a replacement Abel's death would have stopped one specific racial strain of humanity from developing.]

And *within one generation* the entire racial spectrum that God intended to create for mankind (perhaps 20 or even 50 different racial groups?) would have been established. After that first generation (when God still allowed people to live for around 900 years!), in which each of Adam's sons would have married a sister with similar racial characteristics, *their children* would have been instructed for brothers to marry their own sisters, rather than marrying cousins; and then eventually down to marrying immediate cousins within their own racial group. And long before the time of Noah people would have been able to select their spouses from amongst a whole nation of "their own people". And each racial group would have become established exactly as God had planned. Keep in mind that even *several centuries after Noah's time* it was still very acceptable for Abraham to marry his half-sister Sarah, and for Jacob to marry his close cousins, and even for the father of Moses to marry his own father's sister.

In our world today, which is controlled by "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2), we regrettably often think in competitive terms when we think about the different races. But it was never God's intention that one race would be either superior to another race, or else inferior to another race. Variety is not a competition. Competition is something that Satan introduced.

The analogy that the Apostle Paul presented in 1 Corinthians 12 for the composition of God's Church applies equally well to God's intention in creating different racial groups. Paul explained that "the body is not one member, but many" (1 Corinthians 12:14). He then explained that there really is no competition for importance between "the foot" and "the hand" and "the eye" and "the ear" (see 1 Corinthians 12:15-19); they all serve different purposes within the body and work together in harmony and cooperation. Nor did God intend there to be a competition between different flowers as to which flower is "the best of them all". Variety is a trademark of God's creation. And the same point also applies to God creating the potential for different races amongst human beings.

Let's now look at the next verse.

GENESIS 6:2

That the sons of God saw the daughters of men (Hebrew here is again "Adam") that (Hebrew means "because") they [were] fair; and they took them (Hebrew here is "for themselves") wives of all (Hebrew means "from among all") which they chose.

An equally correct translation of this verse reads:

That the sons of God saw the daughters of Adam because they were fair, and THEY TOOK FOR THEMSELVES WIVES FROM AMONG ALL WHICH THEY CHOSE.

For a start, keep in mind that there are MANY different Hebrew words which are at times all translated as "man" or "men" in the KJV. The most common Hebrew words translated as "man/men" are: "ish" (1212 times), "enosh" (520 times), and "geber" (64 times). The Hebrew word "adam" is in the KJV translated 529 times as "man/men" and only 13 times as "Adam". But the Hebrew "adam" is not really the main word for "man".

I believe that there are instances where this Hebrew word really refers to the man "Adam", rather than to "man" or to "men" in a general way, and that this distinction was not really always clear to the translators. And I suspect that this is the case right here in Genesis 6:1-4, that the Hebrew word "adam" here really

does refer to *the man Adam*, and not to men in general.

Now to another point.

We invariably view the world from our own personal perspectives. What we consider "normal" depends on our own backgrounds. People with vastly different cultural backgrounds often also have vastly different expectations. And it is easy for us to read our own expectations into biblical accounts.

We in our world today *assume it to be our inalienable right to choose our own mates!* To us it sounds preposterous that someone else would decide who we should marry. And so we read the Bible with our own prejudices fully installed.

We forget that for thousands of years many cultures have had the custom that *the parents* select a wife for their son, and a husband for their daughter.

At the end of Genesis chapter 2 GOD had selected a wife for Adam (actually God had specifically created this wife for Adam). And God was the One who joined them in marriage, a fact that Jesus Christ also substantiated in Matthew 19:4-6. Back in Genesis 2:24 God had said:

"THEREFORE SHALL A MAN LEAVE HIS FATHER AND HIS MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE UNTO HIS WIFE".

God was "the Father" of Adam, and God had brought Adam a wife. That was the precedent God set here, that a *father* would select a wife for his son. And once that process has taken place, *then* a man would leave his parents to form a new family unit.

There is *nothing* in God's statement here about a man leaving his parents that implies that *the man himself was supposed to take the initiative in this process of finding a wife.*

We need to understand that it was *God's intention* that *Adam would decide* which of his sons should marry which of his daughters, based on clear instructions God had given to Adam. A father (in Adam's situation) would immediately recognize that his black son should marry his (the father's) black daughter, and that his Caucasian son should marry his (the father's) Caucasian daughter, etc. It is very easy for parents to see that their children will be best off when they marry someone who is of the same racial type. If this pattern had been followed for even a few generations after Adam, *then* people would have been able to look outside of their own siblings for potential mates, while still staying within their own racial grouping.

It is *the very start of mankind multiplying*, the very first generation after Adam, that went wrong!

THAT IS THE PROBLEM WHICH GENESIS 6:1-2 IS POINTING OUT TO US!

THE SONS OF GOD

The sons of Adam and Eve, many of whom were racially unlike their own parents, as well as being racially unlike one another, are here called "the sons of God", and so it is time we took a closer look at this expression "the sons of God".

We don't hesitate to say that this expression "sons of God" certainly applies *to us*, who are members of God's Church. And we have clear biblical support for doing so. As the Apostle Paul explained in Romans 8:14:

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, THEY ARE THE SONS OF GOD.

And even though we are right now still only weak, mortal human beings and still very capable of sinning, yet this term applies to us *already right now*. That is what the Apostle John explained in 1 John 3:1-2.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that WE should be called THE SONS OF GOD: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, NOW are we THE SONS OF GOD, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

But *why* can this designation "sons of God" apply to us mortal human beings right now? After all, we can all still sin and potentially miss out on salvation; we all need to take heed "lest we fall" (see 1 Corinthians 10:12), but the sons of God who are born of God cannot sin, right? See 1 John 3:9.

The key is that God, in good faith, calls us His sons from the time we fully submit our lives to Him, long before we become spirit beings in God's Family. The Apostle Paul explained in Romans 4:17 that "GOD CALLS THOSE THINGS WHICH BE NOT AS THOUGH THEY WERE", i.e. in positive anticipation of what is scheduled to take place in the future.

The primary criterion for anyone to become a part of the group designated by the term "sons of God" today is that such an individual submits his life to God. The most important *attribute* that is required for becoming a son of God is that an individual voluntarily accepts *the attitude and mindset* of which God alone is "the Father", i.e. the Author and the Originator. That attitude or mindset is in the Bible called "love", meaning an outgoing concern for the welfare and well-being of others. And that mindset actually defines God Himself (i.e. "God is love", 1 John 4:8).

That attitude or mindset is *not* automatic or spontaneous or inherited by any creature or being. The only way for any human being (or any angel, for that matter) to have that outlook and frame of mind, which the Bible calls "love", is to go through a process. That process must start with God Himself first engendering this mindset in an individual, and the individual himself must from then onwards nurture and further develop this mindset, to the point where it eventually becomes an integral part of that individual's very being, and the person thereby becomes "a son of God".

Now in the Old Testament the expression "sons of God" is used only five times: twice in this passage of Genesis 6:2-4, and three times in the Book of Job. The three references in Job (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7) all refer to the righteous angels of God. And the two references in Genesis 6 refer to human beings, even as the references in the New Testament by the apostles John and Paul refer to human beings.

The three references in the Book of Job identify the righteous angels of God, all the angels that have first accepted and then inculcated into their very beings that mindset of "love", thereby linking them intrinsically to God the Father.

Ignoring the one reference that is in the singular "the Son of God" in Daniel 3:25, which reference is clearly to Jesus Christ Himself, we have *only one other occasion* (i.e. outside of the Book of Job) in the whole Old Testament where this expression "sons of God" is ever used (twice within this one context), and that is right here in Genesis 6. So the question is:

Why is this expression "sons of God" never used again in the Old Testament to refer to human beings, after this one occasion in Genesis 6:1-4? What caused GOD to *never again* inspire the use of this

expression in reference to human beings *until* the time of the New Testament? There must be a reason why this expression is first used to refer to human beings, and then dropped completely for approximately 4000 years, before being used again in reference to human beings.

Here is the point we need to understand.

Originally it was God's *intention* that *all* of Adam's sons would become HIS, God's sons! And therefore ALL of Adam's sons were *from birth onwards* designated as "the sons of God". And they were all eligible for that designation UNTIL they rejected God's rule over their lives, until they rejected the mindset that God desired to engender in them.

It is only when human beings sinned, actively rejecting the way of life of which God is the Originator and Father, that they ceased to be known as "sons of God".

The first generation of Adam's children qualified for this designation "sons of God" automatically, by birth. Because since that time humanity has rejected God's ways universally, therefore *today* God only extends this designation "sons of God" to us *after we have met some conditions*. But that was NOT the case for the first generation of Adam's children.

Put another way, the first generation of Adam's children, which group included righteous Abel, was granted by God, in good faith, the opportunity to be called "sons of God", because *that* was their potential at that point in time! It was still in the early days of God's experience with mankind, long before God expressed regret at having created human beings (see Genesis 6:6). And while God had driven Adam and Eve out of the garden in Eden, *at that point* God did *not yet* withhold access to Himself from Adam's children; and neither did God hold the children accountable for the sins of their parents! That access to God on the part of Adam's children at that point in time is clearly demonstrated in Genesis 4:3-7, when God Himself spoke to Cain after both Cain and Abel had brought offerings to God. God speaking to Cain is *proof* that Cain still had a certain degree or level of access to God.

As far as spiritual responsibility and accountability are concerned, God applied the principle of Ezekiel 18:20 to Adam's children. It was God Himself who said: "THE SON SHALL NOT BEAR THE INIQUITY OF THE FATHER, NEITHER SHALL THE FATHER BEAR THE INIQUITY OF THE SON". That principle acknowledges that it wasn't the fault of Adam's children that Adam and Eve had sinned; and therefore the sin of Adam and Eve did NOT change the relationship their children could potentially have had with God, even though the sin of Adam and Eve certainly did change the physical circumstances in which their children had to conduct their lives. But those children were still potentially "the sons of God", even as we today can be in that position, once we have accepted God's rule over our lives.

It is very clear that Abel, one of Adam's sons, was *not* "cut off from God"! Abel had access to God! Jesus Christ Himself referred to Abel as "righteous" (Matthew 23:35), a condition that is impossible to achieve without access to God.

SO ADAM'S CHILDREN STILL HAD ACCESS TO GOD, IF THEY WANTED THAT ACCESS! AND THEY WERE CORRECTLY KNOWN AS "SONS OF GOD".

Their access to God was just as real as is the access to God which any member of God's Church throughout the past 2000 years has had! Abel's access to God proves this.

This account here in Genesis 6 explains WHY this all changed, and why after the flood the term "sons of God" is never again used to refer to human beings, i.e. not until we come to the time of the New Testament.

So now back to Genesis 6:2.

This verse shows that these sons of God, who were physically sons of Adam, did something wrong! They did something that God did not approve of! This verse reveals *the reason why* God brought the flood upon the earth.

What happened is that Adam's sons married their own sisters, something that God had certainly intended. *But* they did *not* marry the sisters they should have married! They *rejected* God's intentions for them, and instead they married whichever sister *they themselves chose, with a complete disregard for God's intentions!*

For the explicit purpose of establishing various racial lines (however many different races God was hoping to establish?) it was absolutely imperative that every single one of Adam's sons would marry the sister that *God intended for him to marry!*

God's entire plan to establish a variety of races amongst human beings *depended on* Adam's children of the first generation marrying the exact individual that GOD wanted them to marry. In the same way that God had provided the best possible wife for Adam himself, so also God had seen to it that for every son of Adam there was "the ideal sister to marry".

BUT IN THIS PROCESS THE MAJORITY OF ADAM'S SONS REBELLED!

Adam's sons, apart from Seth, *refused point blank* to marry the specific sister that they should have married! Instead of marrying the sister they should have married, they took for themselves wives "of all which **THEY** chose"! That was the problem! Left unchecked this would have completely derailed God's intention to create racial variety amongst human beings.

Genesis 6:3 makes quite clear that *God was angry* with human beings. And it should be equally clear that the previous verse, Genesis 6:2, presents *the reason for God's anger!*

God is never unreasonable! And when Genesis 6:3 expresses God's frustration at trying to persuade human beings to live by God's ways, it should tell us that the previous verse had presented the reason for God's frustration with mankind.

Verse 5 shows that man's wickedness and evil reached enormous proportions. And it all started with Adam's sons defying God's instructions in regard to who they should marry; and instead taking to themselves the right to select a wife, rejecting God's directions regarding who they were to marry.

Adam's sons made their choices based on *outward physical attraction*, in utter disregard for God's instructions. Each son chose the sister that looked "fair" to him, irrespective of the racial traits and characteristics that particular sister might have had. Where God wanted "like to marry like", man followed *Satan's idea* that "*opposites attract one another*".

GENESIS 6:2 DESCRIBES ACTS OF DEFIANCE!

Marriage was not the problem. It is *who* they married that was the problem. People in general were simply *not willing* to "walk with God", as did Enoch and Noah, for example.

Not "walking with God" applied to all aspects of life. But "not walking with God" started with the matter of refusing to marry the sister they should have married, and instead insisting on marrying a sister with different racial traits.

The very fact of the existence today of different racial characteristics is an indication that God intended for those different racial characteristics to be nurtured and preserved. *If* it had been God's intention that all of the races should blend and merge into one group, *then* God would not have created Adam and Eve with the potential of producing children exhibiting the great racial differences we can observe in the world today. Interracial marriage and the blending of the races goes against God's original intention to create variety, which variety was to be nurtured and cherished.

There is something else we should understand at this point, and that is this:

The plan God devised required God to give man a free will and free moral agency. Doing this posed *an enormous risk for God*, but one which God was prepared to take in order to achieve the high target He (really "They," God the Father and Jesus Christ together in cooperative planning) had set. That risk was that man had the potential not just to "occasionally" do something wrong; but that man had the potential to repeatedly and in major and potentially catastrophic ways do things that diametrically opposed God's intentions!

While some violations of God's intentions would simply not be acceptable at all, and would thus evoke immediate punitive responses, God was prepared to deal with certain other transgressions of His intentions for mankind, by modifying some of His instructions, *though not without still imposing some penalties* for the transgression of His original intentions. It was with the intent that, while God would "tolerate" (though some penalties would still apply) certain modifications of His original intentions for man's existence, all of those "modifications" would be removed, and the original intentions would be restored when Jesus Christ would eventually rule as "King of kings and Lord of lords".

Some of the "modifications" God was willing to temporarily put up with included things like: interracial marriage, polygamy, divorce, slavery, etc. God was prepared to temporarily "put up with" these and other violations of His intentions for mankind, in order to work with, test and train a small select and chosen number of people. When the time comes for God to work with the vast majority of human beings (i.e. during the millennium and the subsequent period for those in the second resurrection), then these "modifications" will again be abolished and God's original intentions in these areas will again be the only acceptable standards.

We should never confuse *God's temporary acceptance* of certain selfish practices, for the sake of continuing His plan for mankind, with God's positive approval of such practices. It is most certainly not "positive approval"! As Jesus Christ explained, **BECAUSE OF THE SELFISHNESS OF MAN'S HEART GOD "SUFFERED" CERTAIN PRACTICES, "but from the beginning it was not so"**. See Matthew 19:8

Genesis 6:2 shows us that interracial marriage is one of those things that God had not wanted mankind to get involved in. And the subsequent verses show that this practice was a major reason for why God brought about the flood.

To see the following verses in their correct perspective, it is helpful to look at them in the context of God's overall plan of salvation.

God's purposes require man to have a totally free will to choose God's ways, or to reject God's ways. Some things God has planned ahead and other things God has not planned ahead. Put another way: God has determined in advance **THE DESTINATION** at which He wants mankind to arrive; but God has not planned in advance **THE ROUTE** that mankind would take to get to that destination.

The route to that predetermined destination would depend primarily on the choices mankind would make along the way. A different choice made by certain people at a certain point in time would establish a different route for all those people that would follow after them. An analogy might help to illustrate this.

ANALOGY REGARDING GOD'S PLAN FOR MANKIND

Picture North America before the arrival of any human beings. In analogy, God's plan is to create mankind on the east coast, in the area of Boston. It is God's plan (in this analogy) to lead mankind to the west coast, to the area of Los Angeles.

So God has established the starting point (Boston) and also the destination for mankind (Los Angeles). But God has also given man a *free will* as to how man is going to progress towards that destination. And every decision that man makes in his journey towards that destination will have certain consequences, determining what subsequent decisions will have to be made. Specifically, every decision along the way will eliminate the opportunity to make certain other decisions that could have been made earlier.

Now there are literally thousands of different routes that mankind could take to get from Boston to Los Angeles. But each decision along the way will narrow down the options that remain. And after certain decisions some previous options will never again be available.

Thus:

Starting from Boston, mankind could travel to New York or to Niagara Falls, before proceeding further. But mankind, with a free will, could also travel in the totally wrong direction, like going north towards Bangor, Maine. And that (in our analogy) is precisely what happened from the time of Adam to the time of Noah: mankind traveled in the completely wrong direction. Therefore God stopped the process with the flood in the days of Noah and then started all over again.

Now let's suppose that mankind had traveled from Boston to New York. At that point new choices opened up. Would mankind travel south to Philadelphia or west to Akron (Ohio) or to Niagara Falls? *One thing they could not do was return to Boston.* The extremes in the options open to them would be to travel through the Dakotas and Montana and Washington State, before turning south towards California; or to travel through the Carolinas and Georgia before turning west towards California. And there are hundreds of other options in between those two extremes.

BUT EACH DECISION THEY MADE WOULD OPEN UP NEW CHOICES, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CUTTING OFF PAST CHOICES THAT HAD BEEN REJECTED.

One example that illustrates this point is the following: At the time the 12 spies were sent into Palestine, it was God's intention to lead Israel across the Jordan into the Promised Land at that very time. However, when the 10 evil spies turned the people against this idea, then IMMEDIATELY God removed that choice. The next day it was already too late to comply with God's offer, which offer had still been a possibility 24 hours earlier. The people had made the choice to fear crossing the Jordan, and God had immediately responded with a postponement of 40 years for the crossing into the Promised Land.

To return to our analogy:

God didn't say or even expect that mankind would take the shortest route to the planned destination. But whatever detours man has taken along the way, God has seen to it that subsequent choices were limited to options that would bring mankind somewhat closer to the final destination.

Initially God offered to act as man's guide, by showing man the best possible route to the intended destination. However, when man rejected God's guidance in this journey, God in effect said: all right, then choose your own route. And as man has chosen his own route, God has all along channeled man's choices in a direction that would still be "acceptable" to God for "eventually" reaching the desired

destination, "eventually" being in harmony with the basic time-frame that God has established for the whole process.

So much for the analogy, which no doubt could be carried further.

However, there is one point we need to understand very clearly, something that is fundamental to all of God's dealings with mankind. And that is this:

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH HUMANITY ARE MOSTLY "REACTIONARY"!

It is not that God has mapped out the detailed route along which He will lead humanity to His planned destination. Rather, it is that God has given man a free mind to decide things for himself. This includes the ability to make decisions that God does not really like, decisions that go against God's standards and God's intentions. Whenever that is the case, then *God responds to the decisions man has made!* And in this process we need to understand that God will even "work with" many decisions, though by no means all, that are to some degree contrary to God's real intentions.

It is only when man's ways cross *certain unacceptable limits*, that God takes drastic action (e.g. the flood, Sodom, Pompeii, etc.). Apart from that, God keeps man going in the right direction towards the goal God has established. When some of mankind's decisions lead too far to the left, then God nudges man back to the right; and when mankind goes too far to the right from God's purposes, then God nudges mankind back to the left. But overall there is always a steady progression towards the goal and the general time-frame God has established.

The short-term perspective may not always reveal this steady progression. But the greater picture that God is able to see will show the steady progression "from Boston towards Los Angeles" (in our analogy). Whatever we do here on earth, it all brings us closer to the return of Jesus Christ.

If you can understand this process, then you should be able to understand why the whole idea of predestination is wrong. The whole idea of "que sera sera" is that we really have no control or influence on what is going to happen, because it is all (supposedly) ordained in advance. That is nonsense.

The truth is that, of all the things that happen, *very little was in fact preordained by God to happen!*

This brings us once again back to Genesis 6.

Verse 3 shows God's response to man's provocative conduct which was described in verse 2. God's statement "My spirit shall not always strive with man" covers the period of time from Adam's first generation of sons down to the year 1536 after Adam's creation. This statement tells us that for about 1500 years God had indeed been "striving with man", trying to get man to live in accordance with God's intentions. The Hebrew verb here translated as "strive" is "din", which means "to judge". In other words, God had been *judging* man's conduct to be wrong, and trying to get man to change his conduct and behavior. In the year 1536 after Adam's creation God finally made the decision that exactly 120 years later He would destroy mankind (except for 8 people) in a worldwide flood.

[COMMENT: The Hebrew verb "din" (to judge) in this verse is mistranslated in the Greek LXX as "katameine" and in the Latin Vulgate as "permanebit", which words both mean "to abide or remain" in their respective languages. Both words represent a mistranslation of the Hebrew word, which means "to judge". And this mistranslation is the reason why you will find some English translations that translate this section as "my spirit shall not ABIDE in man for ever" (RSV, etc.). Even the JPS translation has followed this wrong lead, but the older 1853 Leeser Old Testament translation (Leeser was also a Jewish

scholar) reads more correctly "My Spirit shall not always strive for the sake of man". We should keep in mind that in this verse God is *not* speaking about His Spirit "*abiding*" or "*remaining*" in man, a wrong lead that a number of translations have followed, but about God Himself *judging* man's wrong conduct and reaching the decision to put an end to one specific era of man's existence.]

Because of the choices man had made along the way, *therefore* God now reacted by planning to bring on a worldwide flood. In this chapter we have the first example, on a grand scale, of God's "reactionary response" to man's ways. Man had lived a certain way, and God reacted to that in a way that affected every living creature on earth. But God had already previously evidenced this reactionary approach on a lesser scale from His very first interactions with man.

Below are a few general examples that illustrate this reactionary approach God takes in dealing with us human beings.

By "reactionary" I mean that man acts, and then God REACTS to what man has done. Had man acted differently, then God would *also* have "reacted" differently.

1) When Adam and Eve rejected God's ways and accepted Satan's way of thinking, *then* God "reacted" by bringing weeds into existence. See Genesis 3:18. But weeds and thorns and thistles were not a part of what God had originally intended for man's existence.

2) When mankind again took "a completely unacceptable road" soon after the flood, *then* God "reacted" by dividing humanity into numerous different language groups. See Genesis 11:7-8. This had the effect of getting mankind to move along and, more importantly, it ensured the development of different racial groups. But a multitude of languages was not a part of God's original intentions for mankind.

3) When man chose a violent way of living, *then* God "reacted" by changing the natures of animals (to where animals may pose a threat for mankind, see Genesis 9:2) and also by changing man's diet from being vegetarian to being carnivorous (see Genesis 9:3-4). But it had not been God's intention originally that there would be fear or animosity between man and animals, or that man would eat animals. (This is not intended to endorse vegetarianism, since God "reacted" by clearly designating certain animals as food for man. I myself am not, and never have been, a vegetarian.)

4) Because of man's overall rejection of God's ways, then at some point God "reacted" by changing the monthly and annual cycles away from the perfect 30-day months and the perfect 360-day years, to the cycles we now find extant. But originally it had not been God's intention that those cycles would ever be anything other than exactly 30 days and 360 days respectively.

5) As we human beings have sinned more and more, so God has at various times *responded* by bringing new disease organisms into existence, including the AIDS virus in our age today. But originally it had never been God's intention that there would be such things as "disease organisms".

6) It was never God's intention that man would resort to polygamy. Jesus Christ made clear that "from the beginning" it had been God's intention that a man should have only one wife for life, thereby negating both, divorce and polygamy. See Matthew 19:4-8. But when selfish mankind resorted to the practice of polygamy, then God responded by accommodating that practice for a period of time (i.e. during O.T. times), *though not without a very heavy penalty* being attached to this practice. Since then mankind has gone so far down the road that today polygamy is no longer an option that God will allow for His people! In our analogy, any Christian wanting to practice polygamy today would be like trying to travel to Bangor instead of heading for Los Angeles. It is just the totally wrong direction!

7) It was never God's intention that Abraham should have had a child by Sarah's slave Hagar. But

when Abraham did have a son by Hagar, *then* God responded by allowing that son's descendants to grow into a nation. In practice *this turned out to be a major problem for Abraham's descendants through Isaac*, and not a blessing, because Ishmael's descendants became the enemies of those descendants of Abraham that God chose to work with (i.e. Israel). This animosity would never have arisen if Abraham had not foolishly complied with Sarah's request to have a child with Hagar.

8) It was never God's intention that Jacob should marry two sisters! But when Jacob then treated Rachel as his favorite wife, God responded by giving Leah six sons, and at the same time initially making Rachel barren! See Genesis 29:31. The point is that if Jacob had treated Leah with the same kindness and affection and love and tenderness with which he treated Rachel, *then* Rachel may well have had more children! Rachel being initially barren was *God's response* to the way Jacob treated Leah.

I would suggest that, if Jacob had treated both his wives with equal affection and tenderness, to the point where both Leah and Rachel were relaxed and confident and secure in their relationship with Jacob, where both sisters would also have had a genuine concern and affection for one another, then God might very well have given Jacob six sons from Leah and another six sons from Rachel. (This is based on the assumption that God was going to start 12 different tribes through Jacob.) And the handmaids would never have entered the picture.

It was not God's intention that Jacob should have two wives. But because Jacob had been deceived into this situation by Laban, God was going to work with Jacob having two wives. But when Jacob treated the one wife badly (i.e. "Leah was hated"), then God responded by initially making the favorite wife barren. And when Jacob then made further bad decisions, then he ended up having children by four different women, instead of by just two.

[COMMENT: When Rachel gave Bilhah to Jacob, Jacob made a bad decision to accept this offer to have children with Bilhah. He made the same bad decision again when he agreed to have children with Zilpah. Abraham had made a similar bad decision in agreeing to have sex with Hagar. And Adam had made a bad decision in accepting Eve's suggestion to "have a bite". In each of these cases the men involved should have firmly rejected these suggestions from their wives. But they didn't, and each of those bad decisions was *the direct cause* for some subsequent undesirable developments.]

The point is that with all the decisions men have made along the way, God has responded in certain ways. Had men made different decisions, then God also would have responded in different ways. *The history of man was not predetermined by God*. The history of man has developed and unfolded based on decisions men have made along the way, but always staying within the parameters of still progressing towards God's goals and intentions. To use the above analogy again, God didn't foreordain that man should travel through Omaha instead of going through Little Rock, but once man had gone to Omaha, then the option to travel through Little Rock no longer existed.

THE STATE THE WORLD IS IN TODAY HAS VERY LITTLE TO DO WITH GOD'S INTENTIONS.

The present state of the world, with its horrendous problems, is due entirely to the bad decisions we human beings have made over the past approximately 6000 years. Had we and those before us made different decisions, *then* things would also be different in the world today. All along God has given us a choice, and then God has responded (i.e. "reacted") to the choices we have made. As God said in Deuteronomy 30:19, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life". God responds to the choices we make, rather than manipulating or preordaining our choices.

Now at the time of Genesis 6 mankind had chosen to be so rebellious and perverse and depraved, that a

worldwide flood was the only option God was willing to implement as a response to man's evil ways.

The fact that here in Genesis 6:3 God instituted a period of 120 years shows that God was going to plan for His intervention. It shows that God had *not* "premeditated" this drastic response to man's evil ways. God was going to use the next 120 years *to prepare* for this action He was going to take, because thus far God had *not* made any preparations for this extreme form of "reaction" to man's contrariness. At this point Shem, Ham and Japheth had not yet been born; and most likely their three wives had not yet been born either. Noah was only 480 years old; this was still 20 years before Genesis 5:32.

[COMMENT: However many different racial groups God had initially hoped to establish amongst human beings, I suspect that *at this point in time* God decided that after the flood He would limit this to THREE major racial groups. This would no longer have been possible from Noah's line alone. It required genetic input from two other racial strains. So God excluded all of the sons Noah and his wife had produced before this time (they are neither mentioned, nor even hinted at; but Noah and his wife had assuredly not been barren for the over 400 years leading up to this point), and God then gave Noah THREE specific sons who would survive through the flood with Noah. God then also provided a wife for each of those three sons; and for the explicit purpose of establishing three major racial lines AFTER the flood, God provided a Caucasian wife for Shem, a black wife for Ham, and an Asiatic wife for Japheth. This was a part of God's preparation for the flood He would bring upon the earth. After the flood Noah's greater family knew very clearly that God wanted the races to develop in their own right. So the first few generations after the flood married in accordance with God's intentions in this regard, to the point where the three major races had developed into about 70 different nations by the time of the tower of Babel. Genesis chapter 11 records how people first journeyed away from where the ark had rested. It was when they came to the land of Shinar that they once again wanted to stay together and again wanted to intermarry racially; and then God divided them into 70 language groups, along family lines, so that they again began to spread over the earth. The division into different languages, clearly along family lines, is clear proof to me that God wanted them to restrict marriages to within family groups. The division into different languages was God's way of ensuring that different races would indeed develop and flourish. Later marriages across these language lines would no longer threaten this process, because *the vast majority of all people* would always marry someone who also spoke their language, thereby ensuring the survival of their specific racial type.]

There is no indication here that at this point God was already giving Noah specific instructions. All we are told is that Noah, just like his great-grandfather Enoch, "walked with God" (see verse 9). It seems like another 20 years passed before God gave Noah instructions for building the ark, and also before the first of Noah's three sons Japheth, Shem and Ham was born.

God's statement "My spirit shall not always strive with man" shows that *the marriages referred to in the previous sentence* amounted to "striving with God"; those marriages are what God was judging to be wrong. This statement also shows that God was planning to impose a severe penalty to curtail man's evil conduct.

This verse makes clear that God was preparing to bring a worldwide flood upon the earth, *because* human beings were so evil and so antagonistic towards the ways in which God wanted them to conduct their lives. This verse shows that human beings had "fallen away from" the instructions God had given them, thereby becoming "fallen ones". God was clearly extremely unhappy with the conduct of the overwhelming majority of human beings.

This verse has set the stage for what is mentioned in the next two verses.

GENESIS 6:4-5

There were FALLEN ONES (nephilim) 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 (Hebrew "gibborim") which [were] of old, MEN OF RENOWN. And GOD saw that the WICKEDNESS of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] ONLY EVIL CONTINUALLY.

These verses address the *real* problem in the world, both, before the flood as well as today in our age. The real problem has *always* been: how the human mind functions when it is given a totally free will.

For a start, these verses tell us that at that time there were *those who had fallen*. This expression *requires* a standard from which some had fallen, or fallen away. The expression "the fallen ones" furthermore *identifies* those who were the real problem, those who were *primarily* responsible for leading God to bring on a worldwide flood. These fallen ones were around at that time, and *they influenced* the rest of humanity to follow them in their "fallen ways". With the worldwide flood it was God's intention to put a *complete end* to the ways of life of those "fallen ones". As it turned out, God's intention in this regard was unfortunately *not* achieved, because after the flood we human beings returned to the same evil ways that people had practiced before the flood.

The real problem has always been how our human minds work!

Our minds just don't want to go along with God's ways. Today it is still the same problem as it was in Noah's time. That is why the Apostle Paul wrote in reference to our present world that "the natural (carnal) mind is enmity against God". See Romans 8:7.

Biblical Hebrew did not have a specific word for "mind," as does biblical Greek, for example. So when in the O.T. the concept of "the mind" is intended, then various different Hebrew words are used to convey this. The Hebrew word most commonly used to refer to the mind is the Hebrew word for "the heart".

Jeremiah made the same basic observation, that *the mind* is naturally deceitful and desperately wicked. See Jeremiah 17:9.

In Genesis 6:4 it speaks about the nephilim, the fallen ones. And here, in verse 5, we have an absolute statement, that man was evil and depraved and mentally totally like Satan, applying this especially to "the fallen ones". Yes, there were exceptions, but they were very rare. Verse 8 will introduce us to one of those rare exceptions to this general state of affairs, to Noah.

NOTE: The problem God focuses on and highlights here is *how the human mind works!* It is first and foremost THE MIND which God requires to be submissive to Him. The full and unconditional submission of the human mind far transcends in importance any outward physical actions of obedience to God. Those outward actions of obedience are only of any value before God if they are performed by a mind that is unconditionally submissive.

It is because the human mind was so rebellious and so perverse that God decided to bring the flood upon all people.

The key component of godly repentance is first of all to recognize this tendency in our own minds, and then, with God's help, to actively change that wrong way of thinking. Genesis 6:5 is a description of the unconverted human mind throughout the ages.

In the first part of Genesis 6:4 we see two different lines of (male) human beings being contrasted:

The first line of descendants mentioned are "the nephilim", the fallen ones. This is a reference to the

descendants who came from *the line of Cain*, who was *the very first "nephil"* of Adam's children, the leader and trendsetter for "the fallen ones".

The second line mentioned are "the sons of God". This is a reference to the descendants who came from *the line of Seth*.

Then we come to the second part of verse 4.

The second part of this verse tells us that some of the male descendants of Seth (i.e. "the sons of God") married their sisters and cousins, and they had children. It was some of the children that came from the line of Seth that became "mighty men" (Hebrew "gibborim"), or "heroes" before the flood.

It was these "mighty men" from the line of Seth who were "of old" (i.e. before the flood) "*men of renown*". The expression "men of renown" referred to men who had "*two names*": the original name given to them by their parents, and *a second name that reflected a reputation they had acquired*. This was probably the start of "titles" being given to men.

Examples of "men of renown" after the flood would be Abram, to whom God gave a second (or new) name "Abraham," and Jacob, to whom God also gave a second (or new) name "Israel". A woman of renown was Sarai, to whom God gave a second (or new) name "Sarah". A New Testament example of a "man of renown" is Simon Peter. His original name was Simon, and Jesus Christ gave him the name Cephas (in Aramaic), or Peter (in Greek). See John 1:42. Such a second name usually becomes more significant than the original first name.

All those who will be in the first resurrection will be "men and women of renown", because everyone in that resurrection will receive new names. See Revelation 3:12 and Revelation 14:1.

Let's now look at the next verse in Genesis 6.

And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.
(Genesis 6:6)

For God the cost in having created human beings was far greater than God had anticipated. Our depth of evil and perversity surprised God. God had anticipated that we human beings would sin, yes. But we human beings turned out to be far worse and far more evil than God had expected. We didn't turn out to be nearly as responsive to God as the angels, for example, where two thirds of them willingly and gladly embraced God's way of thinking. Thus God regretted that He had made man, and God determined that He would only continue with His original purpose in a modified program.

This is mentioned in the next verse.

And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. (Genesis 6:7)

This was the closest possible thing to making a totally new start! It seems that in the approximately 1500 years of human existence only around a dozen or so human beings had, at least to some degree, submitted their lives to God (i.e. Abel, and the line from Seth to Shem); and all the other millions of human beings that were born during that time went Satan's way. The level of human perversity was so great, that God determined to also destroy all animals as well (except for those in the ark). This was

clearly an extremely drastic action that God took in response to man's evil ways.

Just how great must human sins be, to cause God to say: "I am sorry that I have created you"?

We should also recognize that in bringing about a worldwide flood God was indicating that *after the flood* He would implement *a different way of dealing with human beings!* The flood signaled that God was making *a change in plan!* The overall goal (to lead human beings to the point of eventually becoming a part of God's Family, eventually becoming "sons of God") would remain the same, but *the way to achieve that goal* would be different. In plain language: before the flood God had NOT made any provisions for "the second resurrection". With the onset of the flood God also modified His overall 7000-year plan into a 7100-year plan, by adding a period of time for people in the second resurrection. Adding 100 years for people in the second resurrection to His plan was God's "reaction" to man's perverse conduct during the first approximately 1500 years of human history. And adding this 100-year period was an act of God's enormous mercy.

The continually evil and perverse thoughts and imaginations mentioned in verse 5, which were the direct cause for the flood, originated with "the fallen ones", the line of Cain. But that way of life was then also embraced by the vast majority of the people who descended from the line of Seth.

Genesis chapter 6 has nothing to do with "giants", nor does this account in any way involve "fallen angels" somehow having sex with women and producing children. The word "giants" is a totally inappropriate translation for the Hebrew word "nephilim", which is used in this passage. And the expression "sons of God" is simply the way God initially referred to Adam's sons, who at that time still had the same potential as have all those who are today "the sons of God".

The only giants that are positively identified in the Bible lived *after the flood*.

Genesis chapter 6 tells us a lot more than most people would tend to believe.

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