

The Story of the Watchers Part One

Before The Foundation of the Earth Job 38:4-7

Before Creation

Before the foundations of the earth were laid, there were other beings in the service of God. The Bible calls them “sons of God.” To these divine beings, members of God’s divine council, there was an announcement, God was about to do something!

The Book of Job gives us important information as to what happened at this point. God, talking to Job, says:

“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (Job 38:4–7, ESV)

One thing we learn here is that other divine creatures were present when God announced the creation of the universe. God calls them “*the morning stars*” and “*the sons of God*.” When God created the universe, these “*sons of God*” were already present, and it is they who “*shouted for joy*” at God’s announcement that he was about to do something unique, startling. Well, at least most of them did.

These “*sons of God*” were not human, for they watched God create the world and its human occupants; they were created, intelligent, non-human, spiritual beings.

The word “sons” in this passage addresses the fact that these were creations of God. They were his original family, the first of his creation from sometime in the distant past. “God has created a host of nonhuman divine beings whose domain is (to human eyes) an unseen realm. And because he created them, he claims them

as his sons, in the same way, you claim your children as your sons and daughters because you played a part in their creation.”¹

A Hierarchy of Authority

It appears that in the unseen world, there is a hierarchy of authority much like there is on earth. Archangels illustrate this; these are angels that play a more responsible, more authoritative, more powerful role in God's economy than common angels. Two other terms we are familiar with are seraphim and cherubim. “*Seraphim* are shining divine beings who guard the throne of God; their appearance also includes serpentine and human features as well as wings.”² “*Cherubim* are shining divine beings who guard the throne of God; their appearance is partly human and partly animal.”³ And there very likely are many more levels, authorities, duties, and roles than just these.

“The Old Testament has a three-tiered council structure... Yahweh is at the top. His family-household (“sons of God”) are next in the hierarchy. The lowest level is reserved for *Elohim* messengers—*mal’akim* (the word translated “angels”).”⁴ Paul alludes to this hierarchy, saying:

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” (Ephesians 6:12, ESV)

We have little understanding of who makes up these categories; we are simply told that they exist.

¹ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 25.

² Douglas Van Dorn, *The Unseen Realm: A Question & Answer Companion* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015). See Numbers 21:6-7 and Isaiah 6:2-3;

³ Douglas Van Dorn, *The Unseen Realm: A Question & Answer Companion* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015). See Genesis 3:24; Exodus 25:22; Ezekiel 1:4-8, 13-14, 22, 26.

⁴ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 46.

The “Sons of God” appear to be higher level spiritual beings to which other lower-level spiritual beings serve, like generals over battalions of soldiers. “In the ancient Semitic world, *sons of God* (Hebrew: *beney elohim*) is a phrase used to identify divine beings with higher-level responsibilities or jurisdictions. The term *angel* (Hebrew: *Malac*) describes an important but still lesser task: delivering messages.”⁵

The Divine Council

Some of our most complete descriptions of the activities of the divine assembly are found in the literature from Mesopotamia. “The concept of a divine assembly (or council) is attested in the archaic Sumerian, Akkadian, Old Babylonian, Ancient Egyptian, Babylonian, Canaanite, Israelite, Celtic, Ancient Greek and Ancient Roman and Nordic pantheons. Ancient Egyptian literature reveals the existence of a “synod of the gods”.⁶

The literature of the period and area near Israel expands our understanding on what Israel believed. In that literature of the ancient near east, we learn that “major decisions among the gods were made in the community of the gods. ... this view understood the gods as deliberating and governing as an assembly. This divine council is evidenced in many of the Ugaritic⁷ texts as well as in a wide variety of other texts from Mesopotamia.”⁸

In this ancient literature, we read similar stories about a divine council. We can then compare the stories of this literature with the

⁵ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 24.

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine_Council

⁷ Ugaritic is “an extinct Northwest Semitic language, classified by some as a dialect of the Amorite language and so the only known Amorite dialect preserved in writing. It is known through the Ugaritic texts discovered by French archaeologists in 1929 at Ugarit, including several major literary texts, notably the Baal cycle. It has been used by scholars of the Hebrew Bible to clarify Biblical Hebrew texts and has revealed ways in which the cultures of ancient Israel and Judah found parallels in the neighboring cultures.” <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ugaritic>

⁸ John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*, Second Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2018), 54.

Bible. This literature expands our understanding as to what those in this era and area believed. We learn that their stories are much like those we find in scripture. And in this case, we learn that the divine council was a common theme in ancient literature.

Although the *divine council* is a topic most know little about, it is surprising how often it is referred to in the Bible.

“Have you listened in the council of God? And do you limit wisdom to yourself?” (Job 15:8, ESV)

“God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment.” (Psalm 82:1, ESV)

“You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north....’” (Isaiah 14:13, ESV)

“For who among them has stood in the council of the Lord to see and to hear his word, or who has paid attention to his word and listened?” (Jeremiah 23:18, ESV)

“But if they had stood in my council, then they would have proclaimed my words to my people, and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds.” (Jeremiah 23:22, ESV)

And in a related topic, the members of this divine council are called:

“... Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.” (Psalm 29:1, ESV)

“Let the heavens praise your wonders, O Lord, your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones! For who in the skies can be compared to the Lord? Who among the heavenly beings is like the Lord, a God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all who are around him?” (Psalm 89:5–7, ESV)

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

“Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord.” (Job 2:1, ESV)

“...when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (Job 38:7, ESV)

“I said, “You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you” (Psalm 82:6, ESV)

“He said, “The Lord came from Sinai and dawned from Seir upon us; he shone forth from Mount Paran; he came from the ten thousands of holy ones, with flaming fire at his right hand.” (Deuteronomy 33:2, ESV)

“Call now; is there anyone who will answer you? To which of the holy ones will you turn?” (Job 5:1, ESV)

Sons of God and Holy Ones are particularly interesting phrases because we, Christians, are called by these terms as well.



This brings us to our major text in this book:

“When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.” The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.” (Genesis 6:1–4, ESV)

Now let’s combine our two terms “sons of God” and “the divine council.” It is this thing called the *divine council* that hosts these powerful rulers of God’s creation called “the sons of god” in Genesis.

This is confusing to many people. Just how many gods are there anyway? Does the Bible teach polytheism? No. In the Bible, “All gods are spirits (spiritual beings) whose domain is the spiritual world. All disembodied inhabitants of the spiritual world are, by definition, *’elohim* [gods], since *’elohim* is a term used to identify spirit beings.”⁹ These *’elohim* [gods] are creations of the one omnipotent, eternal God—an important point. Yahweh is the one uncreated, eternal God.

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.” (Psalm 90:2, ESV)

These “gods” do not exercise divine authority with God as equals, instead, they serve God as created beings, servants, much like we do.

The Bible does not “reveal” the concept of a divine council to its readers. “It is just there in the background, not necessarily *borrowed* from the broader culture, but simply a part of how people thought in the cognitive environment of the ancient world.”¹⁰

⁹ Douglas Van Dorn, *The Unseen Realm: A Question & Answer Companion* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015).

¹⁰ John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*, Second Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2018), 57.

As we can see from these verses, “the biblical materials themselves envisioned Yahweh surrounded by his heavenly court, the lesser deities who made up the divine entourage.”¹¹ But do the members of the divine council make the ultimate decision on what will happen in human history? No, “though these...passages suggest deliberation, there is no distribution of power to the council members—Yahweh is the one who carries out the tasks.”¹²

It is this divine assembly or divine council that was present at the creation of the world. And it is a major part of our study.

¹¹ E. Theodore Mullen Jr., “Divine Assembly,” ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 215.

¹² John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*, Second Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2018), 56.

In the Beginning

Genesis 1:1

We are further introduced to the unseen realm in Genesis 1:1 with the eternal, unseen, uncreated, omnipotent, omniscient God creating what can be seen by us—the visible heaven and earth.

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”
(Genesis 1:1, ESV)

But we should note that creation was “accomplished in the aftermath of a battle for control of the pantheon and the cosmos.”¹³ This means that there was a war in heaven in which a great multitude of the *sons of god* turned from obedience to God to follow another. In other words, before the Garden of Eden on earth, there was a similar counterpart in heaven. And in that Paradise, there was also a rebellion and fall.

¹³ John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 29.

Let Us Make Man

Genesis 1:26-28, 3:22, 11:7, and Isaiah 6:8

The next point of interest is in Genesis where we read,

“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” (Genesis 1:26, ESV)

“Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” (Genesis 3:22, ESV)

“Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.” (Genesis 11:7, ESV)

“And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.”” (Isaiah 6:8, ESV)

These several verses are gathered to demonstrate how often this “conversation” takes place between God and the “us.”

So, the immediate question is, who are the “us” and the “our” in these verses? In years past, before the discoveries of the ancient literature of the Near East in the 19th century, writers did not commonly address this question as we do today—with a focus on the divine council. “Without an informed understanding of the divine council it had become commonplace for interpreters to read the Trinity, or at least plurality in the godhead....”¹⁴ So, traditionally there were two answers, one, the “us” is a plural of majesty and refers only to God. Or two, the “us” refers to the trinity, the three members of the Godhead who are in communion with one another.

¹⁴ John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*, Second Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2018), 56.

But there is a third possibility. And that would be God speaking to the *divine council*, the heavenly beings that God has created to rule and serve at his command. It is these heavenly beings, these members of God's divine council that are the object of God's conversation. "Without an informed understanding of the divine council it had become commonplace for interpreters to read the Trinity, or at least plurality in the godhead, into the plurals in Genesis, though most did not hesitate to admit the unlikelihood that the Israelites understood the text in those terms."¹⁵

As noted earlier, these heavenly beings were with God at creation.

"Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? ... when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (Job 38:4–7, ESV)

So, the phrase "'one of us'" clearly refers to any one of the group of divine beings...."¹⁶ "In Gen. 3:22, God sees that human beings have grasped the knowledge of good and evil and have become like divine beings. In Genesis 11 the heavenly court comes down to see what the earth-bound are building to attain the heavenly space. In Isa. 6:8, God is clearly addressing the heavenly court, which the prophet in his vision has entered."¹⁷

This suggests an entirely new way to look at these passages.

¹⁵ John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*, Second Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2018), 56–57.

¹⁶ S. B. Parker, "Sons of (The) God(S)," ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden; Boston; Köln; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge: Brill; Eerdmans, 1999), 797.

¹⁷ Bruce K. Waltke and Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001], 64–65).

A Heavenly Fall

How You Are Fallen

Isaiah 14:3-15

Before we study this passage in Isaiah and the next one in Ezekiel, we should note that most of the commentators believe that these passages are referring only to the king of Babylon and Tyre.

But some disagree; these understand this description and condemnation of the king of Babylon and Tyre to be based on a prior event in the unseen world, the fall of “the Day Star,” which means “Shinning One” or “morning star,” who is further identified as a “son of the dawn.” These phrases may suggest more than the kings of Babylon and Tyre.

As indicated, before the foundations of the earth were laid, there were other divine beings in the service of God. The Bible calls them “sons of god.” To these divine beings, members of God’s divine council, there was an announcement of something God was about to do. God was about to create a material world and He would fill that world with others that would one day become divine beings, who would also become members of his divine council.

That announcement to the sons of god, members of his divine council, was met with joy—*the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job 38:7)*. This joy was expressed by most of the divine council—but not by all. Some of the *sons of god* objected to these new members of the divine council and sought to derail God’s plan for these new creatures and, as a result, these *sons of God* were cast out of heaven.

In Isaiah, we seem to have additional information on these fallen gods of the divine council.

When the LORD has given you rest from your pain and turmoil and the hard service with which you were made to serve, ⁴ you will take up this taunt¹⁸ [proverb] against the king of Babylon:

¹⁸ “*māšāl*, “taunt,” connoted originally a poetic comparison, which later became a mocking comparison and ultimately a parable or a proverb (cf. Num. 23:7; Deut. 28:37; Prov. 1:1; Hab. 2:6). So, a person or nation which comes to a bad end is held up as an example to others. John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1–39*, The New International Commentary on

12 "How you are fallen from heaven,
O Day Star,¹⁹ son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground,
you who laid the nations low!
13 You said in your heart,
'I will ascend to heaven;
above the stars of God
I will set my throne on high;
I will sit on the mount of assembly²⁰
in the far reaches of the north:
14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High.'
15 But you are brought down to Sheol,
to the far reaches of the pit.
Isaiah 14:3–15 (ESV)

Verse 4 explains the purpose of this passage saying, “*you will take up this taunt [proverb] against the king of Babylon.*” This taunt is a “mockery of the misfortunes of others—Isa. 14:4: the king of Babylon in the underworld....”²¹ But who is the King of Babylon here *compared* to? That is *the key* to understanding the passage. Let’s unpack this.

“The figure to whom the king of Babylon is being compared is a divine being fallen “*from heaven*” (v. 12).”²² He is the “*morning star, son of Dawn.*” (14:12). We were introduced to the “*morning stars*” in the Book of Job where the morning stars were identified as “*the sons of God.*”

the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986).

¹⁹ “Our root represents the giving off of light by celestial bodies.” Leonard J. Coppes, “499 הַלֵּל,” ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 217.

²⁰ Or “divine council”

²¹ K.-M. Beyse, “מַשֵּׁל (1),” ed. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 66.

²² Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 85.

“...when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (Job 38:7, ESV)

In Isaiah 14:12, “*Morning star [Day Star], son of dawn*” is an English rendering of the Hebrew *helel ben-shachar*, which literally means “shining one, son of the dawn.”²³ “Isaiah portrays this particular divine being as hopelessly enamored of his own brilliance. So great was his arrogance that he declared himself above all the “stars of God” (*kokebey el*), the other members of the divine council (Job 38:7).”²⁴

“Isaiah 14 reads like an attempted coup in the divine council. *Helel ben-shachar* [shining one, son of the dawn] wanted his seat in the divine assembly on the divine mountain to be above all others. He wanted to be “*like the Most High*” (*elyon*). But there can be only one of those.”²⁵

And here is how this shinning one meets his end.

9 Sheol below is getting excited over you,
to meet you when you come;
it arouses the dead spirits²⁶ for you,
all of the leaders of the earth.
It raises all of the kings of the nations from their thrones....

12 “How you have fallen from heaven,
morningstar, son of dawn!
You are cut down to the ground [’erets]....

15 But you are brought down to Sheol,
to the depths of the pit (Isa 14:9, 12, 15).

²³ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 85.

²⁴ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 85.

²⁵ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 85.

²⁶ *Rephaim, dead*; Job 26:5, Psalm 88:10, Proverbs 2:18, 9:18, 21:16; Isaiah 14:9, 26:14, 26:19.

“The punishment of *helel* [Day Star or Shinning One] is to live in the realm of the dead. *Helel* ends up in Sheol, the pit (*bor*); brought down to earth (‘erets) by God, the truly Most High.”²⁷

²⁷ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 85–86.

You Were the Signet of Perfection

Ezekiel 28:11-19

“Ezekiel, son of Buzi, was among the approximately ten thousand citizens of Judah deported to Babylon when King Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem in 598/597 BC (2Kg 24:10–17).”²⁸ In the years that followed, Ezekiel prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and Tyre.

Chapters 26-27 tells of Tyre’s coming judgment; chapter 28:1-10 focuses on the “*prince of Tyre.*”

This background brings us to Ezekiel 28:11.

Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me: ¹² “Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord God:

*“You were the signet of perfection,
full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God;
every precious stone was your covering,
sardius, topaz, and diamond,
beryl, onyx, and jasper,
sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle;
and crafted in gold were your settings
and your engravings.
On the day that you were created
they were prepared.
¹⁴ You were an anointed guardian cherub.
I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God;
in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.
¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways
from the day you were created,
till unrighteousness was found in you.
¹⁶ In the abundance of your trade
you were filled with violence in your midst, and you
sinned;*

²⁸ Mark F. Rooker, “Ezekiel,” in *CSB Study Bible: Notes*, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 1246.

so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God,
and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub,
from the midst of the stones of fire.

17 Your heart was proud because of your beauty;
you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor.
I cast you to the ground;
I exposed you before kings,
to feast their eyes on you.

18 By the multitude of your iniquities,
in the unrighteousness of your trade
you profaned your sanctuaries;
so I brought fire out from your midst;
it consumed you,
and I turned you to ashes on the earth
in the sight of all who saw you.

19 All who know you among the peoples
are appalled at you;
you have come to a dreadful end
and shall be no more forever.”
Ezekiel 28:1–19 (ESV)

In 28:12 we read, “*You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.*” This verse begins a series of statements that are unrelated to the “*prince of Tyre.*” In the following verses, we will obtain additional information as to the identification of this one.

Verse 13 addresses one who was “*in Eden, the garden of God*” and speaks of this one saying, “*On the day that you were created.*” (28:13).

Verse 14 says, “*You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.*” (Ezekiel 28:14, ESV). The statement of the “guardian cherub on the divine mountain equates him with a divine being serving God in His holy dwelling....”²⁹ “People in the ancient Near East believed that the gods lived in lush gardens or

²⁹ John D. Barry et al., *Faithlife Study Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012, 2016), Eze 28:14.

mountains, as both settings reflected luxury and remoteness—qualities associated with the gods.”³⁰

It then goes on to say: “*You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you.*” (Ezekiel 28:15, ESV). This one is further identified “...so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.” (Ezekiel 28:16, ESV). This term “guardian cherub” is an elevated title. “A cherub was a *divine* throne guardian in the ancient Near Eastern worldview.”³¹

Verse 17 says, “*I cast you to the ground...*” “...this is the sort of language we would expect if the point was the expulsion of a heavenly being from the divine council.”³²

“Let’s summarize: Ezekiel 28 browbeats the prince of Tyre using an ancient tale of divine arrogance in Eden, where a member of Yahweh’s council thought himself on par with the Most High. This divine throne guardian was expelled from Eden to the “ground” or underworld.”³³

Ezekiel 28, along with Isaiah 14, is a description of how and why Satan was expelled from heaven to the earth.

A Summary

As we begin our summary of Satan, we must again note that commentators do not commonly ascribe to Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 descriptions of the fall of Satan. But some do. If Isaiah and Ezekiel do not address the fall of Satan, then we don’t have any

³⁰ Michael S. Heiser, “Cosmic Garden and Mountain Imagery in the Old Testament,” in *Faithlife Study Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012, 2016).

³¹ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 82.

³² Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 81.

³³ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 82.

other passage that adds light on this story. We are in the dark on how he came into being.

Of this one Revelation says:

"His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it." (Revelation 12:4, ESV)

This verse implies that a great host of angelic beings fell from heaven when Satan fell.

"Scripture also refers to Satan as "the devil" (Matt 4:1, 5; Lk 4:2, 3; Eph 6:11), "the serpent" (Gen 3:1; 2 Cor 11:3; Rev 20:2), "the great dragon" (Rev 12:9; cf Rev 20:2), "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph 2:2), "the god of this age" (2 Cor 4:4), "the evil one" (Matt 13:19, 38; Jn 17:15; Eph 6:16), "the prince of demons" (Matt 9:34; 12:24; Mk 3:22; Lk 11:15), "the accuser" (Rev 12:10), and "the tempter" (Matt 4:3; 1 Thess 3:5). Like the other angels and demons, Satan is an invisible being who is highly intelligent and very powerful."³⁴

Revelation sums him up using four names:

"And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years," (Revelation 20:2, ESV)

How do we coordinate the fall of the Satanic host and the fall of the watchers? Were they the same beings and did they fall at the same time? The bottom line is that we don't know. There could have been one fall, there may have been ten, each encouraged by the success of the prior one. The Bible does not give us much to go on in this case.

³⁴ Faithlife, LLC. "Satan." Logos Bible Software, Computer software. *Logos Bible Software Factbook*. Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, LLC, January 28, 2022. <https://ref.ly/logos4/Factbook?ref=Isto.Satan>.

The Garden of Eden

Genesis 2:8

Background

Since Genesis was written, some 3400 years have passed. Vast differences in cultures have occurred and radically diverse languages have developed since then. At the time of the writing of Genesis, much of what is obscure to us was common knowledge to them. They had sat around the fireplace as children and heard their parents recount stories that served them as explanations or background information to their Bible stories. They had heard stories like Enoch and dozens more like them. And all this filled in the blanks that Moses left in his book.

However, we no longer have access to most these stories. We have little to fill in the blanks. So, we find ourselves delighting in newly discovered literature from that time. We also find ourselves doing a lot of speculation on “what Moses meant” in his telling of these events. In the material that follows, we will do more speculation.

Paradise

The Bible tells us about a paradise, a garden that God created and where man lived. It is called the Garden of Eden or “Garden of Delight.”³⁵

“And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers.” (Genesis 2:8–10, ESV)

This garden is also called “*the garden of the Lord*” and “*the garden of God*.”

³⁵ “*garden of delight*.” Carl Schultz, “1568 גֶּדֶן,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 646.

“For the Lord comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.” (Isaiah 51:3, ESV)

“You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering.” (Ezekiel 28:13, ESV)



And what is or was the garden of Eden? “The garden of Eden is ... an archetypal³⁶ sanctuary, that is, a place where God dwells and where man should worship him.”³⁷ The fact that Eden was a dwelling place not only for man but for God also is important information, for it was the place of the meeting for humanity and the divine council.

³⁶ archetypal. “...noun prime example, standard, model, original, pattern, classic, ideal, norm, form, prototype, paradigm, exemplar...”
<https://www.bing.com/search?q=archetypal+&form=ANSPH1&refig=2252635046c54cc09b3919870c82fa1b&pc=U531>

³⁷ John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*, Second Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2018), 84.



We should note three things about this garden.

One,

“And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.” (Genesis 3:8, ESV)

Two,

“You were in Eden, the garden of God.... You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.” (Ezekiel 28:13-14, ESV)

Three,

“Now the serpent.... He said to the woman, “... And the woman said to the serpent... (Genesis 3:1–2, ESV)

So, the three noteworthy points are that 1) God materially walked in the Garden, 2) that there was a holy mountain in the garden of God, and 3) that Eve did not appear to be surprised to meet a divine being.

Why are these three significant? We know from Jewish history and the history of the ancient near east, that God, or the gods, were typically worshiped on mountains. And material appearances [theophanies] of God in the Bible were not uncommon. These two points added to, three, the familiarity of Eve with divine beings would suggest that Eden was a location for the dwelling of God and his divine council as well.

You Will Be Like the Gods

Genesis 3:1-7

The story of the fall of Adam and Eve is a familiar one.

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God [the gods, ’ēlōhîm], knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.”
(Genesis 3:1–7, ESV)

The Serpent

This scene introduces another personage from the unseen world, here called “*the serpent*.” But not so much an animal called a snake but as a luminous serpent-like divine being. The word serpent is from “seraphim” a type of angel, it is from a Hebrew word Saraph [סָרָפִים *sārāp*], which is a “*kind of serpent; kind of heavenly being*.”³⁸ This probably explains why Eve is not surprised or afraid

³⁸ Rick Brannan, ed., in *Lexham Research Lexicon of the Hebrew Bible*, Lexham Research Lexicons (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020).

of this being. “The serpent (*nachash-or a skinning one*) was an image commonly used in reference to a divine throne guardian. This is exactly how the Pharaoh used the symbol of the serpent, as a throne guardian.



Given the context of Eden.... The divine adversary dispenses divine information, using it to goad Eve. He gives her an oracle (or an omen!): You won't really die! God knows when you eat you will be like one of the *elohim*. All the meanings telegraph something important. They are also consistent with the imagery from Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28.”³⁹

Satan is identified in Ezekiel, as a throne guardian, one of the cherubim.

“You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.” (Ezekiel 28:14, ESV)

³⁹ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 88.

Later God placed cherubim at the entrance of the garden of Eden to keep mankind out.

“He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.” (Genesis 3:24, ESV)

We also see this role of *cherubs* in the construction of the Mercy Seat.

“Make one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on its two ends.” (Exodus 25:19, ESV)

As such, Eve would have been comforted by his presence, not threatened. Here was a divine being that one could trust. Or so she thought. Although....

“And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.” (2 Corinthians 11:14, ESV)

“But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:8, ESV)

So, it is not at all unlikely that Eve viewed this one as a friend. Indeed, as far as she knew, there were no enemies in the world. I'm not sure she knew the meaning of the word enemy. So, she was taken off her guard; she was deceived.

Like the Elohim

Satan told Eve, “...you will be like God [the gods, 'ēlōhîm], knowing good and evil.” The serpent, an 'ēlōhîm, or a god, came to Eve; his promise to Eve is if she would eat the fruit, she also could become like one of the 'ēlōhîm, like one of the gods.

Before we move on, we should look at a few translations of this verse:

“For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:5, ESV)

“For God knows that on the day you both eat from it, then your eyes will be opened and you both shall be like gods, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:5, LEB)

“...for God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will open and you will be like divine beings who know good and evil.” (Genesis 3:5, NET)

“...for God knows that in the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be as gods who know good and evil.” (Genesis 3:5, LES)

The ESV is the traditional translation of this passage. The others present viable alternatives that appear closer to the meaning of this passage.

The Hebrew phrase is the same either way. It is a matter of translation, not variation in the text. The Hebrew word *’ēlōhîm* is always plural, however, when pointing to Yahweh it is translated as a singular. Although there are grammatical rules that help decide in these situations, it continues to be a problem for the translator. The plural translation in this passage appears to address the context better.

Eve was not told that she would be like the supreme God of the universe or that she would even believe such a preposterous statement. But she probably was aware of the other divine beings that inhabited God’s divine council—and Eden. These she could identify with, this is what she was promised, and this is what she received.

These divine creatures knew things that she did not. Perhaps she wanted the unique power they displayed—she wanted to be like these *’ēlōhîm*, she wanted to know what they knew.

So, she ate. And she obtained this knowledge of the fallen *’ēlōhîm* just as she was promised. She became like these gods, she now knew good and evil. Testifying to this very fact, Yahweh says:

“Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:22, ESV)

And so, she and Adam, and all humanity, fell.

And They Knew That They Were Naked

And Eve now knew that she was naked, and as follows in the same sentence, “*they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.*” [Genesis 3:7].

“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.”⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.”

⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day,⁴⁰ and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰ And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” ¹¹ “He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”” (Genesis 3:7–11, ESV)

When Eve told God that she was afraid and naked, and as a result hid herself, why did God say, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree....?” Also, how is it that she did not know she was naked until after the Fall? And how was it that eating of the tree would result in her learning that she was naked?

I would like to put forth a theory. Before the fall, Adam and Eve, divine beings, possessed a glory or luminosity that was a natural part of their sinless condition. They dwelt with God in Eden. We are told that Moses experienced this as well when he was in the presence of God.

“When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the

⁴⁰ Or “They heard the roar of the Lord moving about in the garden in the wind of the storm.” John H. Walton, *Genesis*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 224.

mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God.” (Exodus 34:29, ESV)

Paul says something similar:

“But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.” (Philippians 3:20–21, ESV)

“The fathers of the church teach that Adam and Eve, before the fall, were clothed in garments of glory. When they fell into sin, they were ashamed at their nakedness. It is not that they saw for the first time that they were not wearing clothes, it is that they realized the depravity and true nakedness of a human body that is not clothed in God’s glory. This shame drove them to hide when they heard God approaching. Afterward, they were clothed in garments of skin, which represents our present fallen tendencies, or as St. Paul calls it, *the flesh*.”⁴¹

Before the Fall, Adam and Eve’s nakedness was concealed by this glory. At the fall, this glory left them. As a result, it was only at this point that Adam and Eve “knew” they were naked *to others*. The condition existed all along but was not obvious to others until after the loss of glory.

In the Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, we read of this moment that Eve says: “And at that very moment my eyes were opened and I knew that I was naked of the righteousness with which I had been clothed. ² And I wept saying, ‘Why have you done this to me, that I have been estranged from my glory with which I was clothed?’”⁴²

Before the Fall, Adam and Eve knew God in holiness. But in their sin, they gave all this up. In a similar vein, Paul says:

⁴¹ <https://www.orthodoxroad.com/being-clothed-in-glory/>

⁴² James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the New Testament: Expansions of the “Old Testament” and Legends, Wisdom, and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms and Odes, Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works*, vol. 2 (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1985), 281.

“For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.” (Romans 1:21–23, ESV)

Because they no longer possess this glory that hid their nakedness, they now became ashamed. God again clothed them, but this time with the skins of animals which took note of their need for a blood sacrifice.

So, after their fall, after the loss of this glory or luminosity, they became aware that they were naked. They also became aware that there were—*voyeurs* in the garden and they were Watching them! This loss of glory, luminosity, made this an issue, one that never existed before.

Eve *now* understood that she was being watched. Now that their eyes were open, she understood that the *’ēlōhîm*, *lots of ’ēlōhîm*, were watching—her! That freaked her out. She was on the Truman Show, and she didn't like it.

Now put this in the greater context of Genesis 6.

“When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose.” (Genesis 6:1–2, ESV)

Eve became more fully aware of the presence *the sons of God*. Aware that their leering at her evidenced that she was *attractive* to them. This would not do, so she and Adam clothed themselves.

The Judgments of God on Mankind

Genesis 3:8-19

Death was the wage for the sin of Adam and Eve. And as a result, the whole world came under the power of sin and death.

“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—” (Romans 5:12, ESV)

Death is the heart of the fall; it is what Paul deals with so thoroughly in the Book of Romans.

But for the Jewish world, there was more to the story. Although in thinking of the tragedy of man's fall into sin, most Christians limit that to Genesis 3, Judaism did not. They had a larger picture of man's decadence; it included 1) the Fall, 2) man's depravity demonstrated in Genesis 6 in the role of the Watchers, 3) and in Genesis 11, the Tower of Babel

For Judaism, these three events each contributed to the story explaining man's increasingly evil condition. The first was the most significant, but the others intensified man's corrupt condition and were to the Jews critical parts of the story of the depravity of Adam's fallen race. Each of these events was an escalation of man's sin, resulting in increasing consequences of that sin.

I Enoch and the Watchers

Genesis 6:1-4

Why Was I Enoch Written?

Before we tell the story of Enoch, we should ask, why was I Enoch written? And why was it written at this time and not sooner or later?

We know that I Enoch was written “in the middle of what scholars call the Second Temple Period (ca. 500 B.C.–A.D. 70), an era more commonly referred to as the “Intertestamental Period.”⁴³ And to some degree, this date explains why I Enoch was written. Where was Israel living during the early years of this period? They were in exile in Babylon! Here they heard the Babylonian explanation of the creation of the world, the fall of humanity, the role of the Watchers in human history, the Flood, and the founding of a new world. To Israel, these Babylonian stories, although close, were ultimately false. From the writings of Moses and the Prophets, and from the very detailed oral history of their cultural, Israel knew better. I Enoch was a response, a correction to these false teachings of the Mesopotamian world.

I Enoch and the story of Genesis 6 were written because the writer of this book “sought to target the deeply held religious beliefs of Mesopotamia and, most pointedly, the myth of Babylonian superiority.”⁴⁴ In other words, I Enoch was a *polemic*,⁴⁵ a correction against the false teachings of the Babylonian sages. A polemic “is the use by biblical writers of the thought forms and stories that were common in ancient Near Eastern culture, while filling them with radically new meaning.”⁴⁶ In this case, the correct meaning. “The point was to turn the Mesopotamian belief system

⁴³ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 1.

⁴⁴ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 49.

⁴⁵ Polemic “an aggressive attack on or refutation of the opinions or principles of another.” Merriam-Webster, in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

⁴⁶ John D. Currid, *Against the Gods: The Polemical Theology of the Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 25.

on its head, to make sure that Israelites and Jewish readers would know that what happened between the sons of God and the daughters of humankind was not something that bettered humanity. It was the opposite—a transgression of heaven and earth that would corrupt humankind and produce a lineage that would later be a threat to the very existence of Israel, Yahweh’s portion and people (Deuteronomy 32:8–9).⁴⁷

Background to Our Story



The story of the Watchers is an expansion of Genesis 6:1-4.

“When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.” The Nephilim⁴⁸ [giants] were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.” (Genesis 6:1–4, ESV)

⁴⁷ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 50.

⁴⁸ Nephilim “the accepted understanding of the word in Biblical Hebrew is giants.” Yigal Tzadka, Tiki Krakowski, and Orly Kihaly, eds., *Choice Words from the Story of Noah*, Biblical Hebrew Study Book (Jerusalem: Good Times Ltd., n.d.), 13.

The Book of 1 Enoch is where we find most of our knowledge on the story of the Watchers. “This book is about the important influence that the story of the sin of the Watchers in 1 Enoch 6–16 had on the thinking of New Testament authors.”⁴⁹

The Book of Enoch is not inspired as the Bible is and it is important that one not accept something as true simply because it was mentioned in that book. The leaders of Israel, that certified the Old Testament, and the leaders of the Church that certified the New Testament, all concluded that this is not inspired Scripture. However, in broad outlines it can be valuable to the reader of the Bible for it provides an amazing backstory to some parts of our Bible. We note that Jude and Peter both quote 1 Enoch. That suggests the respect and importance it received in the ancient Jewish and Christian world. And what Jude and Peter say is inspired and therefore certainly true, but the rest of 1 Enoch may or may not be true. So, we must be cautious.

The distinct sections of 1 Enoch are:

“The Book of the Watchers (chapters 1–36)
The Book of Parables (chapters 37–71), or the “Similitudes”
The Book of the Luminaries (chapters 72–82), or the “Astronomical Book”
The Book of Dreams (chapters 83–90)
The Apocalypse of Weeks (chapter 91:11–17)
The Epistle of Enoch (chapter 91:1–10, 92–105)
The Birth of Noah (chapters 106–107)
Another Chapter of Enoch (chapter 108)”⁵⁰

Our focus in 1 Enoch is on chapters 6-16, the story of the sin of the Watchers. “There is broad consensus concerning the nature of the

⁴⁹ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 1.

⁵⁰ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 24.

relationship between 1 Enoch 6–11 and Genesis 6–9: the Enochic text is, in some sense, an interpretation of Genesis.”⁵¹

Because 1 Enoch is an obscure book to most 21st century Christians, it would be most helpful to the reader to review this important segment, 1 Enoch 6-16, before we begin.

The Story of the Watchers⁵²

Shemihazah

Chapter 6

6 1 In those days, when the children of man had multiplied, it happened that there were born unto them handsome and beautiful daughters. 2 And the angels, the children of heaven, saw them and desired them; and they said to one another, “Come, let us choose wives for ourselves from among the daughters of man and beget us children.” 3 And Semyaz,⁵³ being their leader, said unto them, “I fear that perhaps you will not consent that this deed should be done, and I alone will become (responsible) for this great sin.” 4 But they all responded to him, “Let us all swear an oath and bind everyone among us by a curse not to abandon this suggestion but to do the deed.” 5 Then they all swore together and bound one another by (the curse). 6 And they were altogether two hundred; and they descended into ‘Ardos, which is the summit of Hermon. And they called the mount Armon, for they swore and bound one another by a curse. 7 And their names are as follows: Semyaz, the leader of Arakeb, Rame’el, Tam’el, Ram’el, Dan’el, Ezeqel, Baraqyal, As’el, Armaros, Batar’el, Anan’el, Zaqe’el, Sasomaspe e’el, Kestar’el, Tur’el, Yamayol, and Arazyal. 8 These are their chiefs of tens and of all the others with them.

Chapter 7

7 1 And they took wives unto themselves, and everyone (respectively) chose one woman for himself, and they began to go

⁵¹ George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch*, ed. Klaus Baltzer, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2001), 166.

⁵² Ida Fröhlich, “Mesopotamian Elements and the Watchers Traditions,” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblentz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 19.

⁵³ Or Shemihazah

unto them. And they taught them magical medicine, incantations, the cutting of roots, and taught them (about) plants. 2 And the women became pregnant and gave birth to great giants whose heights were three hundred cubits. 3 These (giants) consumed the produce of all the people until the people detested feeding them. 4 So the giants turned against (the people) in order to eat them. 5 And they began to sin against birds, wild beasts, reptiles, and fish. And their flesh was devoured the one by the other, and they drank blood. 6 And then the earth brought an accusation against the oppressors.

Azaz'el

Chapter 8

8 1 And Azaz'el taught the people (the art of) making swords and knives, and shields, and breastplates;⁵⁴ and he showed to their chosen ones bracelets, decorations, (shadowing of the eye) with antimony, ornamentation, the beautifying of the eyelids, all kinds of precious stones, and all coloring tinctures and alchemy. 2 And there were many wicked ones and they committed adultery and erred, and all their conduct became corrupt. 3 Amasras taught incantation and the cutting of roots; and Armaros the resolving of incantations; and Baraqiyal astrology, and Kokarer'el (the knowledge of) the signs, and Tam'el taught the seeing of the stars, and Asder'el taught the course of the moon as well as the deception of man. 4 And (the people) cried and their voice reached unto heaven.

Chapter 9

9 1 Then Michael, Surafel, and Gabriel observed carefully from the sky and they saw much blood being shed upon the earth, and all the oppression being wrought upon the earth. 2 And they said to one another, "The earth, (from) her empty (foundation), has brought the cry of their voice unto the gates of heaven. 3 And now, O holy ones of heaven,⁵⁵ the souls of people are putting their case before you pleading, 'Bring our judgment before the Most High.' " 4 And they said to the Lord of the potentates, "For he is the Lord of lords, and the God of gods, and the King of kings, and the seat of

⁵⁴ This event in I Enoch may be at the same time as this passage in Genesis: "*Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.*" (Genesis 4:22, ESV)

⁵⁵ They are probably addressing members of the divine council.

his glory (stands) throughout all the generations of the world. Your name is holy, and blessed, and glorious throughout the whole world. 5 You have made everything and with you is the authority for everything. Everything is naked and open before your sight, and you see everything; and there is nothing which can hide itself from you. 6 You see what Azaz'el has done; how he has taught all (forms of) oppression upon the earth. And they revealed eternal secrets which are performed in heaven (and which) man learned. 7 (Moreover) Semyaz,⁵⁶ to whom you have given power to rule over his companions, co-operating, they went in unto the daughters of the people on earth; 8 and they lay together with them---with those women---and defiled themselves, and revealed to them every (kind of) sin. 9 As for the women, they gave birth to giants to the degree that the whole earth was filled with blood and oppression. 10 And now behold, the Holy One will cry, and those who have died will bring their suit up to the gate of heaven. Their groaning has ascended (into heaven), but they could not get out from before the face of the oppression that is being wrought on earth. 11 And you know everything (even) before it came to existence, and you see (this thing) (but) you do not tell us what is proper for us that we may do regarding it."

The Watchers Punished

Chapter 10

10 1 And then spoke the Most High, the Great and Holy One! And he sent Asuryal to the son of Lamech [Noah], (saying), 2 "Tell him in my name, 'Hide yourself!' and reveal to him the end of what is coming; for the earth and everything will be destroyed. And the Deluge is about to come upon all the earth; and all that is in it will be destroyed.⁵⁷ 3 And now instruct him in order that he may flee, and his seed will be preserved for all generations." 4 And secondly the Lord said to Raphael, "Bind Azaz'el hand and foot (and) throw him into the darkness!" And he made a hole in the desert which was in Duda'el and cast him there; 5 he threw on top of him rugged and sharp rocks. And he covered his face in order that he may not see light; 6 and in order that he may be sent into the fire on the great day of judgment. 7 And give life to the earth which the angels have corrupted. And he will proclaim life for the earth: that he is giving life to her. And all the children of the people will not perish

⁵⁶ Or Shemihazah

⁵⁷ Like in Genesis, this sounds like a universal flood, not a local one.

through all the secrets (of the angels), which they taught to their sons. 8 And the whole earth has been corrupted by Azaz'el's teaching of his (own) actions; and write upon him all sin. 9 And to Gabriel the Lord said, "Proceed against the bastards [giants] and the reprobates and against the children of adultery; and destroy the children of adultery and expel the children of the Watchers from among the people. And send them against one another (so that) they may be destroyed in the fight, for length of days have they not. 10 They will beg you everything—for their fathers on behalf of themselves—because they hope to live an eternal life. (They hope) that each one of them will live a period of five hundred years." 11 And to Michael God said, "Make known to Semyazar⁵⁸ and the others who are with him, who fornicated with the women, that they will die together with them in all their defilement. 12 And when they and all their children have battled with each other, and when they have seen the destruction of their beloved ones, bind them for seventy generations underneath the rocks of the ground until the day of their judgment and of their consummation, until the eternal judgment is concluded. 13 In those days they will lead them into the bottom of the fire—and in torment—in the prison (where) they will be locked up forever. 14 And at the time when they will burn and die, those who collaborated with them will be bound together with them from henceforth until the end of (all) generations. 15 And destroy all the souls of pleasure and the children of the Watchers, for they have done injustice to man. 16 Destroy injustice from the face of the earth. And every iniquitous deed will end, and the plant of righteousness and truth will appear forever and he will plant joy. 17 And then all the righteous ones will escape; and become the living ones until they multiply and become tens of hundreds; and all the days of their youth and the years of their retirement they will complete in peace. 18 And in those days the whole earth will be worked in righteousness, all of her planted with trees, and will find blessing. 19 And they shall plant pleasant trees upon her—vines. And he who plants a vine upon her will produce wine for plenitude. And every seed that is sown on her, one measure will yield a thousand (measures) and one measure of olives will yield ten measures of presses of oil. 20 And you cleanse the earth from all injustice, and from all defilement, and from all oppression, and from all sin, and from all iniquity which is being done on earth; remove them from the earth. 21 And all the children of the people will become

⁵⁸ Or Shemihazah

righteous, and all nations shall worship and bless me; and they will all prostrate themselves to me. 22 And the earth shall be cleansed from all pollution, and from all sin, and from all plague, and from all suffering; and it shall not happen again that I shall send (these) upon the earth from generation to generation and forever.⁵⁹

Chapter 11

11 1 “And in those days I shall open the storerooms of blessing which are in the heavens, so that I shall send them down upon the earth, over the work and the toil of the children of man. 2 And peace and truth shall become partners together in all the days of the world, and in all the generations of the world.”

Dream vision of Enoch: his intercession for the fallen angels

Chapter 12

12 1 Before these things (happened) Enoch was hidden, and no one of the children of the people knew by what he was hidden and where he was. 2 And his dwelling place as well as his activities were with the Watchers and the holy ones; and (so were) his days. 3 And I, Enoch, began to bless the Lord of the mighty ones and the King of the universe. 4 At that moment the Watchers were calling me. And they said to me, “Enoch, scribe of righteousness, go and make known to the Watchers of heaven who have abandoned the high heaven, the holy eternal place, and have defiled themselves with women, as their deeds move the children of the world, and have taken unto themselves wives: They have defiled themselves with great defilement upon the earth; 5 neither will there be peace unto them nor the forgiveness of sin. 6 For their children delight in seeing the murder of their beloved ones. But they shall groan and beg forever over the destruction of their children, and there shall not be peace unto them even forever.”

His intercession for Azaz'el

Chapter 13

13 1 As for Enoch, he proceeded and said to Azaz'el, “There will not be peace unto you; a grave judgment has come upon you.

⁵⁹ “And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man’s heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done.” (Genesis 8:21, ESV)

2 They will put you in bonds, and you will not have (an opportunity for) rest and supplication, because you have taught injustice and because you have shown to the people deeds of shame, injustice, and sin.” 3 Then I went and spoke to all of them together; and they were all frightened, and fear and trembling seized them. 4 And they begged me to write for them a memorial prayer in order that there may be for them a prayer of forgiveness, and so that I may raise their memorial prayer unto the Lord of heaven. 5 For, as for themselves, from henceforth they will not be able to speak, nor will they raise their eyes unto heaven as a result of their sins which have been condemned. 6 And then I wrote down their memorial prayers and the petitions on behalf of their spirits and the deeds of each one of them, on account of the fact that they have prayed in order that there may be for them forgiveness (of sin) and a length (of days). 7 And I went and sat down upon the waters of Dan—in Dan which is on the southwest of Hermon—and I read their memorial prayers until I fell asleep. 8 And behold a dream came to me and visions fell upon me, and I saw a vision of plagues (so that) I may speak to the children of heaven and reprimand them. 9 And upon my awakening, I came unto them (while) they were all conferring together, in Lesya’el, which is (located) between Lebanon and Sanser, while weeping and with their faces covered. 10 And I recounted before them all the visions that I had seen in sleep and began to speak those words of righteousness and to reprimand the Watchers of heaven.

Chapter 14

14 1 This is the book of the words of righteousness and the chastisement of the eternal Watchers, in accordance with how the Holy and Great One had commanded in this vision. 2 I saw in my sleep what I now speak with my tongue of flesh and the breath of the mouth which the Great One has given to man (so that) he (man) may speak with—and (so that) he may have understanding with his heart as he (the Great One) has created and given it to man. 3 Accordingly he has created me and given me the word of understanding so that I may reprimand the Watchers, the children of heaven. 4 I wrote down your prayers—so it appeared in vision—for your prayers will not be heard throughout all the days of eternity; and judgment is passed upon you. 5 From now on you will not be able to ascend into heaven unto all eternity, but you shall remain inside the earth, imprisoned all the days of eternity. 6 Before that you will have seen the destruction of your beloved sons and you will not have their treasures, which will fall before

your eyes by the sword. 7 And your petitions on their behalf will not be heard—neither will those on your own behalf (which you offer) weeping (and) praying—and you will not speak even a word contained in the book which I wrote.

Enoch's vision

8 And behold I saw the clouds: And they were calling me in a vision; and the fogs were calling me; and the course of the stars and the lightnings were rushing me and causing me to desire; and in the vision, the winds were causing me to fly and rushing me high up into heaven. 9 And I kept coming (into heaven) until I approached a wall which was built of white marble and surrounded by tongues of fire; and it began to frighten me. 10 And I came into the tongues of the fire and drew near to a great house which was built of white marble, and the inner walk(s) were like mosaics of white marble, the floor of crystal, 11 the ceiling like the path of the stars and lightnings between which (stood) fiery cherubim and their heaven of water; 12 and flaming fire surrounded the wall(s), and its gates were burning with fire. 13 And I entered into the house, which was hot like fire and cold like ice, and there was nothing inside it; (so) fear covered me and trembling seized me. 14 And as I shook and trembled, I fell upon my face and saw a vision. 15 And behold there was an opening before me (and) a second house which is greater than the former and everything was built with tongues of fire. 16 And in every respect it excelled (the other)—in glory and great honor—to the extent that it is impossible for me to recount to you concerning its glory and greatness. 17 As for its floor, it was of fire and above it was lightning and the path of the stars; and as for the ceiling, it was flaming fire. 18 And I observed and saw inside it a lofty throne—its appearance was like crystal and its wheels like the shining sun; and (I heard) the voice of the cherubim; 19 and from beneath the throne were issuing streams of flaming fire. It was difficult to look at it. 20 And the Great Glory was sitting upon it—as for his gown, which was shining more brightly than the sun, it was whiter than any snow. 21 None of the angels was able to come in and see the face of the Excellent and the Glorious One; and no one of the flesh can see him—22 the flaming fire was round about him, and a great fire stood before him. No one could come near unto him from among those that surrounded the tens of millions (that stood) before him. 23 He needed no council, but the most holy ones who are near to him neither go far away at night nor move away from him. 24 Until then

I was prostrate on my face covered and trembling. And the Lord called me with his own mouth and said to me, "Come near to me, Enoch, and to my holy Word." 25 And he lifted me up and brought me near to the gate, but I (continued) to look down with my face.

Chapter 15

15 1 But he raised me up and said to me with his voice, "Enoch." I (then) heard, "Do not fear, Enoch, righteous man, scribe of righteousness; come near to me and hear my voice. 2 And tell the Watchers of heaven on whose behalf you have been sent to intercede: 'It is meet (for you) that you intercede on behalf of man, and not man on your behalf. 3 For what reason have you abandoned the high, holy, and eternal heaven; and slept with women and defiled yourselves with the daughters of the people, taking wives, acting like the children of the earth, and begetting giant sons? 4 Surely you, you [used to be] holy, spiritual, the living ones, [possessing] eternal life; but (now) you have defiled yourselves with women, and with the blood of the flesh begotten children, you have lusted with the blood of the people, like them producing blood and flesh, (which) die and perish. 5 On that account, I have given you wives in order that (seeds) might be sown upon them and children born by them, so that the deeds that are done upon the earth will not be withheld from you. 6 Indeed you, formerly you were spiritual, (having) eternal life, and immortal in all the generations of the world. 7 That is why (formerly) I did not make wives for you, for the dwelling of the spiritual beings of heaven is heaven.'

8 "But now the giants who are born from the (union of) the spirits and the flesh shall be called evil spirits upon the earth, because their dwelling shall be upon the earth and inside the earth. 9 Evil spirits have come out of their bodies. Because from the day that they were created from the holy ones they became the Watchers; their first origin is the spiritual foundation. They will become evil upon the earth and shall be called evil spirits. 10 The dwelling of the spiritual beings of heaven is heaven; but the dwelling of the spirits of the earth, which are born upon the earth, is in the earth. 11 The spirits of the giants oppress each other; they will corrupt, fall, be excited, and fall upon the earth, and cause sorrow. They eat no food, nor become thirsty, nor find obstacles. 12 And these spirits shall rise up against the children of the people and against the women, because they have proceeded forth (from them).

Chapter 16

16 1 “From the days of the slaughter and destruction, and the death of the giants and the spiritual beings of the spirit, and the flesh, from which they have proceeded forth, which will corrupt without incurring judgment, they will corrupt until the day of the great conclusion, until the great age is consummated, until everything is concluded (upon) the Watchers and the wicked ones. 2 And so to the Watchers on whose behalf you have been sent to intercede—who were formerly in heaven—(say to them), 3 ‘You were (once) in heaven, but not all the mysteries (of heaven) are open to you, and you (only) know the rejected mysteries. Those ones you have broadcast to the women in the hardness of your hearts and by those mysteries the women and men multiply evil deeds upon the earth.’ Tell them, ‘Therefore, you will have no peace!’ ”⁶⁰

Conclusion

I Enoch provides background for Genesis 6:1-4. It is interesting, although not inspired, backdrop for this passage. This is a summary:

“Chapters 6–16 tell the story of the Watchers, in which two stories seem to be woven together. In one, the leader of the fallen angels is named Asael (Azazel ...), and the primary sin is improper revelation; in the other the leader is Shemihazah, and the primary sin is marriage with humans and procreation of giants.... The Watchers beget giants on earth by their union with human women. Out of these giants come evil spirits that lead humanity astray (1 Enoch 15:11–12; this motif is elaborated further in Jubilees). In the short term, the crisis of the Watchers is resolved when God sends the flood to cleanse the earth.”⁶¹

The Purpose of the Story

As stated, the story of the Watchers is an expansion of the narrative described in Genesis 6:1-4 in which the “*sons of God*”

⁶⁰ James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1 (New York; London: Yale University Press, 1983), 15–22.

⁶¹ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 24–25.

came to the daughters of man.” That is *the* key passage, the purpose of I Enoch is to expand the details of this passage.

“When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.” The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.” (Genesis 6:1–4, ESV)

“The Watchers, then, are clearly celestial (nonhuman) beings whose actions are regarded not only as morally evil, but spiritually destructive. While human rebellion first appeared in Eden, it is the actions of the Watchers that served as a catalyst to spread wickedness among humanity like a spiritual contagion. They are held responsible for teaching humans a variety of things that engender lust, warfare, astrology, occult practices, etc.”⁶²

I Enoch was highly respected by both Jews and Christians, and it is in these stories recorded there and in other intertestamental literature that we find greater detail on this story of corruption.

When Did This Take Place?

The question is often asked, when did this fall of the Watchers take place? Genesis 4 may give us hints to this question. It says, “Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron.” (Genesis 4:22, ESV). The fourth chapter of Genesis describes the genealogical expansion of the children of Adam and Eve. In Genesis 4:22, it gives us some detail about the discovery of various technologies. We can correlate this with I Enoch: “And Azaz’el taught the people (the art of) making swords and knives, and shields, and breastplates; and he showed to their chosen ones bracelets, decorations, (shadowing of the eye) with antimony, ornamentation, the beautifying of the eyelids, all kinds of

⁶² Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 32.

precious stones, and all coloring tinctures and alchemy.” (1 Enoch 8:1)

Further, in Genesis 5 we read:

When Adam had lived 130 years...

When Seth had lived 105 years...

When Enosh had lived 90 years...

When Kenan had lived 70 years...

When Mahalalel had lived 65 years...

When **Jared** had lived 162 years, he fathered Enoch.

In 1 Enoch 6:6 we read, “And they were in all two hundred; who descended in the days of **Jared** on the summit of Mount Hermon....”

It was only 460 years from Adam to Jared. The point is, there was not a lot of time after Adam before the fall of the Watchers.

So, from both the lines of Cain and Seth we get indications as to when this took place. Genesis chapters 4 and 5 appear to be soon after creation. If the period from creation to the flood was about 1650 years, then the Watchers and their offspring the giants would have roamed the earth for more than a thousand years before the Flood.

Was This the Only Fall of the Watchers?

Probably not. We read in Genesis 6:

“The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.” (Genesis 6:4, ESV)

And in chapter 6 and verses 6 of 1 Enoch we read: “And they were altogether two hundred; and they descended into 'Ardos, which is the summit of Hermon.”

1 Enoch gives us a small number of Watchers that fall, Genesis using the phrase “*and also afterward*” opens the door for others who may have seen the success of this first group and then followed “afterward.”

So, there may have been several occasions in which, ultimately, a great number of Watchers descended to the earth. We can't say that this number of "two hundred" was the total of the Watchers. But this would have taken place before the Flood for it was before the Flood that the Watchers were confined to prison.

What Happened to the Watchers?

In I Enoch, the archangels plead with God that something be done about the behavior of the Watchers and their children, the giants.

"Their plea is answered by the commissioning of the archangels to punish the watchers, destroy the giants, prepare for the flood, and renew the earth. First, Sariel is commissioned to inform Noah about the coming deluge and about Noah's selection as the seed from which humanity will have hope of survival for coming generations (*1 En.* 10:1-3). Next Raphael is commissioned to punish Asael, by binding him and holding him prisoner in a dark hole in the earth until the final judgment when he will be "led away to the burning conflagration" (*1 En.* 10:4-6). Gabriel is commissioned to destroy the giants. Their destruction, although set in motion by Gabriel, will actually come by their own hands, as the archangel is to send them "against one another in a war of destruction" (*1 En.* 10:9). Michael is sent to subject Shemihazah and his associates to a similar fate to that which Asael received: they are to be bound for seventy generations, until the day of their judgment when they, too, will be imprisoned in a fiery abyss (*1En.* 10:11-15). Finally, Michael receives the commission to restore the earth, removing all impurities, defilement, godlessness, and lawlessness (*1 En.* 10:16-22).

So, I Enoch tells us that the Watchers are bound "until the day of judgment." When the judgment occurs at the end of time, "¹³ In those days they will lead them into the bottom of the fire—and in torment—in the prison (where) they will be locked up forever."⁶³

⁶³ The material in this chapter is based primarily on a 2010 dissertation by Amy S. Richter completed at Marquette University: Amy S. Richter, "The Enochic Watchers' Template and the Gospel of Matthew," PhD dissertation, Marquette University, 2010.⁶³

From this, we see that the fallen Watchers are bound up waiting eternal judgment and are no longer present on the earth. All this occurred before the Flood. But their offspring, the giants, continued. Eventually some, most, or all, of these offspring die but their spirits do not die but become demons roaming the earth.

Who Were the Sons of God? Genesis 6:1-4

The Sethite Hypothesis

“Genesis 6:1–4 is one of the most marginalized passages in the Bible. Many pastors and Bible students do all they can to avoid taking it at face value, opting for “safe” interpretations that allow it to be shelved.”⁶⁴ Let’s look at the most prominent or popular explanation for this passage—the Sethite Hypothesis.

I Enoch gives us the opinion of the Jews of the Intertestamental Period (ca. 500 B.C.–A.D. 70) of Jewish history as to what the story of Genesis 6:1-4 was about. However, some Christians of later ages, the 4th century A.D. and following, concluded that this Enoch story was not correct. They have instead come up with another explanation that appears correct to them. For them it goes like this:

The “sons of God” are the Godly offspring of Adam’s son, Seth. They saw the daughters of men,” or the daughters of Cain who were unbelievers, were enticed by them and married them. Of course, the Bible never calls these women “daughters of Cain,” nor does it call the line of Seth “sons of God.” So, the theory is built on supposition and data not in the text.

The result of these unions was the birth of a race of Nephilim or giants. Another problem with this interpretation is why such unions would result in an offspring of Nephilim or giants being born to them? After all, sadly, Godly men and women do from time to time marry unbelievers. And why would these unions produce an offspring of giants?

And in this text, why would it be that only Godly men married ungodly women, why not the other way around as well? The data does not fit. “Insisting on non-supernatural interpretations like the Sethite hypothesis, where the sons of God are merely men from

⁶⁴ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 9.

the line of Seth, violates the passage's original intent and meaning."⁶⁵

Not only that, why would you reject the opinion of those people who retained the memory of these events from their own culture, i.e. I Enoch, and create one the ancients never head of? We should also mention the stories of the Mesopotamia culture that conveyed much of the same information. Why is this also ignored? The theory is defective.

The Real Story of the Watchers

As we study this material, we will note that unlike those who promote the 'Sethite Hypothesis,' "Second Temple Jews did not attempt to strip the supernatural elements from Genesis 6:1–4; rather, they affirmed them."⁶⁶

In several passages in the OT, a group of heavenly beings other than Yahweh is referred to by the expressions "Sons of God," "children of the gods," or simply "divine beings." However, "Watchers" is the Enochian term of choice (among others) for the divine "sons of God."⁶⁷

Genesis 6:1–4 introduces us to the divine beings called the Watchers. The Genesis passage is the focus and foundation of the story of the Watchers, a word found later in Daniel. It is a story that is not commonly understood; it is our topic.

⁶⁵ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 37.

⁶⁶ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 23.

⁶⁷ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 2.



“But what does it all mean? Why is Genesis 6:1–4 in the Bible at all? What was its theological message?”⁶⁸

You’ve probably read Genesis 6 many times and wondered about these “sons of God” or these “*sons of the gods*,” and the “daughters of man?” What is going on here? It turns out that it is something so terrible that God goes on to say:

“The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.”” (Genesis 6:5–7, ESV)

⁶⁸ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 107.



Why the Flood? We find the explanation for the Flood in I Enoch in the story of the Watchers.

“Then the Watchers “... began to go in to them, and to defile themselves with them and (they began) to teach them] sorcery and spellbinding and the cutting of roots; and to show them plants” (7:1). The women became pregnant from them and bore children, who became Giants. The Giants “were devouring the labour of all the children of men and men were unable to supply them” (7:4). After this, the Giants begin to devour men, and then “... they began to sin against all birds and beasts of the earth] and reptiles ... and the fish of the sea, and to devour the flesh of one another; and they were] drinking blood. Then the earth made the accusation against the wicked concerning everything which was done upon it” (7:5–6).

These then are the transgressions, which finally bring about the punishment of the flood (*1 En* 9:1ff). Thus, the story serves as a justification for the catastrophic punishment wreaked upon the whole world. This explains why these verses are in Genesis 6. Judaism understood this; they remembered the story. Christians have forgotten them.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, comments on this story saying: “for many angels of God accompanied with women, and begat sons that proved unjust, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength; for the tradition is, that these men did what resembled the acts of those whom the Grecians call giants.”⁶⁹

So, what is the summary: “The verdict of all this is inescapable. No interpretation of Genesis 6:1–4 that does not carefully observe and interact with the original Mesopotamian context can hope to be even remotely correct.”⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987), 32.

⁷⁰ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 52.

The Major Players in our Story

We are beginning to collect a lot of terms and will continue to do so, so let's take a moment and review them for they may get confusing.

The Watchers or *Apkallu*

The term Watcher “relates to its Hebrew root, which means “to rouse oneself / be awake.” The term is used in the *Book of the Watchers* to refer not only to angels who ultimately fell, but also to angels who remain in heaven...”⁷¹ The Watchers are another name for the Sons of God that married the daughters of men. Their offspring were giants or Nephilim.



Notice the Wings

The word Watcher can refer to both the fallen members of God's Council and those that did not fall. “Daniel 4 is the only biblical passage to specifically use the term *watcher* to describe the divine “holy ones” of Yahweh's council.”⁷² However, “The book of Enoch

⁷¹ Kevin Sullivan, “The Watchers Traditions in 1 Enoch 6–16: The Fall of Angels and the Rise of Demons,” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblenz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 92.

⁷² Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 104.

... has the Watchers in the same role as both the Mesopotamian *apkallu* and the sons of God in Genesis 6.⁷³

The Nephilim or *Apkallu* and The Giants

We are told in Genesis 6:1-4 that the offspring of the Watchers and the “daughters of man” were Nephilim. We read in I Enoch 7:2, “And the women became pregnant and gave birth to great giants whose heights....”⁷⁴ So, “The Nephilim were the mythical semi-divine beings spawned by these illicit liaisons.”⁷⁵

In Genesis we read:

The Nephilim [or giants]⁷⁶ were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.” (Genesis 6:4, ESV)

⁷³ John H. Walton, Tremper Longman III, and Stephen O. Moshier, *The Lost World of the Flood: Mythology, Theology, and the Deluge Debate* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 127.

⁷⁴ James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1 (New York; London: Yale University Press, 1983), 16.

⁷⁵ P. W. Coxon, “Nephilim,” ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden; Boston; Köln; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge: Brill; Eerdmans, 1999), 618.

⁷⁶ The two most common translations of this Hebrew word are Nephilim and giants.



The LXX, written about 300 BC, confirms that this word Nephilim means giants.

Now giants [γίγαντες] were upon the land in those days, and after that, whenever the sons of God visited the daughters of humans, they fathered children for themselves; those were the giants [γίγαντες] who were from long ago, the people of renown.⁷⁷
Genesis 6:4 LXX

So, the Nephilim were giants, offspring of the fallen “sons of god,” the Watchers.

⁷⁷ Rick Brannan et al., eds., *The Lexham English Septuagint* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Ge 6:4.

“The sins of the Giants, sons of the Watchers, are violence, bloodshed (cannibalism), sins against the animals, birds, and fishes, and drinking of blood (1 En 7:4–5). Homicide is among the sins that make the land impure (Deut. 21:9). ...the Giants’ consumption of blood, which is a violation of the biblical prohibition (Gen. 9:3–4). These are the sins of the Watchers and their offspring that made the earth impure. The resultant flood is not only a punishment of these sins but also, at the same time, a purification of the earth.”⁷⁸ We see them mentioned in a variety of Old Testament passages: Deuteronomy 2:10–11, 21; Joshua 11:21–22; 14:12, 15

Apkallu

“According to the writings of the early Sumerians, there were seven sages, or demigods, who were created by the god Enki (or the god Ea, in the Akkadian version) and sent to Earth in order to establish culture and provide mankind with the roots of civilization. From other of their sagas, we learn that these seven were saved during the Great Flood, and served as priests and advisers to the earliest kings of Sumer. They furnished mankind with a moral code, as well as knowledge of various crafts and arts. They were reported to have the lower torso of a fish, or to be dressed in a costume that represented a fish. They were reported to have first emerged from the sweet water called the “Abzu.””⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Ida Fröhlich, “Mesopotamian Elements and the Watchers Traditions,” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblenz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 16.

⁷⁹ <https://www.paleoaliens.com/the-apkallu-the-mesopotamian-nephilim/>



As is common in Mesopotamian literature the Apkallu are either identified as the Watchers or their offspring, the Nephilim. Their literature suggests *both*. So, on the one hand, "...after the events of the Flood, "apkallu" was a term used in Mesopotamian texts for the divine sages sent to the underworld Abyss by Marduk. They were the Mesopotamian equivalent of 1 Enoch's Watchers,

imprisoned in the Abyss for their transgression with human women.”⁸⁰

“In the Mesopotamian flood story found in a text now known as the *Erra Epic*, the Babylonian high god Marduk punishes the evil *apkallus* with banishment to the subterranean waters deep inside the earth, which were known as Apsu. The Apsu was also considered part of the underworld. Marduk commanded that they never come up again. The parallels are clear and unmistakable. The banishment of these sinister divine beings to beneath the earth is significant. ...this element of the story, found in 2 Peter and Jude, is not found in the Old Testament. The presence of this item in books like 1 Enoch and, subsequently, in the New Testament, is a clear indication that Jewish writers between the testaments were aware of the Mesopotamian context of Genesis 6:1–4.”⁸¹

The Apkallu were the agents that transferred the knowledge supplies by the Watchers to the post-flood world of Mesopotamia. “It is no understatement that for Mesopotamians, the entire repository of knowledge that was to prove indispensable for civilization—and thus their own greatness—“was traced back to the wisdom of apkallus in its entirety.” This role is a precise parallel to the Watchers of 1 Enoch, who taught humanity forbidden knowledge by which they became wicked and depraved (1 Enoch 8:1–4; 10:7–8).”⁸²

But on the other hand, “Mesopotamian texts actually provide evidence for four post-Flood apkallu. These individuals are the key players in understanding why Genesis 6:1–4 was ever written in Scripture. The four post-Flood apkallu are said in one cuneiform

⁸⁰ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 93.

⁸¹ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 103.

⁸² Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 41.

tablet to be “of human descent.” The fourth post-Flood apkallu is further described as being only “two-thirds apkallu.”⁸³

Only “two-thirds apkallu” demands that these were the offspring of the Watchers and not the Watchers themselves.

So, “the pre-Flood apkallu were fully divine but the post-Flood apkallu were hybrid beings. The result is that “apkallu” is a term for both fully divine beings before the Flood and quasi-divine hybrid beings after the Flood.”⁸⁴

Rephaim

The word Rephaim is another word for the Nephilim.

“The Rephaim were giants. Deuteronomy informed us that the Anakim were considered Rephaim (Deut 2:11), as were the Zamzummim (Deut 2:20). Og of Bashan “was left from the remnant of the Rephaim” (Deut 3:11), so that “Bashan was called the land of the Rephaim” (Deut 3:13).”⁸⁵ There is also a Valley of Rephaim near Jerusalem. “The use of *Rephaim* in the Hebrew Bible suggests that behind the biblical narrative were the legends of some ancient indigenous peoples, who inhabited the valleys of the land of Canaan which was subject to the gradual Hebrew conquest.”⁸⁶

The Anakim

The Anakim are mentioned 9 times in the Old Testament.⁸⁷

“So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, “The land, through which we

⁸³ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 42.

⁸⁴ Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 43.

⁸⁵ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 228.

⁸⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rephaim>

⁸⁷ Num 13:22, 28, 33; Deut 9:2; Josh 15:13, 14; 21:11, and Judg 1:20.

have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.” (Numbers 13:32–33, ESV)

They are identified as of “great height” coming “from the Nephilim” first mentioned in Genesis 6:4. The association is clear.

Demons

Warfare and the Flood destroyed these Nephilim or giants, but from their bodies came the *demons* that now roam the earth. “1 En 15:8 refers to the offspring of the Giants as demons... These beings are spiritual in nature, following their fathers’ nature; they do not eat, they are not thirsty, and they know no obstacles.”⁸⁸ And again, “Evil spirits have come out of their bodies.”⁸⁹

An important point to remember is that “the flood does not destroy the giants either, but releases their spirits to constitute a realm of evil spirits, who continue to roam about the world and plague humanity until the eschatological judgment....”⁹⁰

The Greco-Roman world had almost identical beliefs on the origin of demons. “Socrates suggests that demons may be the offspring of union between gods and nymphs (Plato *Apology* 15 [27 B–E]), and Hesiod says that demons are the disembodied spirits of men who died in the Golden Age (*Works and Days* 110–27)”⁹¹

⁸⁸ Ida Fröhlich, “Mesopotamian Elements and the Watchers Traditions,” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblentz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 16.

⁸⁹ James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1 (New York; London: Yale University Press, 1983), 21.

⁹⁰ Amar Annus, “On the Origin of Watchers: A Comparative Study of the Antediluvian Wisdom in Mesopotamian and Jewish Traditions,” *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 19 (2010): 312.

⁹¹ Randall D. Chesnutt, “The Descent of the Watchers and Its Aftermath according to Justin Martyr,” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblentz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 169.

“Justin takes the bold step of identifying the Greco-Roman pantheon with the fallen angels and their demonic progeny.”⁹²

In addition, the Church father, Tertullian, “expressly attributes his beliefs about the fallen angels and their demonic brood to Enoch and Enochic writings (*Apology* 22; *On Idolatry* 4; *On the Apparel of Women* 2–3).”⁹³

“The spirits of the offspring of the fallen angels who remained on earth (even after the Flood) helped give rise to the New Testament concept of the demons as Satan’s minions, so the very concept of the “fall of the angels” gave rise to the idea of demons....”⁹⁴

The word “demon” is not common in the Old Testament yet mentioned twice:

*They sacrificed to demons that were no gods,
to gods they had never known,
to new gods that had come recently,
whom your fathers had never dreaded.* Deuteronomy 32:17
(ESV)

*“They sacrificed their sons
and their daughters to the demons....”* Psalm 106:37 (ESV)

They are mentioned 76 times in the New Testament most of these in the Gospels. In the New Testament “They are malevolent beings who can invade and inhabit human beings causing mental and physical illness (e.g., Mark 1:34).”⁹⁵

⁹² Randall D. Chesnutt, “The Descent of the Watchers and Its Aftermath according to Justin Martyr.” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblenz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 172.

⁹³ Randall D. Chesnutt, “The Descent of the Watchers and Its Aftermath according to Justin Martyr.” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblenz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 169.

⁹⁴ Kevin Sullivan, “The Watchers Traditions in 1 Enoch 6–16: The Fall of Angels and the Rise of Demons.” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblenz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 92.

⁹⁵ Kevin Sullivan, “The Watchers Traditions in 1 Enoch 6–16: The Fall of Angels and the Rise of Demons.” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian*

“The well-known texts of 1 Enoch have the offenders of Gen 6 as divine (the sons of God are called Watchers in 1 Enoch, a term that ... derives from a Mesopotamian context) and their offspring as giants. First Enoch connects this to demonology in that, when a giant was killed, its “Watcher spirit” is referred to as a demon. Hence in Gen 6 divine-human cohabitation is the answer to where demons come from in Second Temple Jewish thinking.”⁹⁶

Deuteronomy 32:15–17 follow the passage in Deuteronomy 32:8–9 describing the division of the nations and of God choosing Israel as his portion—the “*Lord’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.*” (32:9).

“But Jeshurun⁹⁷ grew fat, and kicked; you grew fat, stout, and sleek; then he forsook God who made him and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation. They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons [shedim] that were no gods [’ēlōah],⁹⁸ to gods [’ēlōhīm] they had never known, to new gods [or new ones] that had come recently, whom your fathers had never dreaded.” (Deuteronomy 32:15–17, ESV)

Here we are told of Israel's compromise and fall that followed God's choice, and in this story the demons are mentioned. These demons are the spirits of the dead giants or Nephilim.

For Justin Martyr “The demons descended from those rebellious angels masquerade as deities, enslave people through magic and visions, draw people into every form of vice, mimic Christian doctrines in pagan myth and ritual, trick people into worshipping

Traditions, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblenz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 99.

⁹⁶ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015).

⁹⁷ “*Jeshurun is a poetic term for Israel (v. 26; 32:15; Is 44:2).*” Eugene H. Merrill, “*Deuteronomy.*” in *CSB Study Bible: Notes*, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 313.

⁹⁸ *’ēlōah* is a shortened form of the word *’ēlōhīm* or gods.

idols, deceive pagans into persecuting Christians, and inspire false teachers (*1 Apol.* 5, 9, 10, 14, 26, 44, 54, 56, 58, 62, 66).⁹⁹

To sum up; “To Christians of the second and third centuries ... this story of the mating of the angels with the daughters of men and of its dire consequences for the peace of society, was not a distant myth: it was a map on which they plotted the disruptions and tensions around them.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Randall D. Chesnutt, “The Descent of the Watchers and Its Aftermath according to Justin Martyr,” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblenz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 173.

¹⁰⁰ Randall D. Chesnutt, “The Descent of the Watchers and Its Aftermath according to Justin Martyr,” in *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblenz Bautch, and John C. Endres (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 173.

