



The Diabolical Scheme of Evil Angels in Noah's Lifetime

West Houston Bible Church

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The Identity of the Sons of God

**Topic: Date of the Event and
Identification of the Problem**

(Introduction)

Basic OT Chronological Scheme

- 3298 BC – Universal Flood
- 2625 BC – Tower of Babel Dispersion
- 2320 BC – Nimrod's/Sargon's Reign Began
- 2166 BC – Birth of Abram
- 1876 BC – Jacob's House Moved to Egypt
- 1446 BC – Israelite Exodus from Egypt
- 1406 BC – Israelites Crossed into Canaan
- 967 BC – Construction of 1st Temple Began
- 587 BC – Jerusalem Fell to Babylonians

Sources for Universal Flood in *ca.* 3298 BC

Jeremy Sexton and Henry B. Smith Jr., “Primeval Chronology Restored: Revisiting the Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11,” *Bible and Spade* 29/2 (2016): 42–49.

Henry B. Smith Jr., “The case for the Septuagint’s chronology in Genesis 5 and 11. Pp. 117–132 in Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference on Creationism, ed. J. H. Whitmore (Pittsburgh: Creation Science Fellowship, 2018).

Rodger C. Young, “Ussher Explained and Corrected,” *Bible and Spade* 31/2 (2018): 47–58.

Douglas Petrovich, *The Forgotten Era: Illuminating Biblical History from the Tower of Babel to Abraham* (n.d.), forthcoming.

Who are the pre-flood evildoers
of Genesis 6? What were they
attempting to accomplish here?
Where are their physical remains?
Were they actually giants?

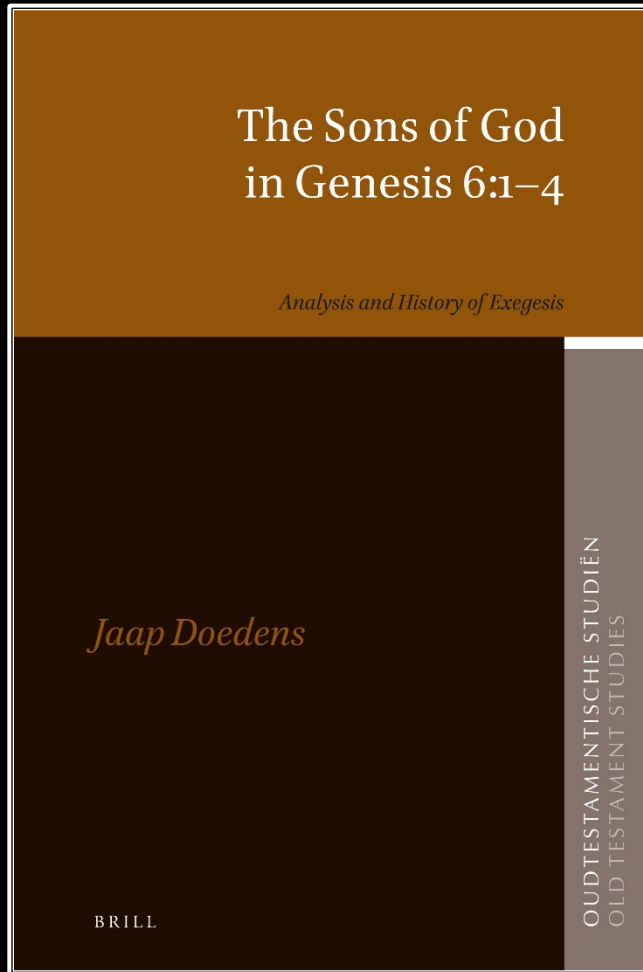
Identifying the Problem, and the 2 Major Views

The Problem: A fervent disagreement has arisen among interpreters over the meaning of the “sons of God” in Genesis 6:4.

The Two Major Views:

- 1) The *běne hā'ēlōhîm* of Genesis 6:4 are evil angelic beings who were permitted to take on human flesh and live among human beings, who descended from the line of Adam.
- 2) The *běne hā'ēlōhîm* of Genesis 6:4 are human beings from the “godly line” of Seth, the son of Adam who was born to Eve after the death of Abel (Gen 4:25), whom (his brother) Cain murdered.

Recent Sources on the “Sons of God”



(1) Jaap Doedens, *The Sons of God in Genesis 6:1-4* (Brill: 2019).

(2) Michael Heiser, *The Unseen Realm* (Lexham: 2015). Plus, online video

(3) Peter Gentry’s online video.

(4) Douglas Petrovich’s, “Identifying the ‘Sons of God’ in Genesis 6:1-7” paper, downloadable from my academia.edu webpage: <https://thebibleseminary.academia.edu/DouglasPetrovich>.

The Identity of the Sons of God

**Topic: Outline and
Translation of the Text**

(Genesis 6:1–7)

Outline of Genesis 6:1-7

- 1) The actors and their actions (6:1-2)
- 2) The consequences for mankind (6:3)
- 3) An elaboration of their actions and judgment (6:4-7)

The Sons of God in Genesis 6:1–7

^{6.1}Now it came to pass that the man [i.e. ‘the race of mankind’] began to increase on the surface of the earth, and daughters were born to them. ^{6.2}Then the sons of God [*bene ha elohim*] saw the daughters of the man [i.e. “the race of mankind”], that they *were* beautiful, so they took women for themselves from all whom they had chosen. ^{6.3}So He-who-is said, “My Spirit will not contend with the man [i.e. ‘the race of mankind’] forever, of whom indeed he is flesh. Thus, his days will be 120 years.” ^{6.4}(The fallen ones [*nephilim* ≠ ‘giants’] were on the earth in those days, and afterwards also, when the sons of God were going into the daughters of the man [i.e. ‘the race of mankind’] and sired *offspring* to them. They [i.e. ‘the sons of God’ = ‘the fallen ones’] were the powerful ones [*gibborim*, but not ‘mighty men’] who were from antiquity, males [not ‘men’!] of renown.)

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The Identity of the Sons of God

**Topic: The Meaning of
hā ādām in Genesis 6:1**

(Identifying *hā ādām* as Humanity: Adam's Entire Line)

Meaning of אָדָם in Genesis 6:1

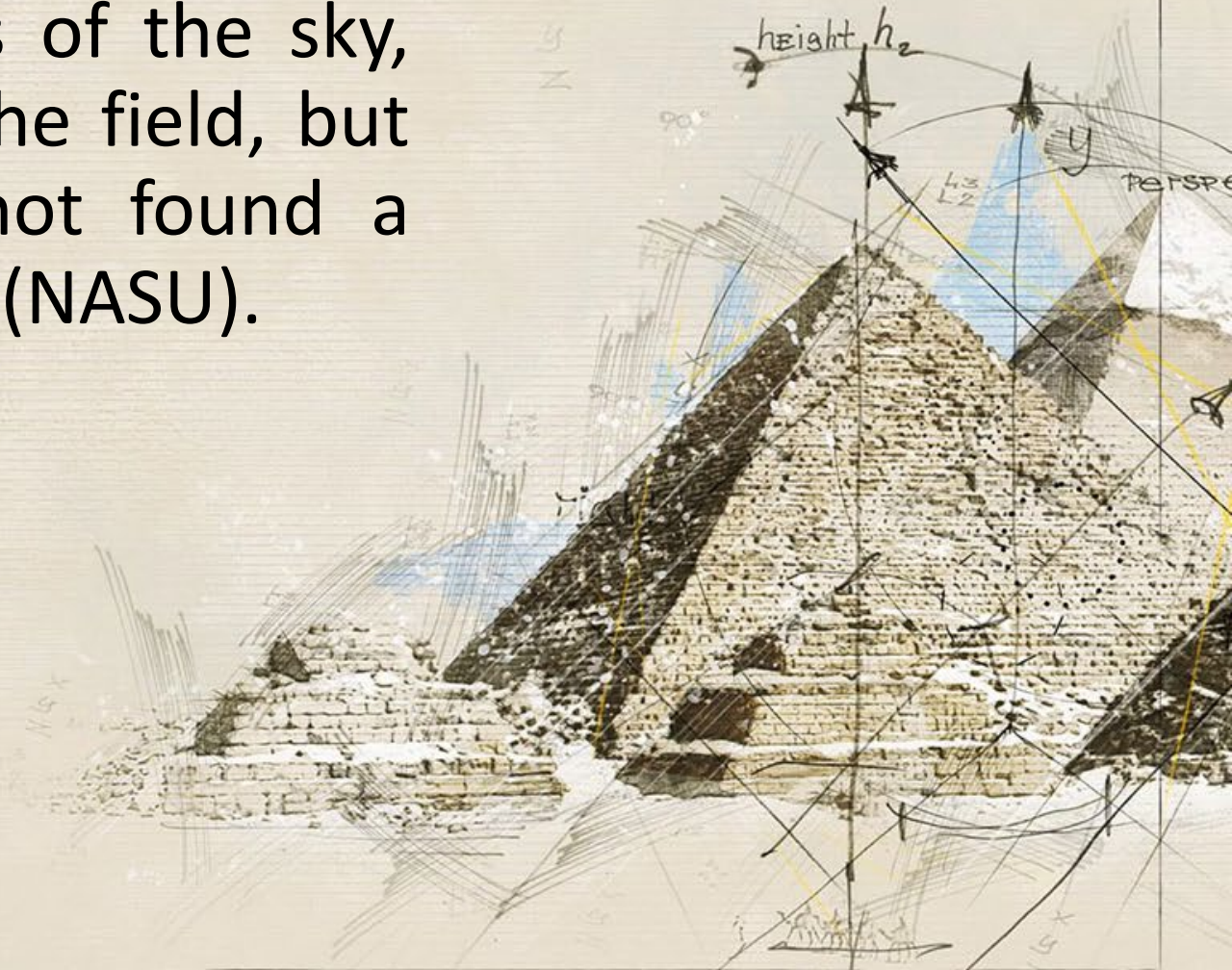
The article + noun *hā ādām* is used consistently in the first 2 chapters of **Genesis** to refer to the first man who was formed. Most often, Bibles translate it, “the man”. In **2:20b**, the NASU first translates *ādām* as “Adam.”

In Gen 3:17, Moses makes another specific reference to this first man without the definite article, essentially the equivalent of using *ādām* as a name. From these points forward in the NASU translation, every time Adam is named in Genesis there is no definite article (5:1, 3, 4, 5).

The other 3 references to Adam in the Hebrew Bible (HB) also are anarthrous (1 Chr 1:1; Job 31:33; Hos 6:7). Therefore, from Genesis 2:20b forward in the HB, any time Adam is named, his name does not possess the definite article.

“The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for **Adam** there was not found a helper suitable for him” (NASU).

GENESIS 2:20



Meaning of הָאָדָם in Genesis 6:1

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“Then to **Adam** He said, ‘Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you,’ . . .” (NASU).

GENESIS 3:17



Meaning of אָדָם in Genesis 6:1

The article + noun *hā ādām* is used consistently in the first 2 chapters of Genesis to refer to the first man who was formed, having been translated “the man” most often. In 2:20b, the NASU first translates *ādām* as “Adam.”

In Gen 3:17, Moses makes another specific reference to this first man without the definite article, essentially the equivalent of using *ādām* as a name. From this point forward, every time—except for Gen 3:24—Adam is named in Genesis there is no definite article (5:1, 3, 4, 5).

The other 3 references to Adam in the HB also are anarthrous (1 Chr 1:1; Job 31:33; Hos 6:7). Therefore, from Genesis 2:20b forward in the HB, any time Adam is mentioned, his name does not include the definite article.

Meaning of אָדָם in Genesis 6:1

The final time that *hā ādām* is used in Genesis of the first man seems to be in 3:24, where God “drove out the man” (i.e. Adam, the individual) from the garden of Eden. By the time that Moses reaches Gen 6:1, *hā ādām* refers to the race of mankind, whose progenitor was Adam.

Here, the text states that *hā ādām* (with the article) began to increase on the surface of the earth. Certainly the author was not stating that Adam began to increase on the surface of the earth, because the very next verse (6:2) notes that the sons of God saw the daughters of *hā ādām*.

Since the earth already was populated with Cain, Seth, and their offspring—such as Seth’s son Enosh (4:26)—the reference to *hā ādām* must refer to the entire Adamic race.

The Sons of God in Genesis 6:1–7

^{6.1}Now it came to pass that **the man** [i.e. ‘the race of mankind’] began to increase on the surface of the earth, and daughters were born to them. ^{6.2}Then the sons of God [*bene ha elohim*] saw the daughters of **the man** [i.e. “the race of mankind”], that they *were* beautiful, so they took women for themselves from all whom they had chosen. ^{6.3}So He-who-is said, “My Spirit will not contend with the man [i.e. ‘the race of mankind’] forever, of whom indeed he is flesh. Thus, his days will be 120 years.” ^{6.4}(The fallen ones [*nephilim* ≠ ‘giants’] were on the earth in those days, and afterwards also, when the sons of God were going into the daughters of the man [i.e. ‘the race of mankind’] and sired *offspring* to them. They [i.e. ‘the sons of God’ = ‘the fallen ones’] were the powerful ones [*gibborim*, but not ‘mighty men’] who were from antiquity, males [not ‘men’!] of renown.)

^{6.5}Now He-who-is saw that great was the wickedness of mankind on the earth, and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil, all the day *long*. ^{6.6}So He-who-is was grieved [not ‘repentant’!] that he had made the man [i.e. ‘the race of mankind’] on the earth, and he hurt to his heart. ^{6.7}Then He-who-is said, “I will wipe away the man [i.e. ‘the race of mankind’], whom I have created, from upon the surface of the ground: from mankind, to animal, to creeping thing, to bird of the sky, because I am grieved that I have made them.”

Who are the
“sons of God” in
Genesis 6?

The Identity of the Sons of God

**Topic: Meaning of the
Technical Term *bēnē hā'ēlōhîm***

(Meaning of “sons of God”)

The Sons of God in Genesis 6:1–7

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The Uses of *běně hā' ʔlōhîm* in the HB

There are only 5 uses of the technical term “sons of God” in the Hebrew Bible. Here are those 5 readings:

- 1) Genesis 6:2: “Then *běně hā' ʔlōhîm* saw the daughters of mankind, that they *were* beautiful, so they took women for themselves from all whom they had chosen.”
- 2) Genesis 6:4: “The fallen ones were on the earth in those days, and afterwards also, when *běně hā' ʔlōhîm* were going into the daughters of the man and sired *offspring* to them. They were the powerful ones who were from antiquity, males of renown.”
- 3) Job 1:6: “Now there was a day when the *běně hā' ʔlōhîm* came to present themselves in the presence of He-who-is, and Satan also came into their midst.” [Satan sought to turn Job from God.]

The Uses of *běně hā'ělōhîm* in the HB

There are only 5 uses of the technical term “sons of God” in the Hebrew Bible. Here are those 5 readings:

- 4) Job 2:1: “There was another day when the *běně hā'ělōhîm* came to present themselves in the presence of He-who-is, and Satan also came in their midst in order to present himself in the presence of He-who-is.” [Satan plagued Job w/boils, head to toe.]
- 5) Job 38: 4a, 6–7: “Where were you *during* my founding of *the* earth? . . . To what were its bases sunk? Or, who laid its cornerstone, *when* the morning stars were shouting out in joy, and all of *the* *běně 'ělōhîm* yelled out *loudly*? [Not only are “morning stars” a clear reference to angelic beings, but this use of hendiadys also includes the “sons of God,” who rejoiced at the creation of the earth, which took place on Day 1 of creation.]

The Uses of *běně hā' ělōhîm* in the HB

Since Adam, and thus the race of mankind, was not created until Day 6 of creation, the *běně hā' ělōhîm* must have been alive as functional beings at least 5 days before the advent of mankind.

For this reason, the *běně hā' ělōhîm* of Gen 6:2 can be spirit beings who were around on Day 1 of creation to rejoice at the splendor of earth's formation. Yet by the time of Job, they were accomplices of Satan, whose scheme was to turn Job against God, first by stripping away his possessions and killing his children, and second by striking him with painful boils from top to bottom.

Any attempt to connect these *běně hā' ělōhîm* to some alleged “godly line of Seth,” a modern term rather than a biblical term, simply cannot be sustained by the context of Genesis 6. After a study of the text of Genesis 6:1–7 in part 3, in part 4 the evil-angels view will be proven to be superior to the line-of-Seth view.

Who are the
“fallen ones” in
Genesis 6?

The Sons of God in Genesis 6:1–7

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Hebrew: נפֿלִים



Greek LXX: γίγαντες



Latin Vulgate: *gigantes*



English (KJV): giants

The Hebrew word נְפִלִים (*nəphilim*)
is a masculine plural participle
that derives from the verb נָפַל.

The undisputed meaning of this 3ms verb is “he fell,” and it is used of how Cain’s countenance fell when God disregarded his offering (Gen 4:5), as well as of how the rain fell on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights during the flood of Noah’s day (Gen 7:12).

Luke 10:17

As recorded in Luke 10, Jesus had sent out 70 of his disciples to perform great deeds and to announce that the Kingdom of God had come near to them. After the 70 disciples returned to Jesus, they told him of their astonishment that demonic beings were subject to them in the name of Jesus. His reply to them appears in **Luke 10:18** (πεσόντα aor. act. sing. part. from πίπτω):

“**Then he said to them, ‘I saw Satan fall from heaven as lightning.’**” While it is disputed as to whether Isaiah 14:12–15 records the event of the fall of the evil angels from the heavenly abode of God at their initial disobedience, there is no dispute about the Greek Bible’s record of this event for Satan. Here, Jesus, himself, states clearly that he—obviously in his pre-incarnate state as the 2nd member of the Trinity—observed Satan fall from his original place in heaven. If Satan fell from that abode, his evil angels also must have fallen from there. Thus, **they truly can be the fallen ones of Genesis 6.**

Who are the
“powerful ones”
in Genesis 6?

The Sons of God in Genesis 6:1–7

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Genesis 10:8–9

The problem with translating *gibbor* as “a mighty one” here is that in English this usually implies someone mighty in a good sense, such as David’s mighty men (2 Sam 23), or Apollos, who was mighty in the scripture (Acts 18). Nimrod was anything but mighty in a positive sense. In fact, if he is one-and-the-same as Sargon of Akkad—the first empire-builder, as I attempt to prove in my book on Nimrod—he was anything but good. In fact, Sargon of Akkad was a ruthless killer who invaded cities and killed their armies, if not their civilian occupants as well, then incorporated their cities and possessions into his growing empire.

“Now Cush sired Nimrod. That one acted irreverently, in order to become **powerful** [not a mighty one!] on the earth. He became a powerful slaughterer in the sight of He-who-is.”

The Sons of God in Genesis 6:1–7

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The Identity of the Sons of God

**Topic: Fuller revelation about
the evil angels of Genesis 6**

(New Testament passages)

1 Peter 3:17–22

^{3.17}For *it is* better to *go on* suffering while practicing good, if the will of God should wish, than while practicing evil, ^{3.18}because Christ indeed died once concerning sins, the righteous for *the* unrighteous, so that he may bring you to God, on one hand being put to death in flesh, but on the other hand brought to life **in spirit**, ^{3.19}**in which also he gave a proclamation** (ἐκήρυξεν aor. act. ind. verb from κηρύσσω) **after going to the spirits in prison**, ^{3.20}**after their disobedience in a previous time, when the longsuffering of God was in the state of waiting during the days of Noah, while an ark was being prepared, into which a few—that is, eight souls—were saved through water,** ^{3.21}**which corresponding immersion also now is saving you, not an immersion** of flesh—a removal of dirt—but of a good conscience, the result of a request to God, by means of *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ, ^{3.22}who is at *the* right hand of God, after going into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers were submitted to him.

Ephesians 4:8–10

Therefore, the interpretation of evil angelic beings in Genesis 6 fits perfectly with the spirits to whom Jesus—while “in spirit” himself—made a proclamation. Where did Jesus announce this proclamation to the evil spirit-beings who committed heinous evil in Noah’s day? The answer is found in Ephesians 4:8–10: *πίπτω*):

^{4.8}“Therefore, it says, ‘Having ascended on high, he led captivity captive. He gave gifts to humans.’ ^{4.9}Now the saying, ‘He ascended,’ what is its *meaning* except that **he also descended into the lower parts of the earth?** ^{4.10}The one having descended is himself also the one ascending far above all of the heavens, in order that would fulfill all things.”

The location of the proclamation of Jesus to the evil angels of Noah’s day was the lower parts of the earth. No text states what he announced to them, but undoubtedly his message was that their

Ephesians 4:8–10 and Jude 6

sinister plot to corrupt the purely human line that needed to go directly from Adam to Messiah had failed miserably. Instead, Jesus was born within that pure line, lived a completely sinless life as the only-begotten son of God the father, and conquered sin and eternal separation from God for mankind by becoming a sinless sacrifice while dying on the cross. What's more, he was resurrected, which according to 1 Corinthians 15 made him the first fruits among all who eventually will be resurrected. Thus, the place where Jesus announced the failed plot to these evil angels was the lower parts of the earth.

Jude 6 reads, “and **angels who did not maintain their own domain**, but abandoned their proper place of habitation, he [i.e. God] has guarded **in perpetual bonds, under darkness**, for the judgment of the great day.” The leaving of their own domain thus was their exiting of the spiritual realm, when they took on human flesh and cohabitated with the daughters of mankind (i.e. the race of Adam), which caused

Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4

God to place them in permanent bonds in darkness, as they await the judgment of the great day, certainly referring to when all mankind will be judged and condemned into hell, which is the lake of fire.

In relation to this, 2 Peter 2:4 clearly notes that angels—i.e. the very evil angels who had attempted to prevent the purely-human line that needed to extend from Adam to Jesus—were cast into *tartaros*. This verse states that “God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but he threw them into *tartaros*.” The Greek word *tartaros* does not mean hell, as many English translations suggest, but rather a holding area that is a temporary place of torment as the final judgment and form of eternal suffering awaits. The act of committing these evil angels to pits of darkness within the earth was connected expressly to God’s preservation of Noah when the universal flood was used to judge all of humanity on earth (2 Pet 2:5), including Seth’s line. So, the sons of God in Genesis 6 only can be evil angels.