


***The Theology of the Unseen Realm:
How God Uses Angels, Demons and the Holy Assembly***


“The Case for the Supernatural View of Genesis 6:1-4 – Part C”

I. New Testament Case for the Supernatural View of Genesis 6:1-4

A. **Text One** – I Peter 3:18-22



“¹⁸ For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; ¹⁹ in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, ²⁰ who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. ²¹ Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.”




1. Peter uses typology in the above text. He assumes the great flood in Genesis 6-8 is in conjunction with the Sons of God incident. Genesis 6:1-4 typified or foreshadowed the gospel and resurrection.
 - a. Edmond Clowney’s remarks display the difficulty commentators have when a supernatural view of Genesis 6:1-4 is set aside as “fanciful.”

“Peter writes about Christ’s preaching to *spirits in prison*. His words were no doubt clear to those who first heard them, but they have been hard for later generations to understand. Martin Luther writes in his commentary: ‘A wonderful text is this, and a more obscure passage perhaps than any other in the New Testament, so that I do not know for a certainty just what Peter means.’ Study of the passage may have progressed since Luther’s day, but his confession still warns us against over-confidence!”

– From Edmond Clowney, *The Message of I Peter*, p. 156.
 - b. The difficulty in understanding verses 19 and 21 becomes clear when one realizes that Peter is referencing an older story. Expositors who do not hold to a supernatural view of Genesis 6:1-4 avoid this understanding.

c. McKnight makes a valid point:




“After analyzing the evidence myself, mostly in preparation for class lectures at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, where students are quick to challenge a professor’s points of view, I came to agree with those who thought that Peter was utilizing a view about spirits that was current in the Judaism of his time. Inheriting this tradition, probably from *I Enoch* (a Jewish pseudepigraph), Peter adds color to it by having Jesus announce his victory over the nether world in his exaltation to the Father.” [Emphasis mine]

– From Scott McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary*, I Peter, p. 218.

d. Peter H. Davids summarizes the correspondence between I Peter,

Intertestamental Writings, and Genesis 6:1-4:



“A reading of Gen. 6:1-4, especially as used by Jews of Peter’s day, makes it clear that these “sons of God” were associated with Noah and interpreted as angels who had disobeyed God and were subsequently put in prison. In 1 Enoch, for example, Enoch sees a place of imprisonment and is told, ‘These are among the stars of heaven that have transgressed the commandments of the Lord and are bound in this place’ (21:6). Here, then, we have an event that includes all the elements to which Peter refers, spirits (angels, stars, Watchers, and spirits are used interchangeably by 1 Enoch) that were disobedient (“transgressed the commandment of the Lord”) and were therefore put in prison (“This place is a prison house of the angels; they are detained here forever,” 1 Enoch 21:10), all of this happening with relation to the days of Noah.

“Christ, then, journeyed to this prison, which 2 Pet. 2:4 describes as Tartarus (cf. Rev. 20:1-3), but along with Jude 6 gives no spatial location, unless Tartarus itself serves to locate it in the netherworld. While there he “preached” to those spirits. In the NT the Greek term *kēryssō* normally refers to the proclamation of the kingdom of God or the gospel (e.g., 1 Cor 9:27), but it does on a few occasions retain its secular meaning of “proclaim” or “announce” (e.g., Luke 12:3; Rom 2:21; Rev. 5:2). Furthermore, while Peter refers to the proclamation of the gospel clearly four times, he never uses this verb to do so.”

– Peter H. Davis, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Epistle of I Peter*, p. 140.

e. Some have resisted a watcher interpretation of I Peter because the tradition

would have been unfamiliar outside of Judaism. However, Karen Jobes, PhD from Westminster, makes the following point:

“... Peter’s allusion to the tradition of the watchers does not necessarily require a literary knowledge of the *Book of I Enoch*. The *Book of I Enoch* may preserve a tradition that was more widely known. Many people today who are familiar with the concept of purgatory are neither Roman Catholic nor able to cite the religious texts in which that doctrine is stated. Only a general knowledge of the role of the evil spirits in Noah’s flood story would have been sufficient to make Peter’s point. ... For those who knew the Enoch – Noah tradition of the condemnation of the watchers and the evil spirits that came from their progeny, Peter’s point is that Christ’s resurrection and ascension have given Him victory over them and the evil they incited on Earth ... whether Jew or Gentile, were familiar at least with the Noah tradition.” – Karen H. Jobs, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: I Peter*, p. 244, 245. [Emphasis Mine]

2. The New Testament never speaks of an evangelism of dead spirits. Yet, it does speak of Christ’s triumph over evil entities and the powers of darkness.

Proclamation vs. Preaching:

II Corinthians 2:14

“¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.”

Colossians 2:15

“⁵ When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.”

I Enoch also notes a proclamation of judgment upon spirits held in prison. See I Enoch 16:4.

“⁴ Say to them therefore: You have no peace.” (Said to fallen *elohim* who committed the sin noted in Genesis 6:1-4.)

a. Davids continues:

“Thus it seems likely that this passage in 1 Peter refers to a proclamation of judgment by the resurrected Christ to the imprisoned spirits, that is, the fallen angels, sealing their doom as he triumphed over sin and death and hell, redeeming human beings.

“It is precisely this contrast between the spirits and human beings that occupies the next step in the argument. The angels were ‘disobedient’ to God

(while not totally clear in Gen. 6, it is very clear in 1 Enoch 6), and with them in the time of the deluge the majority of people.” – IBID, p. 141.

b. Even Edmond Clowney, who does not hold to a supernatural view of Genesis 6:1-4, concedes the following:

‘It would be a great mistake to read into 1 Peter the fanciful descriptions of *1 Enoch*. But the use of *1 Enoch* in Jude 14-15 and the passage about the doom of fallen angels in 2 Peter 2:4 show us that the language of the ‘Enoch’ literature could help us to understand the terms used in 1 Peter. Since the disobedient angels and their offspring were viewed as instigators of lawlessness in the antediluvian world, it might be possible to speak of them as those *who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah* (3:20). ... Peter’s word for *preached* (3:19) means ‘heralded’ or ‘proclaimed’. It could carry the meaning of announcing judgment rather than offering salvation. In view of the description of Christ’s victory in 3:22, that meaning is possible here. Christ’s preaching’ to the spirits in prison would then be his proclamation to the ‘angels, authorities and powers’ of his resurrection victory and their doom. ... Yet,” he continues, “It is a proclamation of God’s righteousness and therefore of the need of repentance. That message was addressed through Noah to those disobedient sinners during their lifetime. The passage describes no second chance.”

– Edmond Clowney, *The Message of 1 Peter*, p. 161, 163.

3. Doriani, while commenting on I Peter 3, notes that the imprisoned spirits’ identity ... “could be fallen angels, perhaps those mentioned in Genesis 6 and imprisoned by God (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). The last option, that Jesus made a proclamation to fallen angels, is most widely adopted for several reasons.” [Emphasis mine] – Daniel M. Doriani, *Reformed Expository Commentary: 1 Peter*, p. 152.

a. Doriani is onboard with a supernatural view of Genesis 6:1-4. He uses it as a rationale for Peter’s words. His reasons include:

1. The word “spirits” (plural) always refers to non-human spiritual beings unless qualified. Deceased human souls (psyche) refer exclusively to deceased humans. Typically, *spirits* refers to evil spirits or fallen angels. “Scripture nowhere states that the souls of men are kept in prison.” – Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: James, Epistles of John, Peter and Jude*, p. 142.

2. In I Peter's time, the most common Jewish understanding of Genesis 6 held that fallen angels played a great role in corrupting humans in Noah's day. These fallen angels are prominent in I Enoch 12-21. See specifically I Enoch 21:6-10.
3. We note that "prison" probably does not refer to hell. Many other terms are used by New Testament writers for the location of the dead. It seems wise to take "prison" as a metaphor for God's control over evil spirits. See Doriani, *I Peter*.

B. Text two and three – First note, just about all commentators assert that Jude and II Peter are inter-dependent. Either Jude is borrowing from II Peter, or II Peter is borrowing from Jude. Additionally, both borrow from a shared tradition. See Thomas R. Schreiner, *I and II Peter, Jude, New Testament Commentary*, p. 447-451.

1. Jude 6

“⁶ And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day.”

2. II Peter 2:4

“⁴ For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment.”

3. Further note correspondence and background from I Enoch.

a. There are actually two books of Enoch who was the great, grandfather of Noah and who also did not see death (Gen. 5:24). *I Enoch* is also known as the *Ethiopian Book of Enoch*. *II Enoch* is also known as the *Slavonic Book of Enoch*. The books are dated to 300-200 BC (Intertestamental time). The content regarding a divine rebellion is also recorded in *Jubilees* and Hesiod's *Theogony*, 313-320. Both Aramaic and Greek fragments were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

b. I Enoch 1:9 (a prophecy) is actually cited in Jude 14, 15.

c. Regarding Jude's connection to I Enoch, Davids remarks, "Did Jude, then consider this [*I Enoch*] Scripture to be like Genesis or Isaiah? Certainly, he did consider it authoritative, a true word from God. We cannot tell whether he

ranked it alongside other prophetic books such as Isaiah and Jeremiah. What we do know is, first, that other Jewish groups, most notably those living in Qumran near the Dead Sea, also used and valued *I Enoch*, but we do not find it grouped with the Scriptural scrolls.” – Davids, *Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, p. 76.

4. Some commentators have asserted that Peter was writing about angels who rebelled with Satan. For example, see Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd Ed., pp. 471-472.

a. However, John Tibai makes a sound rebuttal.

“...if the angels cast into Tartarus are yet free to roam, then Peer’s argument is significantly weakened, for the certainty of the judgment of the apostates in verse 9 is based on the historical fact that God [has already] punished the sinning angels and will deliver a future punishment as well.” – John Tibai, *A Study of the Viability of the Angelic Interpretation of the Sons of God in Genesis 6:1-4*, p. 68.

II. Divine Spirits in Prison Comparison

A. Note interdependence of Jude and II Peter with I Enoch

1.

2 Peter 2:4-5	Jude 5-6	I Enoch 10:11,12
<p>Vs 4: “For God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them to hell and committed them to pits of darkness reserved for judgment.”</p> <p>Vs 5 locates the time period: “And did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness....”</p>	<p>Vs 5: “Now I desire to remind you”</p> <p>Vs 6: “... angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, he has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the Great Day.”</p>	<p>“...bind his associates who have united themselves with women ... bind them fast for seventy generations in the valley of the earth till the day of judgment and the prison in which they shall be confined forever....”</p>

2. The clearest reading of the New Testament writers indicates I Enoch as the original source.

- a. This does not mean all of I Enoch is inspired, but these authors held that parts were indeed inspirational or at least authoritative on background information.


B. The Book of Jubilees, another intertestamental book, notes the supernatural view of Genesis 6:1-4 and the imprisonment of the lesser *elohim* for the transgression.

1. Often called the “lesser Genesis” because of its close dependence upon the Book of Genesis. The book is generally dated to the middle of the second century B.C.

“Based upon the number of manuscripts found among the Dead Sea Scrolls and its use by numerous early church fathers, we can conclude that Jubilees was well-known during the New Testament times. Along with Enoch, it is often included in the canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.” – Tim Chaffey, *Fallen*, p. 129.


2. Note the following references.

- a. Jubilees 5:1-2



“And when the children of men began to multiply on the surface of the earth and daughters were born to them, that the angels of the Lord saw in a certain year that jubilee that they were good to look at. And they took wives for themselves from all of those whom they chose. And they bore children for them; and they were giants. And injustice increased upon the earth, and all flesh corrupted its way; man and cattle and beasts and birds and everything which walks on the earth. And they all corrupted their way and their ordinances, and they began to eat one another. And injustice grew upon the earth and every imagination of the thoughts of all mankind was thus continually evil.”

- b. Jubilees 5:6



“And against his angels whom he had sent to the earth he was very angry. He commanded that they be uprooted from all their dominion. And he told us to bind them in the depths of the earth, and behold, they are bound in the midst of them, and they are isolated.”

All quotations from the *Book of Jubilees* are from James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 2.

- c. Jubilees quotes an earlier work – The Book of Noah. We examined it in Lesson #5, page 66.

1. We previously noted the connection between the name Mastema and Satan. Now note what happened in God’s wisdom and holy anger.

“And the Lord our God spoke to us [the archangels] so that we might bind all of them. ^{7,8} And the chief of the spirits, Mastema, came and he said, ‘O Lord, Creator, leave some of them before me, and let them obey my voice. And let them do everything which I tell them, because if some of them are not left for me, I will not be able to exercise the authority of my will among the children of men because they are (intended) to corrupt and lead astray before my judgment because the evil of the sons of men is great.’ ⁹ And he said, ‘Let a tenth of them remain before him, but let nine parts go down into the place of judgment.’ ... All of the evil ones, who were cruel, we bound in the place of judgment, but a tenth of them we let remain so that they might be subject to Satan upon the earth.

– noted in Heiser, *Demons*, p. 96-97

2. A second rebellion by lesser *elohim* who did the same sin will be noted in a later lesson.

III. More recent analysis, including intertestamental works and the Dead Sea Scrolls, demonstrates an expository shift away from Calvin and Luther’s rejection of the supernatural view of Genesis 6:1-4. (The preponderance and level of academic scholarship is noteworthy.)

A. Additional scholars regarding correspondence

1. Richard J. Baucham:

“Originally the fall of the Watchers was a myth of the origin of evil (so I Enoch 6-19), but by the first century A.D. its importance was already waning as the origin of evil was focused rather on the fall of Adam (e.g. Rom 5; 4 Ezra). This is no doubt why there are only a few allusions to it in the NT (1 Pet 3:19-20; 2 Pet 2:4; perhaps 1 Cor 11:10; 1 Tim 2:9). But it was still widely known and accepted, especially in those Jewish Christian circles where the Enoch literature remained popular. Perhaps it was largely owing to the influence of those circles and the continuing popularity of the Enoch literature in the second-century Christianity that the fall of the Watchers retained its place in the Christian tradition longer than in Judaism, where the Enoch literature fell out of favor in rabbinic circles

“Jude’s reference is directly dependent on I Enoch 6-19, which is the earliest extant account of the fall of the Watchers (from the early second century B.C. at the latest: Milik, *Enoch*, 22-25, 28, 31), and he shows himself closely familiar with those chapters. They tell how, in the days of Jared (Gen 5:18), two hundred angels under the leadership of Semihazah and ‘Asa’el, filled with lust for the beautiful daughters of men, descended on Mount Herman and took human

wives. Their children, the giants, ravaged the earth, and the fallen angels taught men forbidden knowledge and all kinds of sin

Jude's intention in stressing here the peculiar sexual offenses of both the Watchers and the Sodomites is probably to highlight the shocking character of the false teachers' violation of God-given order. This is the emphasis in *T. Napht.* 3, which belongs to the same tradition as Jude uses here ("Sun, moon and stars do not change their order; so should you also not change the law of God by the disorderliness of your deeds . . . that you become not as Sodom, which changed the order of her nature ... In the same way also the Watchers changed the order of their nature..."; and cf. the same idea of sin as violation of the created order in *1 Enoch* 2-5)."

– Richard J. Baucham, *Word Biblical Commentary: Jude and 2 Peter*, p. 51,54. [Emphasis Mine]

2. D. A. Carson notes:



"However we understand 'the sons of God' in the Hebrew of Gen. 6:1-4, the LXX refers to them as *angeloi*, which word is picked up in both Jude 6 and 2 Pet. 2:4 and, in the NT, is almost always used of angels, rarely of 'messengers,' and never of aristocratic figures such as kings and nobles. In other words, on the basis of philology alone, the angel interpretation seems most credible,"

– *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* D. A. Carson, , p. 1071.

3. F.F. Bruce:

"The first and third examples are biblical (cf. Num. 14; Gen 19); but the second of them, that of the fallen angels, is drawn from non-canonical books such as 1 Enoch (chapters 6-10), although the basis of the apocryphal details may well have been Gen. 6:1-4. Such apocryphal books were evidently well known and appreciated by Jude's readers, and so he could confidently appeal to them as well as to Scripture Books of this sort might not be truly inspired nor authoritative, but their moral lessons in particular were wholesome and worth heeding

"Like Jude (vv. 5-7), Peter uses three well-known examples of God's punishment of the wicked and presumptuous. First he recalls the **angels** who **sinned**, probably an allusion to Gen. 6:2 (see the commentary on Jude 6). They were **sent ... to hell** (literally, Tartarus, the Gk. Name for the very lowest hell); **dungeons** represents the better MS reading, preferable to the 'chains of the AV.'"

– F.F. Bruce, *The International Bible Commentary: Jude*, p. 1591, 1567.


4. Mayer:

"So, also for the story of the fall of the angels. But is it a satisfactory explanation of the latter to suppose that 'sons of Seth' are meant by 'sons of God'? Ryle (*Early Narratives of Genesis*, 91-95) points out that 'there is nothing in the context to suggest this, no sign that the Sethites were distinguished for piety: they are not even exempted from the charge of general wickedness which


brought on the Flood.’ Equally untenable is the Jewish explanation that ‘sons of God’ are the nobles. ... The pre-Abrahamic narrative shows many resemblances with the Babylonian records, but in general the motive has been changed and purified. Thus Driver says (p. lxiii): ‘It is impossible, if we compare the early narratives of Genesis with the Babylonian narratives, from which in some cases they seem plainly to have been ultimately derived ... not to perceive the controlling operation of the Spirit of God, which has taught these Hebrew writers’”

– Joseph B. Mayer, *The Epistles of Jude and I and II Peter, Greek Text*, p. 166.


5. Hillyer:



“The second warning example from the OT concerns the sin and fate of fallen **angels**. They became disgruntled with their **positions of authority**. Their lofty station, Jude says, the angels **did not keep** (*tērein*, to watch over). They failed to do their duty in guarding something of great value. They were not single-minded in maintaining the exclusive position for which God had purposely created them. They chose to look elsewhere and **abandoned their own home**. They deserted in order to further their own ends.” ...



“Jude combines the two ideas. First, the angels deserted their appointed place of authority to go after a position not intended for them. Second, they abandoned their proper domain to cohabit with beautiful women on earth. Such notions may sound bizarre to modern ears, but their implication is plain. *Pride* and *lust* ruined the angels that fell. The evil interlopers Jude warns his readers against are equally guilty of pride and lust. Their judgment is as certain as that which befell those angels, despite their exalted status.



“The angels who defected have been sentenced to be **kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains**. We are not intended to imagine a literal dungeon in which fallen angels are fettered. Rather, Jude is vividly depicting the misery of their conditions. Free spirits and celestial powers, as once they were, are now shackled and impotent. **Shining once, once enjoyed the marvelous light of God’s glorious presence, are now plunged in profound darkness.**”

– Norman Hiller, *Understanding the Bible Commentary Series: I and II Peter, Jude*, p. 242.

6. Moo, regarding II Peter:

“But a more likely candidate for Peter’s reference emerges when we consider Jewish tradition. A number of writers in the intertestamental period developed a story about angels who sinned and were punished by God at the time of the Flood. The story finds its most developed form in the pseudepigraphical book *I Enoch*, but it is alluded to in several other places. ... This tradition was not simply made up from whole cloth; the writers were elaborating on Genesis 6:1-4, a passage that tells about ‘sons of God’ who were attracted to the ‘daughters of men,’ married them, and had children with them. In the Jewish tradition we are referring to, the

‘sons of God’ were angels and their cohabiting with women was a basic reason why God judged the world of Noah’s day. ... Peter refers to this same tradition in his first letter when he announces that Christ ‘went and preached to the spirits in prison’ (I Peter 3:19). ...

“The presence of a metaphor here is further suggested by the Greek word that lies behind the NIV’s ‘but sent them *to hell*.’ This word is *tartareo*, ‘consign to Tartarus.’ In Greek mythology, Tartarus was the subterranean abyss to which disobedient gods and rebellious human beings were consigned. The NJB captures the idea rather literally: ‘sent them down into the underworld.’ Other Jewish writers had already borrowed the language to describe the place where the ungodly were punished.⁵ The translation ‘hell,’ while accurate enough in some ways, may be misleading. For Peter makes clear that this consigning of the angels to Tartarus is only a preliminary punishment; they are being ‘held for judgment.’ Tartarus in Peter’s conception appears not so much to represent a place of final and endless punishment (as our ‘hell’ often does), but the limitation on sphere of influence that God imposed on the angels who fell.”

See Footnote as well:

“⁵ ‘Tartarus’ does appear as a name for hell in the Septuagint (Job 40:20; 41:24; Prov. 30:16) and in a few Jewish writings (*1 Enoch* 20:2; *Sibylline Oracles* 4,186; Philo, *Moses* 2.433, *Rewards and Punishments* 152). This is another example of Peter’s penchant for using Hellenistic terminology (see the ‘Bridging Contexts’ section of 1:3-11).

– Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter, Jude*, p. 101-103.



7. MacArthur – Note on II Peter

“According to Jude 6, they [angels] entered men who promiscuously cohabitated with women. Apparently, this is a reference to the fallen angels of Gen. 6 (sons of God) ... who left their normal state and lusted after women.”

– *MacArthur Study Bible*, Second Edition, p. 2013.

a. Note MacArthur said of S. Lewis Johnson, “Through the years I have listened to the preaching of S. Lewis Johnson more than any other preacher.”

8. Lucas and Green:

“[Jude] ... is more likely to be referring to the strange incident in Genesis 6:1-3. The angels have some positions of authority, areas of God given responsibility. But they were not satisfied with the role God had given them, and infringed the boundaries by intermarrying with humans.”

– Dick Lucas and Christopher Green, *The Bible Speaks Today: The Message of 2 Peter and Jude*, 178.

9. Interpreter Bible

“Their [angels] proper dwelling was the high heaven. The story of their abandonment of their privileges to satisfy their lust reinforces Jude’s warning of the possible loss by professing Christians of their privileged spiritual status and the punishment that must follow.”

– *The Interpreter’s Bible*, Vol. 12, 327.

10 Francis Schaeffer – Regarding Genesis 6 and the interface with Jude, he writes:

“What has stirred men’s curiosity is that the book of Jude seems to refer to this. Verses 6-7 read, ‘And angels that kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, having in like manner given themselves over to fornication and gone after strange flesh [the Greek says *other flesh*], are set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire’ (ASV). This passage seems to say that there are angels who left their own proper place and are specifically under judgment because they acted like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. That is, as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah sought ‘other flesh’ in homosexuality, these angels sought flesh that was ‘other flesh’; they involved themselves with human women in what could be called fornication.

“There is further interest along this line if one understands this as a comingling of the angelic and the human, for then it is possible that it was the original historic source of an element common in mythology. More and more we are finding that mythology in general though greatly contorted very often has some historic base. And the interesting thing is that one myth that one finds over and over again in many parts of the world is that somewhere a long time ago supernatural beings had sexual intercourse with natural women and produced a special breed of people.

“Such a notion is further strengthened by Genesis 6:4: ‘There were giants [*Nephilim*] in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.’ One can speculate, therefore, that the mighty men which were of old, men of renown, might be the historic reality behind these myths.”

— Francis A. Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time*, 125-126. [Emphasis mine]

11. Gene L. Green:

“Jude has in mind a very well-known Jewish interpretation of Gen. 6:1-4 that understood the passage as a reference to angelic sin. ... According to a considerable portion of ancient Jewish literature, these ‘sons of God’ were thought to be fallen angels. ... The book that contains the most extensive reflection on these angels is *1 Enoch*, a work that Jude quotes in verse 14-15. ... Jude’s purpose in evoking the story of the angelic fall is to demonstrate that those who hold a privileged position are not exempt from divine judgment if they embrace sin. The apostacy of angels and the judgment against them is

paradigmatic for the present time; as angels, so these heretics, whom Jude deems apostates, vs. 8. The link between the heretics and the angelic apostasy is strengthened by the sexual nature of the angels' and the heretics' sin."

– Gene L. Green, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Jude and II Peter*, 66,67.

12. A. W. Pink:

“These ‘sons of God’ then, appear to be angels who left their own habitation, came down to Earth and cohabitated with the daughters of men. ... The reference in Jude 6 to the angels leaving their own habitation, appears to point to and correspond with these ‘sons of God’ (angels) coming into the daughters of men. Apparently, by this means, Satan hoped to destroy the human race (the channel through which the woman’s Seed was to come) by producing a race of monstrosities.”

– Arthur W. Pink, *Gleanings in Genesis*, 93-95.

13. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum:

“This was a satanic attempt to corrupt the Seed of the woman by having some of his angels take on human form and intermarry with human women to try to corrupt the seed so that the Messiah could not come. There is a parallel here with Genesis 3:6, where in the case of Eve: *The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and ... she took*. The three words *saw, good, and took* means that she violated a barrier between God and man. Now 6:2 states that these angels saw the daughters of men and that they were fair and they took... Here again the same three words (*saw, good, and took*) are used, indicating that they violated the barrier between angels and men. ... These unions resulted in the Nephilim. ... *They bore children unto them*. These children were the *Nephilim*. So the Nephilim were the children of human women and fallen angels. They were human on one side but superhuman on the other.”

— Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariel’s Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*, 143-144.

14. Edwin A Blum regarding Fallen Angels:

“The most likely reference here is to the angels (‘sons of God’, c.f. Gen. 6:4; Job 1:1,2) who came to Earth and mingled with women. This interpretation is expounded in the pseudepigraphical book of Enoch (7; 9.8; 10.11; 12:4), from which Jude quotes in v.14, and is common in the intertestamental literature and the early church fathers (e.g., Justin *Apology* 2.5). These angels ‘did not keep their positions of authority’ (*tēn heautōn archēn*). The use of the word *archē* for ‘rule,’ ‘dominion,’ or ‘sphere’ is uncommon but appears to be so intended here (cf. BAG, p. 112). The implication is that God assigned angels stipulated responsibilities (*archē*, ‘dominion’) and a set place (*oikētērion*). But because of their rebellion, God has kept or reserved (*tetērēken* – perfect tense) these fallen angels in darkness and in eternal chains awaiting final judgment.”


— Edwin A Blum, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Vol. 12: II Peter, Jude*, 390.

15. Paul Gardner:

“He did this, it seems, because his *readers* regarded it so highly. He therefore was, in effect, using their own material to point to their own judgment. A paraphrase of Jude’s intention might go something like this: ‘Here is a book you know well; it contains much that is useful. We can learn a number of things from it. In some places we can learn from its interpretation of parts of the Old Testament; you need specially to hear these words, for they relate to you!’ ... In Jewish intertestamental times there was a great emphasis on the activity of angels and on the final judgment of the wicked and the coming of the Messiah. ... 1 Enoch was part of all this and Jude was writing to a readership caught up with such ideas. In quoting this work, Jude was therefore adding weight to his argument, for he had found truth in the passage quoted from the book of Enoch.”

— Paul Gardner, *Focus on the Bible: I and II Peter and Jude*, 392, 393.

16. See also Mark D. Futato, Course-Joshua-Esther, The Land Part II – The Inhabitants, Lesson 2, Lecture 2, Reformed Theological Seminary, September 1, 2020. (subsplash.com/reformtheosem_copy/learn-about-rts/mi/+b5p5mp8)

 B. Without a supernatural view of Genesis 6:1-4, Jude and II Peter do not make sense.

1. Some have asserted that the quoting of I Enoch by Jude and II Peter was simply hypothetical for illustrative purposes. A modern example would be when a minister would quote a portion of “Star Wars” to illustrate a biblical point.
 - a. Response: Ancient people did not have tension in accepting and presuming the supernatural. They assumed it, but we struggle with it. Jude and Peter were predisposed toward believing in the supernatural.
 - b. The obvious answer is the best. Both writers clearly refer to a divine rebellion. There is no heavenly rebellion resulting in a spiritual imprisonment discussed anywhere in the Old Testament except Genesis 6:1-4. In addition, the mention of imprisonment connects directly to the Mesopotamian story as well as Enochian material. To assert otherwise is sophistry (the use of fallacious arguments.)

C. The highly anticipated Genesis, Vols. I and II have just been released. While maintaining the Sethite view, Richard Phillips concedes the following:



“I noted that the expression ‘sons of God’ can refer to the godly line. Yet, the most direct reference of this phrase in Scripture is to the angelic court that attends upon God in heaven. A clear parallel is seen in Job 1:6, which describes ‘a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.’ Without question, the Job reference speaks of angels, including both holy and fallen ones, as do similar references in Psalms 29:1 and 89:7. While it is possible that ‘sons of God’ and ‘daughters of man’ refer to Sethites versus Cainites, Gordon Wenham points out that this ‘is, to say the least, an obscure way of expressing such an idea.’”

Later he concludes:



“In my judgment, the view that sees ‘the sons of God’ as Sethites who sinfully married the daughters of Cain would be the stronger argument, given the overall context of Genesis 4-6, except for the testimony of 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6-7. Yet, we must allow the New Testament to provide the final word on the Old Testament. In this case, while the interpretation is still not certain, the New Testament seems to identify the sons of God in Genesis 6 as fallen angels.”

– Phillips, *Genesis*, Vol. I, pg.338-339. [Emphasis Mine]

IV. Summary argument for the supernatural view.

A. Sons of God identity.

1. The sons of God are identified as supernatural in Scripture.
2. To identify them as Sethites requires an allegory hermeneutic.
3. The seed of the serpent motif is in play.
4. The ancient Ugarit language confirms a supernatural view.
5. The pseudepigrapha confirms a supernatural view.
6. Moses’ emphasis against all unholy mixture confirms this view.
7. Lesser *elohim* appear as men and so human that they may be unrecognizable.
8. There is no Jewish or Christian debate until the 2nd century AD.
9. I Peter 3:18-22, Jude 5-6 and II Peter 2:4 are dependent on I Enoch.
10. Jude is not only dependent upon Enoch, but actually quotes the ancient book.

a. Jude 14-15

“¹⁴ It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of

His holy ones, ¹⁵ to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

B. Jesus smashed the serpent’s head.

1. After the crushing blow, he proclaimed his victory before the powers of darkness who dared to pollute God’s image. See I Peter 3:18-22, pg. 105.

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