

“THE REDESIGN OF HUMANITY”

INTRODUCTION: Tonight we turn to one of the most interesting and most discussed passages in the Bible...

1. **Genesis 4:25-6:8**

2. The two things that make the text so interesting are these:

- a. First: The *incredible lifespan* of the Patriarchs of Genesis 4-5
- b. Second: The controversy over the meaning/interpretation of Genesis 6:1-3

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." (Genesis 6:1-3)

3. **Notice that this passage comes in two parts:** The Genealogy of Adam (4:25-5:32) and the Corruption of Man (6:1-8).

a. **Key observation:** each passage ends with *Noah*

- i. *When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son and called his name Noah, saying, "Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands." Lamech lived after he fathered Noah 595 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Lamech were 777 years, and he died.*

After Noah was 500 years old, Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Genesis 5:28-32)

- ii. *But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. (Genesis 6:8)*

b. **Bruce K. Waltke:** *Genesis: A Commentary* (p. 109-110).

The two acts of this account are linked by the reference to Noah in their final verses (5:32; 6:8). Act 1 traces the generations from Adam to Noah, demonstrating that Noah is the legitimate seed to build the culture pleasing to God. This act consists of an introduction giving the setting of this genealogy as the creation of 'ādām in God's image (5:1b-2), a tenfold linear genealogy from Adam to Noah (5:3-31) and a segmented eleventh generation (5:32). Both the setting and the unique citations of Enoch and Lamech link this lineage with God. The second act corroborates Noah's right by contrasting him with his own generation. The whole world has become so utterly corrupt that God determines to wipe out the human race; however, Noah finds favor with God (6:8). The second act also forms a transition to Book 3, the account of Noah (6:9-9:29).

- c. Here is the second *toledot* (genealogy)
- i. *These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. (Genesis 2:4)*
 - ii. *This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. (Gen. 5:1-2)*
4. In Moses' structure of the Book of Genesis, the passage of 4:25-6:8 forms a **third story**.
- a. **Story one:** The Creation of the World (Gen. 1:2)
 - i. Scene one: *The Creation of the Earth (ch. 1)*
 - ii. Scene two: *The Creation of Mankind (ch. 2)*
 - b. **Story two:** The Fall of Mankind (Genesis 3-4)
 - i. Scene one: *The Fall of Adam and Eve (ch. 3)*
 - ii. Scene two: *The Fall of Human Culture (ch. 4)*
 - c. **Story three:** The Corruption of Mankind (Genesis 4:25-6:8)
 - i. Scene one: *The godly line of Seth (4:25-5:32)*
 - ii. Scene two: *The Corruption of Humanity (6:1-8)*
5. We are “unpacking” these great themes in Genesis in order to understand *why* and *how* the Gospel changes culture:
- a. *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)*
 - b. *He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1:13-14)*
 - c. *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world— the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever. (1 John 2:15-17)*
 - d. *Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." (Revelation 11:15)*
6. St. Paul *connects* Genesis (creation & culture) to the Gospel (Christ and the Kingdom of God). He calls this “*the new creation.*”

- a. According to Paul, Jesus is restoring what Adam ruined – “the world.”
- b. *Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.*

I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

*"Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory?
O death, where is your sting?"*

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. (1 Corinthians 15:45-56)

- c. *He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (Colossians 1:13-17)

- d. *"Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created." (Revelation 4:11)*
- e. *"Worthy are you to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation. (Revelation 5:9)*
- f. *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."*

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." (Revelation 21:1-5)

- g. *Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:11-13)*

7. In our *Gospel mission and message*, Genesis 1-11 must be connected to the Great Commission.

- a. i.e., **the Gospel transforms human culture**
- b. **Ken Ham:** *Creation Evangelism for the New Millennium (1999)*, p. 29.

An understanding of the following three elements of the Gospel is a prerequisite to an understanding of how to present the Gospel to different people within a culture, or to different cultures.

1. *If one preaches the Gospel without the message of the Creator, and the origin of sin and death, then one preaches it without the foundational knowledge that is necessary to understand the rest of the Gospel. Without this information, who then is Jesus Christ? Why did He need to die? Why could He, and not someone else, die for sin? What is special about Christ? Where did sin come from? Why can we say that all have sinned? Why do we die?*
2. *If one preaches a Gospel without the message of Christ crucified and raised from the dead, then one preaches a Gospel without power. After all, as Paul said: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:17). The only reason our personal sins can be forgiven and our relationship with our Creator be restored is because of what Christ did on the Cross. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is central to the Gospel.*
3. *A Gospel that is preached without the message of the new heaven and earth is a message preached without hope. What point is there to a Gospel with no future sinless state? Because of sin the judgment of the curse, the creation is “groaning” (Romans 8:22). There is death, sickness, and suffering all around us. However, we need to understand that death is an intrusion in our world. In 1 Corinthians 15:26, Paul states it this way: “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”*

Death, then, is an enemy that is to be destroyed some time in the future.

8. We have looked at **Four Key Issues** that the Gospel addresses in our American, Western, Postmodern Culture:

- a. **First:** *The good and noble life:* how God planned and made our world. What Jesus is restoring.
- b. **Second:** *The Historicity of Adam and Eve:* how Christ is the new man, the son of Adam, creating a new humanity.
- c. **Third:** *The Emergence of Strong Women:* how Christ is both redeeming fallen women and restoring to them a redemptive role in life.
- d. **Fourth:** *The Evolution of Lost Boys:* how Christ is renewing masculinity and calling us to, once again, become what He is: “Our brother’s keeper.”

9. And now we turn to **theme #5: The Corruption of the human race...**

- a. *The Redesign of Humanity*
- b. Satan's desire to ruin the human race
- c. Lost mankind's desire to redefine and "redesign" themselves
- d. The spiritual struggle behind *transexuality, transgender surgery, homosexuality, Lesbianism, social design theories of both sociology and psychology, cloning, abortion and other bioethical discussions.*

10. **Question:** Can individuals, scientists, doctors and the social scientists *redesign* the human race without dire consequences?

11. **Genesis 4:25-6:8** will answer that question for us:

- a. The Reality of Two Humanities (4:25-5:32)
- b. The Redesign of One Mankind (6:1-8)

I. THE REALITY OF TWO HUMANITIES (Genesis 4:25-6:8)

1. **Notice** something interesting: *The genealogy of Adam does not include Cain and his descendents!*
2. *And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him." To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD. This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.*

When Seth had lived 105 years, he fathered Enosh. Seth lived after he fathered Enosh 807 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Seth were 912 years, and he died.

When Enosh had lived 90 years, he fathered Kenan. Enosh lived after he fathered Kenan 815 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Enosh were 905 years, and he died.

When Kenan had lived 70 years, he fathered Mahalalel. Kenan lived after he fathered Mahalalel 840 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Kenan were 910 years, and he died.

When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he fathered Jared. Mahalalel lived after he fathered Jared 830 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Mahalalel were 895 years, and he died.

When Jared had lived 162 years he fathered Enoch. Jared lived after he fathered Enoch 800 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Jared were 962 years, and he died.

When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years. Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he fathered Lamech. Methuselah lived after he fathered Lamech 782 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Methuselah were 969 years, and he died.

When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son and called his name Noah, saying, "Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands." Lamech lived after he fathered Noah 595 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Lamech were 777 years, and he died.

After Noah was 500 years old, Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

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.

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 was sorry 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." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. (Genesis 4:25-6:8)

3. Adam had 3 “primary” sons: *Cain...Abel...Seth...*

- a. The murderer (*Cain*)
- b. The murdered (*Abel*)
- c. The father of a godly line (*Seth*)

4. **Derek Kidner:** *Genesis: TOTC*; p. 80.

- a. *It is striking that of Adam’s sons only Seth is named here. No doubt the chapter first existed as a pedigree of this one family, but placed here in the context of the Cainites and their achievements its silence regarding them is pointed. In the history of salvation the family of Cain is an irrelevance.*
- b. God works through **redeemed people** in order to redeem the world.
- c. In fact, the redemption of **creation** goes hand-in-hand with the redemption of **mankind**.
- d. The **Redeemer** (the New Adam) works through his **redeemed** (New Humanity) to bring in His New World.
- e. *For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. (Romans 8:19-25)*

5. This is **why** I believe Adam and Eve were “saved” (redeemed).

- a. *And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.* (Genesis 3:21)
 - b. *And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him." To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD. This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created.* (Genesis 4:25-5:2)
 - c. Key statement: "...people began to call upon the name of the Lord." (a people of faith)
 - d. Unlike the Cainanites who *never* reference God!
 - e. **Adam is listed as the progenitor of the godly line of men who, in faith, called upon the name of the Lord.**
 - f. Adam is the **first** of 15 patriarchs: *From Adam to Joseph*
 - g. The story line of Genesis: *The History of the Patriarchs*
6. Moses sets forth this genealogy to tell us two important things that **define human history...**
7. **First:** *The linear nature of the human story; human history*
- a. A beginning...begetting...belonging
 - b. **David Atkinson:** *The Message of Genesis 1-11; BST; p. 124.*
The faith of this writer, in common with the Old Testament authors generally, is distinctive in many ways from the religions of neighboring cultures. Nowhere is this clearer than in their understanding of time. Whereas some other cultures worked with a cyclical view in which all things are merely part of an endless turning of the wheel of nature, with no start, no end, no significance, the Old Testament views time as linear. There was a beginning – the author refers to that once more (5:1). There will be an end; much of this chapter is about endings (and he died, e.g. vv. 5, 8, 11, 14, etc.). In between, unique and unrepeatable events happen. People live their lives, make their choices, marry and are given in marriage, have their children, celebrate their joys, reap the result of their failures. Each event has significance.
 - c. Only Christianity holds firmly to this *linear view of history.*
 - i. **Hinduism:** hinges upon reincarnation's unstoppable and endless circle of meaninglessness.
 - ii. **Buddhism:** the circle of life ends in nothingness.
 - iii. **Shintoism** and **Animism:** life after death is connected to life now by means of the interference of ancestor spirits in the affairs of life.
 - iv. **Islam:** a religion of selective history, choosing only those events Mohammed desired to remember.
 - v. **Judaism:** a religion with an aimless trajectory since the death of Christ. A people without a future!

- d. **Christianity** has a beginning (Genesis 1:1), a middle (John 1:1), an end with a happy future (Revelation 21).
- e. **Brian D. McLaren** challenges this linear view: *A New Kind of Christianity* (pp. 33, 37).
- i. *To be a Christian – in the West at least, since the fifth or sixth century or so – has required one to believe that the Bible presents one very specific story line, a story line by which we assess all of history, all of human experience, all of our own experience. Most of us know the story line implicitly, subconsciously, even though it has never been made explicit for us. We begin our quest for a new kind of Christian faith by questioning this story line. “What we call the Biblical story line isn’t the shape of the story of Adam, Abraham, and their Jewish descendants. It’s the shape of the Greek philosophical narrative that Plato taught! That’s the descent into Plato’s cave of illusion and the ascent into philosophical enlightenment.” It was also the social and political narrative of the Roman Empire, and so I began calling it the Greco-Roman narrative. What we call Western civilization is the project that grew from a marriage between the Greek philosophical tradition and the Roman political, economic, and military Empire.*
 - ii. One problem: *Moses was not Greek or Roman, but a Jew.* And “his story” (history) is older than 500 or 600 AD!
 - iii. Western society is **not** founded on a Greco-Roman worldview but on a **Judeo-Christian** worldview!
- f. What McLaren and the Emergent pastors hate is this **metanarrative** (they admit):
- i. *Creation-Fall-Flood-Redemption-Heaven-Hell*
 - ii. “the six-line narrative” (story)
 - iii. *Why? Because they don’t like the reality of hell!*
- g. Postmoderns reject the idea of any **Metanarrative**: one grand, over-arching, “big” (*meta*) story that ties all stories, all humanity and all history together
- i. Metanarratives communicate *moral absolutes*
 - ii. Metanarratives tie me to the past and to the future
 - iii. *Metanarratives make me accountable for how I live!*
 - iv. And...they tell us that all other stories are false; only the *Great Story* can be true!
- h. **But here is the truth of the True Story –**
- i. All men are connected, by genealogy, to the beginning of our human race.
 - ii. *The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for*

"In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said,

"For we are indeed his offspring."

Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." (Acts 17:24-31)

- iii. This metanarrative connects all mankind: *We are brothers and sisters of the human family.*
 - iv. This Grand Story allows for redemption: *One Savior who is a Son of Adam who redeems mankind.*
 - v. This overarching story includes billions of little stories, each human life a “subplot” of redemptive history.
 - vi. The Metanarrative tells you that *your story* is very unique, very important, and connected to all others.
 - vii. Finally: You live in *linear time*, heading toward a destiny, and not in a meaningless circle of life.
- i. **The Old Folk Hymn: “Will the Circle Be Unbroken?”**
 - i. *Will the Circle be Unbroken?
By and by, Lord, by and by.
In a better home awaiting,
In the sky, Lord, in the sky.*
 - ii. Meaning: People sitting in a circle remembering a loved one who has died (Quaker meeting?)
 - iii. Will the circle of death be broken?
 - iv. *By and by* (meaning: someday or “in due time”)
 - v. Someday I’ll break the circle and go to heaven
 - vi. **An old folk hymn of faith in an afterlife with God**
 - j. **Key point:** *Don’t jettison the linear history of the Genesis Metanarrative. It ties all of life together, gives your life true significance, and points us to heaven’s hope.*
8. **Second:** *The Reality of God’s warning: Death to all men*
- a. The lineage of Adam, shows incredibly long lives:
 - i. *Adam* (930 years)
 - ii. *Seth* (912 years)
 - iii. *Enosh* (905 years)

- iv. *Kenan* (910 years)
- v. *Mahalalel* (895 years)
- vi. *Jared* (962 years)
- vii. *Enoch* (365 years – “walked with God”)
- viii. *Methuselah* (969 years: the world record)
- ix. *Lamech* (777 years)
- x. *Noah* (950 years)
- The Flood –
- xi. Terah: Abraham’s father (205 years)
- xii. Abraham (175 years); Ishmael (137), Isaac (180), Jacob (147) and Joseph (110 years)

b. The “*wages of sin*” took centuries (millennia) to unfold.

c. Prior to the flood: *Long life-spans due to the greenhouse nature of the world and the strong DNA of prefall Adam*

When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— (Genesis 2:5-6)

d. After the flood: *a harsher climate and conditions for the world and a weakening DNA*

9. **Key point:** Death is taking its toll on people, and they want to seek for a way to redesign humanity and ensure their own immortality.

10. The stage is set for the sad story of Genesis 6:1-8.

II. THE REDESIGN OF ONE MANKIND (Genesis 6:1-8)

1. *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.*

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 was sorry 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." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. (Genesis 6:1-8)

2. “*The Sons of God*” intermarry with “*the daughters of men.*”

- a. Why? Because these women were “*attractive*” (good, lovely, desirable).
 - b. Eve’s daughters were a race of beautiful women.
 - c. This so displeases God that He says, “*That’s it! For millennia, I have struggled with a sinful race. I will give them 120 years to repent and, if not, I will destroy mankind with a great flood judgment.*”
3. What exactly had happened? Who were these “*Sons of God*” and these “*daughters of men,*” and why did their intermarriage so displease God that He wiped out humanity?
4. There are **three classic answers** to these questions...
5. **First:** The sons of God were the descendants of Seth’s godly line who married the daughters of men from Cain’s ungodly line: *Godly men marrying beautiful but pagan women.*
- a. The “classical” interpretation: *Chrysostom, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Francis Schaeffer and conservative scholars (H. C. Leupold).*
 - b. Fits the *immediate context* of Cain’s line vs. Seth’s line (chapters 4 and 5)
 - c. Repeated sin of Old Testament Israel: *marrying pagan wives* (esp. in Genesis and Numbers)
 - d. But...one problem: *This is not what Moses writes.*
 - e. **Bruce Waltke:** *Genesis: A Commentary; p. 116.*
Superficially this best fits the immediate context contrasting the cursed-laden line of Cain with the godly line of Seth, but it must be rejected for philological reasons. Genesis 6:1 reads “when men [hā’ādām] began to increase...and daughters [bānôt] were born to them.” hā’ādām is generic for humanity and bānôt refers to all their female offspring. It is arbitrary in the next verse to limit ’ādām to the Sethites and bānôt to the Cainites. If anything, “daughters” in this context refers to Seth’s, for in his lineage the begetting of daughters is repeated nine times (5:4, 7, passim), and the narrator never mentions daughters in Cain’s lineage.
 - f. Also: This does not fit the greater context of Genesis 5-10.
 - g. **I reject this arbitrary view (interpretation).**
6. **Second:** The sons of God are pagan rulers who forcibly take the daughters of Seth and marry them.
- a. i.e., Cainanite rulers capturing Sethite women
 - b. The modern view of *Meredith Kline, Bruce Waltke, Rabbi Umberto Cassuto, and others*
 - c. Problem: No evidence of monarchs yet in the Genesis narrative
 - d. *Nimrod* is the first king to appear, and not until Genesis 10.
 - e. Cainanites and “Jews” were not yet ethnic or even religious distinctions yet.
 - f. “*Sons of God*” never used in Old Testament for pagan kings
 - g. **Bruce Waltke:** *Genesis: A Commentary; p. 117.*

The best solution is to combine the “angelic” interpretation with the “divine king” view. The tyrants were demon possessed. Gispens avers: “The text presents us with men who are controlled by fallen angels.” Their perverted psyches allowed this entrance of the demonic.

- h. **Allen P. Ross:** *Creation and Blessing; pp. 181-182.*

I find most attractive a combination of the “angel” view and the “despot” view. Fallen angels left their habitation and indwelt human despots and warriors, the great ones of the earth.

- i. But not a well-grounded view. Also arbitrary.

7. **Third:** Fallen angels (“sons of God”) marry females and create a new line of “super humans” – the *Nephilim*

- a. *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.*

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 was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. (Genesis 6:1-6)

- b. The view of: *Early Church Fathers – Justin, Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, Lactantius, Rabbinic Judaism – Philo and Josephus; more modern scholars like J.M. Boice, Derek Kidner, David Atkinson, Gordon Wenham, and others.*

- c. **Gordon Wenham:** *“The angel interpretation is at once the oldest view and that of most modern commentators.”*

- d. The Linguistic Evidence favors this view:

- i. *“Sons of God” is used only 3 times in the Old Testament – each time referring to angels (Job 1:6, 2:1; 38:7)*
- ii. *He answered and said, “But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.” (Daniel 3:25)*
- iii. Contrast: Sons of God...daughters of men

- e. New Testament Evidence: Peter and Jude

- i. **Peter and Jude seem to take this angel view**

- ii. *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. (1 Peter 3:18-20)*

- iii. *Spirits in prison: fallen angels*

iv. *For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones. (2 Peter 2:4-10)*

v. Angels judged for sexual perversions

vi. *Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day— just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire. (Jude 5-7)*

It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him. (Jude 14-15)

vii. Jude tells us that *angels "left their proper dwelling,"* engaged in the sexual sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, and then references *Enoch* (a Jewish apocryphal book).

1. *In those day, when the children of man had multiplied, it happened that there were born unto them handsome and beautiful daughters. 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." 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. (1 Enoch 6:1-7)*

2. *And they took wives unto themselves, and everyone (respectively) chose one woman for himself, and they began to go unto them. And they taught them magical medicine, incantations, the cutting of roots, and taught them (about) plants. And the women became pregnant and gave birth to great giants. (1 Enoch 7:1-2)*

3. The Apocryphal Book of *Jubilees* about Enoch

And he wrote everything, and bore witness to the Watchers, the ones who sinned with the daughters of men because they began to mingle themselves with the

daughters of men so that they might be polluted. And Enoch bore witness against all of them. (Jubilees 4:22-23)

4. *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 of 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 the 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. (Jubilees 5:1-2)*

viii. Is **Enoch** correct in what he wrote? Obviously, Jude thinks so.

ix. **Thomas R. Schreiner:** *1, 2 Peter and Jude; NAC: p. 448.*

The sin of the angels committed, according to the Jewish tradition, was sexual intercourse with the daughters of men. Apparently Jude also understood Genesis 6:1-4 in the same way. Three reasons support such a conclusion. First, Jewish tradition consistently understood Genesis 6:1-4 in this way. Second, we know from vv. 14-15 that Jude was influenced by 1 Enoch, and 1 Enoch goes into great detail about the sin and punishment of these angels. Jude almost certainly would need to explain that he departed from the customary Jewish view of Genesis 6:1-4 if he disagreed with Jewish tradition. Third, the text forges a parallel between the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah and the angels (“In a similar way,”). The implication is that sexual sin was prominent in both instances.

f. The New Testament **does not** teach that angels are “sexless” or unable to procreate...

- i. *But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living." (Matthew 22:29-32)*
- ii. Jesus doesn't say angels *cannot* procreate, but simply that they *do not* – at least not the godly angels in heaven and not in the resurrection, i.e., the New Heaven and Earth.
- iii. **James M. Boice:** *Genesis; vol. 1; p. 248.*

The objection to this supposed union of angel flesh and human flesh is that the angels are supposed to be sexless, since Jesus said, “At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven” (Matthew 22:30). But this is not the equivalent of saying that the angels are sexless or that they could not have had sexual relations with women if they had chosen to do so. In heaven human beings will not marry but will nevertheless retain their identity, which includes their being either male or female. In the same way, the angels could also have sexual

identities. It is significant perhaps that when the angels are referred to in Scripture it is always with the masculine pronoun “he,” and they are always described as men. When Jesus said that the angels in heaven do not marry, this does not necessarily mean that those who have been cast out of heaven were incapable of doing so.

- iv. Angels are *male*: male names, always appear as masculine, masculine pronouns refer to them, called “*the Sons of God.*”
- g. The *Nephilim* point to a super-human corruption of the human race.
 - i. Half angel (demon), half human
 - ii. **James M. Boice:** *Genesis; vol. 1; p. 248.*

Since we have no information about the results of an angel/human union, except what is found here, it is impossible to argue how such a union might produce giants. It is enough to say that it is conceivable that this could happen and that this is the probable meaning of verse 4. What would be more natural than that this union would produce the “mighty men” of antiquity? Since this verse specifically refers to the “heroes of old,” what would be more probable than that this is the origin of those stories of half-human-half-divine figures present in virtually all ancient mythologies? The stories of Homer and other writers would be embellished, of course, but they probably reflect memories of these ancient outstanding figures of the pre-Flood period.
 - h. This “angelic view” is the view I hold.
- 8. God says, “*No! I will not allow demonic influence to alter the design of mankind that I brought forth in the first creation. There will be no half-angelic and half-human Superman. Women will not procreate with anyone but men. I will not allow my creatures to change my creation order...*”
 - a. For angels: They will not have bodies, enjoy sex, have offspring and rule the earth.
 - b. For men: They will not extend their mortality, alter their strength or recast their nature as immortals on the earth.
- 9. **Victor P. Hamilton:** *Genesis 1-17; NICOT; p. 263.*

Genesis 1-11 abounds with illustrations of human beings who were not content with being merely human. Accordingly they reached for divine status and attempted to overstep the boundaries that had been imposed on them. This story, with this approach, supplies another illustration of such transgression, albeit in the opposite direction. Here the divine or angelic world illegitimately impinges on the human world.
- 10. **Most of all:** *This is a story about fall creation’s attempts to push beyond the limits of creation as set by God Himself...*
 - a. Fallen angels who want a body, sex, children and dominion on God’s earth
 - b. They want what belongs to mankind: *a race of descendants.*
 - c. **Derek Kidner:** *Genesis: TOTC; pp. 84, 85.*

The craving of demons for a body, evident in the Gospels, offers at least some parallel to this hunger for sexual experience. And the present episode could well belong to the series as an

attempt, this time an angelic initiative, to bring supernatural power, or even immortality, illicitly to earth.

- d. Human beings who want supernatural powers, heavenly knowledge and immortality on earth
- e. They want what belongs to angels: *freedom from death.*
- f. **David Atkinson:** *The Message of Genesis 1-11: BST; pp. 130-132.*

So what is all this about? In the first place, as we have seen before in Genesis, the boundaries between 'heaven and earth' are being blurred: once again the boundary between the divine and the human is preached in a crossing of God-given limits. And once again, there is disaster. These giants illustrate a monstrous pushing out beyond the ways of God. In these few vivid sentences, the author is calling the people of God back to their limits. It is God who sets the boundaries for human life. There are certain things human beings may not do if they are to retain their humanity. This story of the intercourse between the earthly and the heavenly beings indicates a refusal to accept those bounds. Here is another extension and deepening of the meaning of sin. There are overpowering forces within the world which drive us to overstep God's bounds. And when we try to take to ourselves that which belongs only within the providence of God, we are likely to succumb to the demonic. The evil within humankind can, if not restrained, overstep God-given limits, and when it does, it produces giants that human beings can no longer handle. It sets free powers which should have no place in this world. The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair, and they took them as wives, breaking through the bounds of God's created order. But God speaks his Word! God sets the limits. God decrees at what point the judgment shall come. If this incident points to yet another attempt by human beings to grasp at immortality, God reminds men and women that they are 'flesh'. There is no through route to immortality this way. 'You are dust,' God said to Adam, 'and to dust you shall return' (Genesis 3:19). There is no immortality which is ours by nature: our span of life is inevitably bounded by death. Life beyond death is of God's gracious gift; it does not come through human activity – even intercourse with angels!

11. **This is a story for us** in this 21st Century “no limits” society:

- a. God determines *gender*, and no man or woman can break those boundaries – even if medical procedures can perform a “sex-change” operation.
- b. God sets the limits to *sexual intercourse*, and any sex other than between a male and a female is an abomination fraught with disaster.
- c. God sets the boundaries of *marriage*: a male husband and a female wife, together for life.
- d. God preserves the value of *children* and *how* they come into the world; abortion, the sale of children (or ones' sperm or eggs), surrogate parenting and cloning are reaches beyond the safe, sanctified and dignified limits of humanity.
- e. God sets the *limits of life* – and our frantic and infantile efforts to prolong youth, forestall death, and grow old with grace are both *embarrassing* and *stupidly sinful*.

12. **We...are...not...gods!** Never have been. Never will be.

13. And **only God** can design and redesign life –

"In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring." (Acts 17:28)

14. And God **has** a new design for fallen humanity: **His Glorious Son, Jesus Christ.**

- a. *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)*
- b. *A new nature: born from above*
- c. *A new life: life in the Spirit*
- d. *A new home: the Kingdom of God/City of God*
- e. *A new destiny: The New Heaven and New Earth – the City of God*
- f. *And a new immortality: eternal life*

15. **This is the Good News:** Jesus, the God-man, is redesigning humanity

- a. *A man both divine and human*
- b. *The Redeemer of Men and Renewer of Creation*
- c. *And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." (Revelation 21:5)*