

Sons of God in Genesis and Job By: Drew Worthen

If you've done any reading on the subject of who the "sons of God" are in Genesis 6 and the book of Job, you will find that the discussion usually revolves around three basic interpretations of this phrase.

One view contends that this phrase is addressing fallen angels who had sexual relations with the daughters of men in a marriage relationship with the express purpose of ruining the seed of humanity so as to ruin the possibility of the promised seed of the Messiah, announced by God to Adam and Eve, after their rebellion.

But to arrive at this conclusion, one must assume that Moses understood, along with his first audience, that the phrase in question defines angels. But again, if we exegete the passage in question there is no direct evidence that Moses understood this to mean angels. We would have to read this back into the passage which is not exegesis but eisegesis.

After all, Moses knew exactly what he had in mind when he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to pen this portion of Scripture since he is dealing with historic narrative. And so, we need to let Moses speak for himself and not impose on the text what we think he may have meant.

In other words, the immediate passage as it stands, does not define whether they are angels or someone else. The larger context must be brought to bear to arrive at what the Holy Spirit was conveying through this phrase.

Later in this study, we'll look in depth at other problems with the view that it refers to angels.

Another view contends that the "sons of God" in Genesis 6 are equated with powerful human rulers who dominated the known world and through their influence corrupted the morals of the seed of Seth, possibly through polygamy, which led to the downfall of humanity.

Again, this particular view does not depend on the text itself but assumes, often from extra-biblical sources, that it was understood during the time of Moses, according to the different cultures of his

day, that such rulers would have been the focus of the passage and understood as such by his readers.

While it is true that the word of God is not devoid of allusions to the culture of the day in which the Spirit of God moved men to write the very words of God for the edification of His people, we must be careful not to let the lens of the culture be the primary focus through which God is communicating His word to His people.

I certainly acknowledge that there are many places in the word of God where the pagan culture of that day is brought to bear on those who penned the very word of God. Paul at Athens comes to mind or Daniel in exile while in Babylon.

But that influence didn't trump their theology and the language used to communicate that theology in a way that depended upon any one particular culture to advance their ideas.

If the lens of culture is the nexus by which we view some of these truths then we run the risk of placing culture in a much too prominent position in our hermeneutics.

Again, I don't discount the culture of the day for helping to understand the setting in which any particular prophet or apostle may have written, only that they understood their culture and did not bow to that culture as if they were hamstrung without using its particular tenets to communicate God's truth.

If God speaks then we should depend on the actual words He communicates in His word within the context of who He is and what He desires to reveal to His glory, whether it is within the culture of near eastern thought or the culture of Roman or Greek thought.

Another aspect of this position that the sons of God are a privileged or powerful group, distinct from the common people, promotes the idea that the Nephilim are the actual product of the sons of God cohabitating with the daughters of men thus producing a super-race of angel/people.

And I'll also touch on this position a little later though the thrust of this study will reflect my position against the "sons of God = angels" position.

And yet another view says that the “sons of God” were the “godly” descendants of Seth who eventually intermarried with the ungodly seed of Cain again resulting in God’s judgment of the world.

And so, we end up with three views that are all looking at the same information found in the Scriptures and are coming up with three different perspectives depending on one’s pre-supposition as to what the phrase, “sons of God” actually means.

A Fourth View

But, I believe there is an additional view that I will argue is closer to the view of the sons of God being the descendants of Seth, but with a distinction that is not emphasized enough, which I believe differentiates between a “godly” seed and a “covenant” seed, both of which are not always equal.

I make this argument from the premise that when God created Adam, His unilateral covenant with Adam on the sixth day of creation was the basis upon which God would identify His people. Along with the covenant came a designation that identified Adam with that covenant; image of God.

Of course, God’s covenant compelled Adam to participate in its requirements which led either to life or death as he was given the responsibility to carry the name of God in faithfulness.

After Adam’s rebellion God graciously, and with no other motivation than a love for His people, enacted a new covenant with the promise of being reconciled back to God and the hope of the curse being lifted through the seed of the woman, the promised Messiah.

This new covenant with Adam and Eve is identified with a seed, the seed of the woman, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Genesis 3:15 ¹⁵ And *I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed*; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

This is the covenant war of two seeds. And it is from this time in redemptive history where God’s covenant people will be distinguished from the rest of the world through this covenant promise.

This same premise is seen in the covenant that God made with Israel whereby its initial establishment with that people in Egypt was not dependent on Israel’s status as either good or bad at the

time, (with a name attached to that covenant, My People), but because of a choice on God's part and a promise in an existing covenant that God made with their forefathers, primarily with Abraham which reflected back to Adam.

Deuteronomy 7:7-10 ⁷ "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, ⁸ but because ***the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers***, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹ "Know therefore that the ***LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant*** and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments; ¹⁰ but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; He will not delay with him who hates Him, He will repay him to his face.

As with Adam, this covenant that God initiated with Israel worked itself out through the terms of that covenant as to whether or not they would continue in that covenant through faith and obedience.

And so, my presupposition is that God's choice of a people and His unilateral covenant established with that people, and His name which is attached to that people, (containing all of the requirements God has laid out in the covenant), are the bedrock for how Scripture identifies the people of God.

Therefore, if we are going to understand the first mention of the phrase, "sons of God" in Genesis 6:2, we must place it in some sort of context as Moses would have understood it. To simply assign it a meaning without understanding the context is to do a disservice to the biblical exercise of exegesis and sound hermeneutics.

In a normal setting, without any preconceived notion, the phrase "sons of" would normally carry with it the idea of a progeny of sorts, the offspring of any particular group.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to determine what main group is being discussed. For those who hold to the view that the sons of God in this passage are angels, one is forced to move forward from the point of Genesis 6 and reflect backward from other biblical revelation to arrive at that conclusion.

In other words, you must go to the only other place where this identical phrase is used out of the context of Genesis in an entirely different book.

In fact, the only other place where this exact phrase is used anywhere in the O.T. is the book of Job. And we will address all of those particular passages a little later.

But, if we are going to arrive at any conclusive meaning to a phrase that is controversial it would be important to see if there is anything in the immediate context that would lend information to determining the correct meaning of our text in Genesis 6.

Again, utilizing the hermeneutic principle, analogy of faith, we must find more clear passages to define the less clear verses.

Seed of the Woman

Interestingly enough there is a plethora of biblical information that Moses, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has given us leading up to the context of our passage in question that paves the way for a proper Theological interpretation that is backed up with similar images throughout the Old and New Testaments as we will see.

So, let's go back to the phrase in question, "sons of God", and systematically pursue what I believe is a proper foundation for arriving at my conclusion that the phrase addresses the covenantal community called out by God according to His purposes for His glory to carry His name throughout the earth.

To be a son of anyone, especially in a biblical context, one is essentially in the image of that progenitor.

Adam, is the first man of all creation, but we are told that he was made in the image of God.

Genesis 1:27 ²⁷ *God created man in His own image*, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

To be image of God is to reflect the characteristics of the Creator. And as image of God Adam was responsible to carry on the family name to the glory of God.

In fact, this is a major theme that runs throughout the word of God as we are told that the Creator makes it clear that it is His name that must be exalted in all the earth through His people.

But going back even further than the creation of man on the sixth day, one could say that God's very name is on every atom of the universe as it bears His name and decree to be a product of His power, majesty and wisdom, with the express purpose of declaring His glory and this is seen in the very first verse of the word of God.

Genesis 1:1 ^{NAU} In the beginning God *created* the heavens and the earth.

We identify works of art by the signature of the artist on the piece, revealing his name, and we identify the work of God with His signature that bears testimony to His greatness that magnifies His name.

And so, there is a sense in which the entire universe bears and declares the name of God as Paul would point out in his letter to the Romans.

Romans 1:20-23 ²⁰ *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.* ²¹ For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

In a sense, Paul is saying that creation itself has a voice and is identifying the master artist who brought it into existence, but that sinful humans have attempted to strip God's signature from His masterpiece, and therefore re-identify His true nature, according to how they foolishly perceive Him and in the process they have exchanged the true name of God as Creator and Lord who is incorruptible, for anything and everything related to the present cursed creation, which is corruptible, which they now claim as superior to the Creator.

In this sense they have taken God's name in vain and they will not be held guiltless.

Exodus 20:7 ⁷ "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

God's name and person will not be mocked as He has chosen a people for His own possession, (ostensibly His sons), who are decreed by God to carry that name throughout the earth.

Exodus 3:15 ¹⁵ God, furthermore, said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to *the sons of Israel*, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' *This is My name forever*, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.

Exodus 9:16 ¹⁶ "But, indeed, for this reason I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power and in order *to proclaim My name through all the earth*.

The name of God was originally designed to fill the earth through His chosen priest/king, Adam, who was ultimately to be the standard bearer over the Kingdom of God whose name must be established forever in that kingdom.

G.K. Beale states it this way.

"Since Adam was to be a priest-king in fulfilling the mandate of Gen.1:28, after his sin and initial restoration, his destiny was likely to receive clothing appropriate to his kingly office, of which God's clothing him with "garments of skin" was a symbolic down payment of a greater clothing to come. If so, then it "suggests that the reason for mentioning Adam and Eve's nakedness at the end of Gen.2 is to arouse in the reader an expectation of royal investiture in keeping with man's Gen.1 status as the ruling image of God on earth.""

This was the mandate given to Adam.

Genesis 1:27-30 ²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ God blessed them; and God said to them, "*Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.*" ²⁹ Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; ³⁰ and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, *I have given every green plant for food*"; and it was so.

Therefore, the King of kings is giving a kingdom to Adam to rule over thus becoming co-ruler with God as Adam bears the name of God in righteousness.

Everything else in the word of God stands on this premise that God created the universe and placed man in the position of being ruler over everything He created as Adam was charged, through covenant, to carry the name of God throughout the whole earth. Thus, “fill the earth and subdue it”, ‘and rule over every created thing in the earth.’

This mandate hasn’t changed for those who carry the name of God.

God’s people in Christ still carry the covenantal charge from God, as they look to a renewed creation, (as they themselves are new creations), to be priests and kings awaiting that final age in which they will rule and reign with Christ on the new earth in the midst of the new heavens, all of which will declare the glory of God.

Revelation 5:9-10 ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. ¹⁰ ***"You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."***

However, it’s interesting to note that we are not called to establish this new Kingdom in this present world; only that God’s people are called to acknowledge the resurrected Christ’s present rule and reign from His throne in heaven as we live in Christ in that reality.

1 Corinthians 15:22-25 ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, ²⁴ then *comes* the end, ***when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.*** ²⁵ ***For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.***

In a recent interview on the radio program, *Christ the Center*, Rita Cefalu, who is the Adjunct Assistant Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of San Diego as well as a Ph.D. candidate at Queen’s University Belfast, (who also has written on this subject of the sons of God in Genesis and Job), acknowledged that when Adam was given the mandate by God to be fruitful and

multiply on the earth it was followed by the command to essentially rule and reign over it.

In the interview she went on to say that Noah is often seen as a type of Adam as he was given the mandate by God to repopulate the world after all living things were destroyed by the flood.

Genesis 9:7 ⁷ "As for you, be fruitful and multiply; Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it."

She suggested that, though not explicitly stated, the mandate for Noah to rule and reign over the earth could have been inferred, but because it is conspicuously missing in the Scriptures her contention is that God's people are not necessarily to expect to rule and reign over the present earth in the same way as pre-fall Adam and Eve.

I believe there is something to be said about that as we are told that Christ's Kingdom is not of this world, that is, this present world. But there is the age to come when that rule and reign of Christ will take place with all of God's people on the new earth, just as Abraham longed for that future rule and reign.

Hebrews 11:8-10 ⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to *a place which he was to receive for an inheritance*; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow *heirs of the same promise*; ¹⁰ for *he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.*

But since the fall of Adam that mandate for God's people, to enjoy ruling and reigning on the earth with their Creator, has been pushed much further into the future to find its ultimate expression in the last Adam.

In the in-between time, the sons of God, who carry the name of God, still continue to be given the charge to faithfully live in the reality of this future eternal Kingdom as Christ presently rules from His throne.

2 Samuel 7:12-13 ¹² "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ *"He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.*

Those *assigned* the name, son of God, who do not promote the name of God in His kingdom, according to God's covenant, will be cut off as one's who would be *designated* not His people.

1 Kings 9:6-7 ⁶ "But if you or your sons indeed turn away from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, and go and *serve other gods and worship them*, ⁷ *then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them, and the house which I have consecrated for My name*, I will cast out of My sight. So Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

God's name is the Family name and all those who carry His name are *identified* as sons of God with the responsibility to faithfully represent Him.

The following verses are representative of this aspect of God placing His name upon His covenant people as they are then responsible to carry that name into the earth faithfully.

Psalms 89:24 ²⁴ "My faithfulness and My lovingkindness will be with him, *And in My name his horn will be exalted*.

The horn is the family through which God's name is exalted. And it is God Himself who causes His children to be brought into His family.

Exodus 3:10 ¹⁰ "Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring *My people, the sons of Israel*, out of Egypt."

Exodus 6:6-8 ⁶ "Say, therefore, to *the sons of Israel*, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and *I will deliver you* from their bondage. *I will also redeem you* with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. ⁷ "Then *I will take you for My people, and I will be your God*; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸ *'I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the LORD.'*"

Again, notice the connection of God's declaration to His people and the covenant He made with Abraham as fulfillment of the promises found in that covenant with the express purpose of magnifying His name.

Isaiah 29:22-23 ²² Therefore thus says the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: "Jacob shall not now be ashamed, nor shall his face now turn pale; ²³ But when he sees his children, *the work of My hands*, in his midst, They will *sanctify My name*; Indeed, they will *sanctify the Holy One of Jacob* And will stand in awe of the God of Israel.

One of the last of the prophets left Israel with this declaration about their covenantal responsibility to declare the name of God and their continued rebellion with consequence.

Malachi 1:11-14 ¹¹ "For from the rising of the sun even to its setting, *My name will be great among the nations*, and in every place *incense is going to be offered to My name*, and a grain offering *that is pure*; for *My name will be great among the nations*," says the LORD of hosts. ¹² "But you are profaning it, in that you say, 'The table of the Lord is defiled, and as for its fruit, its food is to be despised.' ¹³ "You also say, 'My, how tiresome it is!' And you disdainfully sniff at it," says the LORD of hosts, "and you bring what was taken by robbery and *what is lame or sick*; so you bring the offering! Should I receive that from your hand?" says the LORD. ¹⁴ "But cursed be the swindler who has a male in his flock and vows it, but sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord, for *I am a great King*," says *the LORD of hosts*, "*and My name is feared among the nations.*"

The climax of the Old covenant is found in Jesus Christ. And so, it should come as no surprise that God continues to show how His people must carry His name as they bow the knee at the name of Jesus Christ in the new covenant. This is why at the very end of the canon of Scripture much is said regarding God's name being faithfully extended throughout the earth through His people.

Revelation 2:17 ¹⁷ 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give *some* of the hidden manna, and *I will give him* a white stone, and *a new name* written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

Revelation 3:8 ⁸ '*I know your deeds*. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because *you* have a little power, and have kept My word, and *have not denied My name*.

Revelation 3:12 ¹² 'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and *I will write on him the name of My God*, and the name of the city

of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

Revelation 11:18-19 ¹⁸ "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time *came* for the dead to be judged, and *the time* to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and ***those who fear Your name***, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." ¹⁹ And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

Revelation 14:1 ^{NAU} Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb *was* standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and ***the name of His Father written on their foreheads***.

Revelation 19:12-16 ¹² His eyes *are* a flame of fire, and on His head *are* many diadems; and ***He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself***. ¹³ *He is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and ***His name is called The Word of God***. ¹⁴ And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white *and* clean, were following Him on white horses. ¹⁵ From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. ¹⁶ And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

Revelation 20:15 ¹⁵ And if ***anyone's name was not found written in the book of life***, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 22:3-4 ³ There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; ⁴ they will see His face, and ***His name will be on their foreheads***.

From Genesis to Revelation it is the name of God that is attached to the family of God who are *designated* as sons of God.

It is this *designation* that was given to Adam and his household whose seed was commissioned by God to carry the Name of God in whose likeness Adam was created.

And this brings us back to the context of the phrase, "sons of God" in Genesis 6 and which, as we will see, demonstrates that we do

not have to be dependent on a text not related to Genesis to arrive at the proper interpretation of, “sons of God” in Genesis.

Notice the relationship between the covenant seed of Adam, *designated* a son of Adam, in his own son, Seth, being in the likeness of Adam who is in the likeness of God.

Genesis 5:3 ³ When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, *he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.*

In his book, “A New Testament Biblical Theology”, G.K. Beale makes this observation about the relationship of God to Adam, and Adam to Seth.

“Just as Adam’s son was in Adam’s “likeness” and “image” (Gen.5:1-3) and was to resemble his human father in appearance and character, so Adam was a son of God who was to reflect his Father, since he was in the “image” and “likeness” of God (Gen.1:26).....

....This means that the command for Adam to “subdue, rule and fill the earth” includes uppermost that of him as a king functionally filling the earth, not merely with progeny, but with image-bearing progeny who will reflect God’s glory and special revelatory presence.” (pg.36)

In other words, to be an image bearer carries with it a covenantal responsibility to the one whose image you represent. The seed of Adam necessarily represents that covenant that God had with Adam.

Cain and his seed broke with that covenant and therefore bore the image of the father of lies. Therefore, there is a fundamental difference in “image” and “likeness” in a covenantal sense between the two seeds as each now moves in entirely different directions; one toward the covenant promises, the other away from those same promises.

It is in the beginning of this division between the two seeds that we must place the *designation*, sons of God, squarely on that seed that is *identified* with “MY Name,” the sons of Adam, whose seed is commanded to faithfully exemplify the name of God.

What is interesting about Gen.5:3 is that the son of Adam, Seth, is distinguished as having both the image and likeness of Adam.

The language “image and likeness of Adam” is the same covenantal language God used regarding Adam on the sixth day of creation as the Lord laid out for Adam the terms of his existence within the framework of the covenant that God made with him.

And so, what is found in Adam’s son Seth is seen in his father, both in his physical and spiritual make up. Certainly from the genetic makeup the son of Adam is of the same stuff as Adam who was formed from the dust of the earth, and therefore earthy.

1 Corinthians 15:47-48 ⁴⁷ The first man is from the earth, earthy; ⁴⁸ As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy;

But this would also be true of Adam’s son, Cain. But what Moses is doing in the beginning of Genesis is *identifying* both seeds with the express purpose of *distinguishing* one seed that is earthy only and the other seed that is both earthy and now identified with the promise given to post-fall Adam from God.

Adam was made in the image of God, whose image he distorted through rebellion, but now through faith in the promise from God, Adam’s original image was regained in an eschatological sense.

And it is this covenantal promise that looks forward to the perfect image of God as it points to the second Adam who righteously fulfills what the first Adam did not. In this sense, by faith, Adam looks to the restoration of himself, his seed, and the world with a future eye to Paradise restored, the new creation.

G.K. Beale sums up very well the premise of Adam’s forward looking to a future new-creational reign.

“That all the doctrines or notions of salvation/redemption are thematically subordinate to God’s new-creational reign through an earthly representative is evident from recalling that eschatology precedes soteriology in Gen.1-3. That is, had Adam been faithful in ruling over the first creation, he would have received subsequent escalated blessings, which would have been none other than eternal end-time blessings, with the result of God’s glory filling the whole earth.” (A New Testament Biblical Theology, pg.178)

This new-creational reign cannot take place with sinful man, who is now separated from God and Eden. But in the post-fall promise from God Adam, by faith, sees himself as reconstituted into a future new creation in that promise.

In the context of 1Corinthians 15 Paul is contrasting the two Adams as he addresses post-fall man as being earthy, which includes all aspects of man as depraved and sinful and therefore rebellious toward God.

Paul then arrives at the only conclusion for all men in the first Adam.

1 Corinthians 15:50 ⁵⁰ Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

But then Paul contrasts this first Adam with the last Adam by showing how the last Adam will secure a new creation for Himself.

1 Corinthians 15:45-49, 51-58 ⁴⁵ So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The *last Adam became a life-giving spirit*. ⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵² 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 will be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. ⁵⁵ "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; ⁵⁷ but *thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that *your toil is not in vain in the Lord*.

But being earthy was not a negative for Adam before the fall. In fact, it necessarily follows that since we are sons of Adam, as far as being earthy, the resurrection is the means by which God will fully and perfectly restore both the earthy and spiritual aspect of man precisely because of the last Adam, Jesus Christ, not just to its original pre-fall status, but much beyond that as our earthy bodies in Adam, will be glorified to be like Christ's physical resurrection body in the new creation.

But again, back to the point of the covenant seed of the woman moving forward through the son of Adam in Seth; what we see is the group that bears the name of that covenant promise are sons of Adam, in both image and likeness, who himself was created in the image of God and who then embraced the covenant promises from God by faith after the fall.

Seed of the Serpent

This covenant language is not used of Cain's seed. We do not see a reference to Enoch being a son of Cain in his image and likeness because we know what that image and likeness is. It is the image of his father, the devil. This is the designation that Jesus Himself assigns to that seed, even that seed that is hiding among the called out people of God in Israel.

John 8:44 ⁴⁴ "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. ***He was a murderer from the beginning***, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

And so, when we look at the line of the Messiah and we see how that line is associated with Jesus Christ we need only work backward through the lineage leading to Seth and Adam to see how that line was *identified*.

Luke 3:38 ³⁸ the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the ***son of God***.

Remember, Genesis 6 is on the heels of Genesis 5 which is a *description* of the sons of Adam, the covenantal line of the sons of God.

This is the theme throughout the word of God. God chooses a people to represent Him. Unfortunately, many of those people rebel as in Adam. God, before the foundations of the world, chooses a remnant out of that people even though the larger group is still *identified* as His covenant people.

But if we back up to chapter 4 in Genesis we see one of the two seeds, the offspring of Cain, who is necessarily associated with the seed of the serpent. In fact, the claim to fame in the line of Cain, begins and ends with death.

Cain kills his brother Abel, and a few generations later comes Lamech.

Genesis 4:23-24 ²³ Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, Listen to my voice, You wives of Lamech, Give heed to my speech, For I have killed a man for wounding me; And a boy for striking me; ²⁴ If Cain is avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold."

In contrast, at the end of chapter 4, we see the introduction of the seed of the woman.

Genesis 4:26 ²⁶ To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then *men* began to call upon the name of the LORD.

This translation almost makes it sound as if men did not call upon the name of the Lord until sometime after Enosh was born. But the phrase is really identifying men from the time of Seth through Enosh, and beyond, as continuing to call upon the name of the Lord, as we know that Abel and Adam had already been doing.

A better translation is found in the ESV.

^{ESV} **Genesis 4:26** 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.

“At that time” suggests that time in history when the two seeds lived side by side, where the group *identified* with the covenant promises passed on to Seth and Enosh, called upon the name of the Lord.

You’ll notice that it does not say, “those who were godly called upon the name of the Lord”, but simply those identified with a particular family line, those born to Seth and Enosh, who are distinguished from the family of Cain.

It is these who call upon the name of the Lord who are *identified* in chapter 5 as those coming from the seed of the woman, found in the line of Seth, son of Adam, son of God.

In contrast, Cain and his line are not described as calling upon the name of the Lord, but like the serpent, Cain actually lies and questions the veracity of God’s word.

Genesis 4:9 ⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

Genesis 4:16 ¹⁶ Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Cain's line is one that is *identified* with moving away from God, not calling upon the name of the Lord.

Chapter 5 *identifies* this people of God, the sons of God, in a covenant son-ship relationship to the Creator, and then chapter 6 shows the covenant people marrying into both seeds as they come into the daughters of men, which we'll see is a *designation* of the two seeds. Again, this war is always between the two seeds, the two peoples.

But even when the seed of the woman is *identified* as "sons of God", as we see in chapter 5, this seed-group, who are commissioned by God to carry His name throughout history, often rebels against the promises of God even though they are *identified* with the name of the Lord, and it results in God's judgment.

This is the classic picture we see in O.T. Israel who were called out by God to call upon the name of the Lord, but who failed miserably as a nation as they were charged by God to carry His name.

Ezekiel 20:19-22 ¹⁹ *'I am the LORD your God; walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and observe them.* ²⁰ *'Sanctify My sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God.'* ²¹ *"But the children (Hebrew - Ben, son) rebelled against Me; they did not walk in My statutes, nor were they careful to observe My ordinances, by which, if a man observes them, he will live; they profaned My sabbaths. So I resolved to pour out My wrath on them, to accomplish My anger against them in the wilderness.* ²² *"But I withdrew My hand and acted for the sake of My name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations in whose sight I had brought them out.*

Jeremiah 11:13-14 ¹³ *"For your gods are as many as your cities, O Judah; and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars you have set up to the shameful thing, altars to burn incense to Baal.* ¹⁴ *"Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them; for **I will not listen when they call to Me** because of their disaster.*

Like Adam, who represented mankind as the name-bearer of God and then failed in that covenantal relationship, Israel takes on the corporate responsibility of the first Adam, and they too come up short of that mandate to carry the name of God throughout the earth.

And this is precisely what we see with that people in Genesis 6 who are *designated* as sons of God who call upon the name of the Lord and yet will not faithfully represent the God who desires “MY Name” to be attached to them in a way that brings glory to the Name of God.

This is the same formula that leads to destruction that both the apostle James and Moses points out.

James 1:12-16 ¹² Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But *each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.* ¹⁵ Then when *lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin;* and *when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.* ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

We’re going to revisit this passage later and see how it ties together the truth regarding the issue of sin and its resultant judgment by God.

Genesis 6:5-7 ⁵ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of *the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* ⁶ The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷ *The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land,* from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them."

My People

In contrast to the apostasy of those *associated* with the covenant from God, only Noah, a remnant, continues the true line of the covenant along with his sons.

This too, is seen played out again with Israel, later in redemptive history, to where they are judged by God for their rebellion. But He takes a remnant out of that people, just as He did with Noah, and they call upon the name of the Lord.

Zechariah 13:9 ⁹ *"And I will bring the third part through the fire,* Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. *They will call on My name,* And I will answer them; I will say, *'They are My people,'* And they will say, *'The LORD is my God.'"*

Genesis 6 *identifies* the group of those who call upon the name of the Lord as “the sons of God” who would be the sons of the covenant. However, as is always the case with those *identified* as the sons of the covenant, sons of God, only a remnant truly believes, despite the fact that many *identified* with that group who carry the “Name of God” don’t believe.

Their unbelief does not negate the covenant that God has made with mankind to rule and subdue the earth.

Romans 3:1-4 ^{NAU} Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? ² Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. ³ What then? ***If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? ⁴ May it never be! Rather, let God be found true,*** though every man *be found* a liar, as it is written, "THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED."

But only those who are the remnant will follow the Lord, not just in covenant responsibility through obedience to the terms of that covenant, but in faith in the promises of that covenant, thus proving to be true “sons of God” not just “sons of God” in name only, which turned out to be the case with “the sons of God” pursuing after the daughters of men from both seeds.

Genesis 6:8-10 ⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. ⁹ These are *the records of* the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. ¹⁰ Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

If we are going to get a correct meaning of the phrase, “sons of God,” we must recognize first and foremost what Moses has already revealed and that is the reality of the war between the two seeds that started in chapter 3 between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

Genesis 3:15 ¹⁵ And ***I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed;*** He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

This is the immediate context that I alluded to earlier when I made the argument that to understand Genesis 6 we must first look to the previous chapters in Genesis before going to other places in Scripture and trying to make those outside of Genesis the primary source for what a son of God is in Genesis 6.

Those seeds are still in view in chapters 4-6. So, this is the overview.

Exegesis of the Text

Now, let's look specifically at the text in light of this background.

Genesis 6:1-2 ^{NAU} Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, ² that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.

The first question is who are the men who began to multiply on the face of the land?

Well, chapters 4 and 5 identifies these people. They were the seed of Cain and the seed of Seth as daughters were being born to the two seeds. So, both seeds were multiplying side by side.

One seed, however, is distinguished from the other as those who call upon the name of the Lord. (Gen.4:26)

And so, this phrase in Gen.6:1, "men began to multiply on the face of the land" identifies all peoples of the earth.

Within this context of the two seeds dwelling on the earth the product of these two seeds, (generally identified in Scripture through the male population), is clearly contrasted with the introduction of daughters being born to the heads of the descendants of both seeds.

Daughters of Men

One of the seeds, (identified as the "sons of God"), takes notice of the daughters of men, (daughters of the two seeds), who are identified as beautiful.

Again, notice that the daughters of men are not identified with either seed, but rather are part of both seeds as we are simply told that "*men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them,*" (Genesis 6:1)

As we'll see these daughters are at the center of the controversy for the downfall of the covenant sons of God.

This too, has already been the case with Eve as it relates to the redemptive plan of God as the woman is the one identified with enticing man which leads to the downfall of mankind. And so, the

context once again sees a repeat of the sin that caused the two seeds to be separated by God with the seed of the woman ultimately being given the promise of the restoration of Eden.

Genesis 3:1-6 ^{NAU} Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And *he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden '?"* ² The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; ³ but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" ⁴ The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! ⁵ "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, *she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.*

1 Timothy 2:13-14 ¹³ For it was Adam who was first created, *and then Eve.* ¹⁴ And *it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.*

Paul makes it clear that Adam was not deceived, but the woman. And though that may look like Paul is exonerating Adam it is really an indictment on him since Adam had no excuse. His action was total rebellion as he knew what God had said about the law of consequences for eating of the forbidden fruit.

As priest/king Adam shirked his responsibility to protect his wife, his seed and the entire kingdom he was given to advance the glory of God, and instead brought corruption to all things related to God's creation.

By the way, the intermingling of the seeds is demonstrated in a similar way with the sons of God who carried His name, the Jews, intermingling with the daughters of men outside of the covenant community, in the book of Ezra, which was a book revealing how the promises of God were to call out a remnant to return to the Land of Promise. But here's what the sons of God do.

Ezra 9:1-2 ^{NAU} Now when these things had been completed, the princes approached me, saying, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, according to their abominations, *those* of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the

Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians and the Amorites. ² "For *they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has intermingled with the peoples of the lands*; indeed, the hands of the princes and the rulers have been foremost in this unfaithfulness."

Notice too, that Ezra is making a distinction between the seed of the covenant, the people of Israel, and the seed of the serpent as found in particular peoples identified as the "Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians and the Amorites."

This seed of the serpent were people dwelling in the land of Promise but they were *identified* as an abomination before the Lord.

Again, when we look at the judgment that is made upon the people of God regarding the intermingling with the pagan people's this is the pattern seen throughout redemptive history and this is why God warned His covenant people to remain faithful to Him and His covenant community.

^{NAU} **Deuteronomy 7:3** "Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons.

Even the church, those designated as sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Gal.3:26), are warned not to intermingle with those outside of the New Covenant community.

^{NAU} **2 Corinthians 6:14** Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

The daughters of men outside of the covenant community seem to be a temptation for the sons of God in all ages of redemptive history and this is true of that early community of the covenant of promise who called upon the name of the Lord in Genesis 6.

In our text in Genesis 6 these women are seen as beautiful.

Genesis 6:2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful;

Though the word beautiful in this context can certainly mean something that appeals to the eyes of men the word has an

extended meaning. It can also include the idea of being pleasant, agreeable, good, charming.

Beauty, limited to physical characteristics, cannot be the only determining factor that these men just figured out one day and decided that they needed these women born to men.

In other words, this phrase in verse 2 is simply another way of saying that men will be men as God intended them to be as they naturally seek out that woman, (just as the Lord did with Adam in the beginning by bringing him the woman fashioned by God from Adam's side), who would be beautiful in appearance and essence.

Therefore, women, though their outward beauty can certainly entice men, also express an attraction to men that transcends outward appearances and includes those aspects of being charming and pleasant in their social interaction which is really the bedrock for companionship that is designed by God to lead to marriage.

A woman does not have to be a believer in the promises of God to be both physically attractive and inwardly attractive. And that attraction leads all peoples, whether they are in the covenant community or not, to seek each other out.

But, when faithfulness to God is placed to the side it is not unusual to see the people of the covenant, (*designated* sons of God), going after those who are outside of the covenant community.

Marriage has been taking place for a long time before Genesis 6 and the beauty of women was no new thing.

Since both seeds were dwelling on the earth together and since beauty and marriage have been a part of mankind since day six of creation, this phrase does not have to mean anything more than that the God-given natural desires of both seeds were still happening and it was also happening within the covenantal context of the seed of the woman (Eve), here *identified* as the sons of God.

Being *identified* as a son of God does not preclude that the covenant seed, or the covenant community that was *identified* as calling upon the name of the Lord, was exempt from going after beautiful and charming women, even women who were not part of the covenant community.

Solomon comes to mind.

So, what happens when men of both seeds see the beauty of women and desire to spend their lives with these women?

Genesis 6:2 ...they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.

The word whomever is interesting in the Hebrew. It simply means the whole, or all.

In other words, of the entire woman-pool, (made up of both the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent), some of those *identified* with the sons of God made no distinction when choosing a mate. They chose from both pools, if you will. Many were not discerning, they chose selfishly, not with God and His covenant promises in mind.

What was the result? God's displeasure with man. Not because angels intervened but because man continues to break covenant with the God who called them out so as to call upon the name of the Lord.

Genesis 6:3 ³ Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

This verse is, of course, in the context of identifying the sons of God. But here we see an activity on the part of God that is directed toward man who is also identified as flesh, not flesh/angel.

The Spirit not striving with man is another way of saying that the regenerative activity of the Spirit has ceased so as to seal the people of the world in their sin as they now await the coming judgment from God.

David understood the work of the Spirit moving among the people of this world so as to draw men to Himself and he prayed in such a way as to acknowledge the need for the Spirit in his life and the life of Israel.

Psalms 51:11 ¹¹ Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

This is the same work of the Spirit that Isaiah acknowledged as being essential for Israel's existence unto the glory of God.

Isaiah 63:10-12 ¹⁰ But they [*Israel*] rebelled And *grieved His Holy Spirit*; Therefore *He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them.* ¹¹ Then His people remembered the days of old, of Moses. Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of His flock? *Where is He who put His Holy Spirit in the midst of them,* ¹² *Who caused His glorious arm to go*

at the right hand of Moses, Who divided the waters before them to make for Himself an everlasting name,

Just as the *designation*, sons of God, in Israel, did not protect them from God's judgment when they rebelled, so too, the Spirit does not strive with man in general as they rebel against a holy God.

In this way there is an indictment against the sons of God who were not seeking the things of the Spirit as they pursued the things of the flesh, which is something that even the sons of God in the new covenant struggle with.

^{NAU} **Galatians 5:17** For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

The apostle Peter also points out that the striving of the Spirit had to do with God's patience toward sinful men coming to an end, as the Spirit of God, who alone gives life, had determined that He would allow hearts of stone to continue to pursue the coldness of their sin which lead to death through a global flood.

1 Peter 3:18-20 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.

At the end of Genesis 6:3 we see that the patience of God will continue but only for a limited time until which all flesh will be destroyed. But, this raises another question as to the issue of whether the "sons of God" are angels and that has to do with the fact that all flesh was destroyed wherein only 8 persons were saved through the water.

Genesis 6:12-17 ¹² God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for *all flesh had corrupted their way* upon the earth. ¹³ Then God said to Noah, "*The end of all flesh* has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth. ¹⁴ "Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵ "This is how you shall make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty

cubits, and its height thirty cubits. ¹⁶ "You shall make a window for the ark, and finish it to a cubit from the top; and set the door of the ark in the side of it; you shall make it with lower, second, and third decks. ¹⁷ "Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, *to destroy all flesh* in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; *everything that is on the earth shall perish*.

If this is the case then did the *angels/demons/sons of God*, who supposedly married the daughters of men, die in the flood as well, or were they simply inhabiting the bodies of real people, in which case the sons of God were not really angels but demon possessed people?

But if these sons of God/angels were real angels and they too died in the flood, along with all flesh, can we assume that they took on flesh, became incarnate, and presumably relinquished their former status as angels, albeit fallen angels, who are spirits according the writer of Hebrews?

Can an angel die a physical death and for that matter can an angel pass on "*angel DNA*" to "*human DNA*" to the daughters of men so as to create a hybrid being made up of angel and human?

And what about all creatures producing after their "kind" or Christ's statement that angels in heaven do not marry, and thus do not have sexual relations with women?

As to the last question, some proponents of "sons of God = angels" state that Jesus was only identifying angels "in heaven" not fallen angels who evidently were capable of having sexual relations with women in marriage relationships.

But again, it begs the question, where in Genesis 6 does it explicitly or even implicitly state that these sons of God are identified as fallen angels, especially in light of the fact that these are supposedly the same sons of God identified in Job who are apparently good angels, as they are distinguished from Satan and were apparently present at the creation of the universe as "the sons of God shouted for joy"?

These are a few of the questions that appear to me to be troublesome.

But some of the proponents of the "sons of God = angels" position seem to have an answer to this in the group identified as Nephilim.

Nephilim

Verse 4 of Genesis 6 is simply a repeat of what preceded with the added feature of identifying these sons of the covenant and the sons of the serpent with a group called the Nephilim.

Genesis 6:4 ⁴ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore *children* to them. Those were the mighty men who *were* of old, men of renown.

The name Nephilim is sometimes translated giants, but the passage actually identifies who these people were. These were mighty men or men of renown with emphasis on the designation “men.”

By the way, these men of renown, or mighty men, seem to include a person we’ve already seen in the context to which we’ve been looking, and that is one man by whom the known-world was threatened as he saw in himself such a pride that would lend itself to becoming a mighty man or man of renown.

Genesis 4:23-24 ²³ Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, Listen to my voice, You wives of Lamech, Give heed to my speech, For I have killed a man for wounding me; And a boy for striking me; ²⁴ ***If Cain is avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.***"

Lamech seems to make it clear that he is no mere man to be trifled with but was a mighty man with whom the world must contend.

But it should be noted here that the Nephilim are introduced as almost a sub-group of the seed of the serpent. In chapters 4 and 5 we have the two seeds, the seed of Cain and the seed of Seth.

It is those *identified* with the seed of Seth, real people, who betray the covenantal community by taking women from the seed of Cain, the seed of the serpent, which always leads to being led astray.

Those who are *identified* with the seed of the woman who have joined with the seed of the serpent are now getting married in a covenantal sense to the seed of the serpent and are being influenced in an ungodly way.

In the midst of this crossing over of seeds, the Nephilim, or *men* of renown, were also on the earth in those days at the same time many of the sons of God married into the seed of the serpent.

Look at the passage again.

Genesis 6:4 ⁴ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore *children* to them.

Here, we see that the sons of God were also *identified* with the Nephilim in that they bore children to that particular group as well. It does not *identify* the sons of God as the Nephilim, only that they bore children to that group, along with the rest of the daughters of men, (some of whom were presumably part of the Nephilim), which is to say that the sons of God are now being *identified* with every group on the planet instead of being *identified* exclusively with the covenant community who called upon the name of the Lord.

And it is apparent that the Nephilim, (*men* of renown), continued to have a powerful presence right up to the judgment of water by God as the text makes clear. "The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, *and also afterward...*"

It has been argued from this last statement that the Nephilim were on the earth both before and after the flood. And of course, we know that a reference is made after the flood identifying the Nephilim.

Numbers 13:32-33 ³² So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of *great* size. ³³ *"There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."*

If the Nephilim were the product of angels having sexual relations with the daughters of men before the flood, resulting in a direct correlation to God's judgment, it does raise the issue of how this same phenomenon can take place at the end of the age through a fiery global judgment, (with no mention of angels contributing to the destruction of the world in the second judgment from God), as Jesus Christ makes reference to only men as being guilty of sin, in Matthew 24, resulting in this fiery judgment.

Peter also points out the sinfulness of men only, resulting in God's second global judgment.

2 Peter 3:7 ⁷ But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of *ungodly men*.

But, as to the days of Noah, it is apparent that the *designation* sons of God, (sons of the covenant), found in the called out seed, continued to have a presence until the judgment, as many of them were still *identified* with the covenant community despite the fact that only one person is declared righteous by God and that is Noah.

And so, it could be said of this seed of the woman, (*identified* as the sons of God, at this point in redemptive history), that a great apostasy had taken place among them that resulted in a judgment, that in like manner, will be repeated in the last days by the same covenantal group who also bear the *designation*, sons of God.

These people of God in the last days are *identified* in the context of the “church” and though they are *identified* as sons of God, it is in name only.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 ^{NAU} Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, ² that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. ³ Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come unless the apostasy comes first*, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

Matthew 7:22-23 ²² "*Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'*" ²³ "And then *I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'*"

And so, only those who are the true sheep of Christ will be saved, just as in the days of Noah, who was declared by God as righteous.

Genesis 6:9 ⁹ These are *the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.*

Though 8 people were saved on the ark only one is clearly identified as righteous. Why?

Because the same God who covenanted with Adam and his seed, (although many proved unrighteous), is the same God who

covenants with Noah, and all of those who are identified with his seed come under the protection of that covenant.

At this point in redemptive history nothing is explicitly said of the faith of the family of Noah, only that their righteousness is not what is recorded as causing God to have mercy on them. In fact, what do we read?

Genesis 6:18-20 ¹⁸ "But *I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark-- you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you.* ¹⁹ "And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every *kind* into the ark, to keep *them* alive with you; they shall be male and female. ²⁰ "Of the birds after their kind, and of the animals after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every *kind* will come to you to keep *them* alive.

Genesis 7:1 ^{NAU} Then the LORD said to Noah, "*Enter the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this time.*

The covenant was not made directly with Noah's wife, his sons or their wives, but they shared in the covenant blessings given by God to Noah by virtue of the fact that they were of the same family, and the wives of his sons were sharers through the covenant of marriage.

So, covenant promises and blessings are prominent in what God does with one man, and by extension of that same covenant, all who are in his household as they share in that blessing. And I might add even animals share in the covenant blessings of Noah as they come under the protection of God through the covenant.

So, again, it was through those who followed the covenant, originally given to Adam, and who faithfully called upon the name of the Lord, that we see Noah emerge as a true believer and his family shared in the covenant blessings extended to him by God.

Genesis 9:12 ¹² God said, "This is the sign of *the covenant which I am making between Me and you* and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations;

This would include the generations that would carry the covenant name of God until we come to Abraham, Moses and the nation of Israel who become a corporate Adam.

Again, this does not mean that every person who falls under the covenant established by God will remain faithful, only that the covenant is that which establishes what belongs to God and through whom the redemptive promises given to Adam and Eve will be realized.

God Judges Men or Angels in the Flood?

Genesis 6:5 ⁵ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

It is only after the leaven of sin, which has now permeated every aspect of the covenant community, (where they have in essence rejected the covenant promises, in what we have already stated as a great apostasy), where there is now no discernable difference between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, and the wickedness of man was great on the earth.

By the way, “wickedness of man” and “every intent of the thoughts of his heart being evil continually” does not have to be identifying a world on fire and out of control, where evil is so prevalent that you can’t leave the house without fear for your life. Moses is describing a heart problem that leads to sin and wickedness of all kinds.

Wickedness and an evil heart describes every generation, and in fact Jesus makes it clear that the wickedness of the heart that was found in man at the time of Noah will also be found in man at the end to result in His final judgment of men who appear to be secure and at peace in a world that meets their needs and wants.

Matthew 24:37-38 ³⁷ "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

Jesus seems to be describing people partying and pursuing life with little care when the last judgment comes, just as in the days of Noah. The connection between both groups is an evil heart and wickedness that does not comport with the covenant of life found in the Messiah, who will redeem men from their wickedness against a holy God, as they repent and believe.

What we see here in these opening chapters of Genesis is the redemptive story of man. The only involvement of a demon in the life of man, up to this point in Genesis, is seen in Satan in the

garden. Man, not demons, are the focal point in the judgment that God enacts on wicked men of the earth.

There is global wickedness of *men* and there will be a global judgement from God who is now sorry He has made *man*.

Genesis 6:6-7 ⁶ The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷ The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them."

Here again, we see the covenantal aspect of God's involvement in His creation where everything on earth, not just man, falls under the covenantal judgment of man that was promised in the Garden.

Genesis 3:17 ¹⁷ 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, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; *Cursed is the ground because of you*; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life.

In fact, it was the father of Noah, Lamech, who longed for the day when the curse would be lifted from the ground as he looked to his son to be that one who would play a part in the lifting of the cursed ground, and as we know, is an eschatological look to the new earth.

Genesis 5:28-29 ²⁸ Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son. ²⁹ Now he called his name Noah, saying, "*This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the LORD has cursed.*"

Just a side note here: Remember it was one of the offspring of Cain, Lamech, who fancied himself a man of renown and one to be feared as he continued to demonstrate himself to be part of the seed of the serpent in Gen.4:18.

And then in Gen.5:30 we have a Lamech who is the father of Noah, the seed of the woman, who will be instrumental through his son in delivering men from God's curse that included the earth itself.

This was also the point Paul made when writing to the Romans as he acknowledges that all of creation falls under this curse as it will

one day be set free from its slavery to corruption unto its recreation by God who made the promise to Adam and Eve.

Romans 8:20-22 ²⁰ For *the creation was subjected to futility*, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that *the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God*. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

Interestingly enough, man along with animals, creeping things, and birds of the sky are all part of this global judgment that we see in Gen.6:7. Conspicuously missing are angels disguised as “sons of God”, aka – demons. The reason? Demons have their own final judgment called the Lake of Fire whom they will share with fallen resurrected humans, called the second death.

This future judgment, and subsequent release from its curse for God’s chosen people, along with the entire universe, is tied to the promise made to Adam and Eve, who alone are responsible for the curse. To suggest that judgment of men is in any way dependent on demons is to miss the point of who the curse is associated with.

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 ²¹ For since *by a man came death*, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as *in Adam all die*, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

Remember, the curse on the entire universe did not come into effect with Satan’s sin. It only came to effect man and all creation with Adam’s sin.

There is no room for that oft repeated phrase, “the devil made me do it.” Because if demons cohabitated with human women, who in turn were responsible for the entire world being destroyed in a flood, then there is certainly room for that line of argument.

Therefore, man and only man is responsible for such a judgment.

But what about all of the references to Satan deceiving the nations? Can’t we say that Satan is in fact quite responsible for man’s sin?

To the degree that man is tempted by Satan we can certainly say that Satan plays a role and will be judged in that role. But again, this is different from saying that man didn’t have a choice in the matter of submitting to such temptation as seen with the first man, Adam, who was created without a sin nature.

Remember, that Adam was given a commission to be both priest and king in this new creation which involved protecting this kingdom from any potential invader. The serpent was certainly an intruder who questioned the Creator. In this test the first Adam failed.

But, we see how the last Adam, Jesus Christ, did not succumb to such temptation from the devil.

Matthew 4:9-10 ⁹ and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"

Satan does deceive, but in the post-rebellion Satan does not cast a spell on people so as to make them choose what they do not already love.

John 3:19 ¹⁹ "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and *men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.*

People don't love and pursue the darkness after Adam's rebellion because Satan deceived them. People love the darkness because their deeds, which speaks to their hearts, are evil. Satan plays no role in the evilness of people other than to personify it as he is the epitome of evil, and in that sense becomes the father of all who follow his lead as Jesus points out to the Jews in John 8:44.

Again, it was Adam's sin, not Satan's temptation of man, that brought the curse and death into the world.

Watery Judgment vs. Fiery Judgment

This is why Peter uses the flood as a parallel account of the reason for God's judgment on men at the very end, where the only involvement of demons and Satan is one of questioning the truth of God's word, deceiving Eve and ultimately the entire world.

2 Peter 3:3-7 ³ Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "*Where is the promise of His coming?* For *ever* since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." ⁵ For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God *the* heavens existed long ago and *the* earth was formed out of water and by water, ⁶ through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with

water. ⁷ But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the *day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men*.

Notice here why the second and final global judgment through fire is being enacted by God on the present heavens and earth.

Because of *ungodly men*. Nothing to do with demons, everything to do with men's wickedness just as in the first watery judgment.

But if it couldn't be clearer as to man's lone culpability in this judgment we need only look to Jesus's very words on this matter of the first and second judgments of mankind and the world.

Matthew 24:35-42 ³⁵ "*Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.* ³⁶ "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. ³⁷ "For *the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.* ³⁸ "*For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,* ³⁹ *and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.* ⁴⁰ "Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹ "Two women *will be* grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴² "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.

Here, Jesus is referring to the same two events that Peter spoke on. Our Lord uses the imagery of heaven and earth passing away and places that in the context of that day and hour when the Son of man will come again in judgment at the end. This is the same judgment that Peter calls, "the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men."

And like Peter, Jesus moves immediately into comparing this second judgment with the same type of judgment that was placed upon the earth and mankind with the flood. In a covenantal sense these two judgments are identical with the same result but not to the same degree.

The first judgment from God was complete but not final. The second judgment from God will be complete and final.

Sons of God Marrying Daughters of Men

But notice how Jesus gives a commentary of the first judgment as He introduces Noah into the picture and what was going on in the

world at that time as He compares that to the second and final coming of the Son of Man in judgment.

Matthew 24:37-39 ³⁷ "*For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.* ³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they did not understand until *the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.*

Here, Jesus says the second judgment will be just like the days of Noah.

Well, what were the days of Noah like? Jesus makes it clear.

Matthew 24:38 ³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

"Before the flood." How long before the flood? Long enough for the world to revel in their sin and to break covenant with the Lord to where the cup of God's wrath was being filled up.

And when did that begin?

When the two seeds began to multiply on the face of the land and those who called upon the name of the Lord began to deny the name of the Lord and wickedness began to define mankind as the sons of God broke covenant with God through unbelief and rebellion in a great apostasy. (More on the related great apostasy of the church later.)

But notice what else was going on before the flood according to our Lord Jesus who, by the way, was there in the days of Noah.

Matthew 24:38 ³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were *eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage*, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

Where have we heard this before?

Genesis 6:2 ² that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and *they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.*

Exactly. The people who were *designated* as the sons of God, together with the sons of the serpent, were eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage, right up to the time of judgment in the flood.

This brings me back to the passage found in James.

James 1:14-16 ¹⁴ But *each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.* ¹⁵ Then when *lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin*; and *when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.* ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

Where is the blame for sin? Squarely on the shoulders of each one that is tempted, who is then carried away and enticed by HIS OWN LUST. To suggest that a watery judgment on the world could be attributed to demons in any fashion undermines the heinousness of man's personal sin which leads to death.

And it skews the only solution to man's sin by suggesting that Christ was paying a debt owed to God that was the result, not of man's culpability alone, but the combined culpability of demon and man as demons supposedly were a large part of the cause for the annihilation of men and this world in the flood.

Satan and his demons will have their own judgment but it is a judgment for their own rebellion. Their world began in the spiritual realm, not the earth. The earth and the universe will be judged according to man's sin, not Satan's. And yet both rebellious angels and men will ultimately suffer the same fate after the resurrection of all people.

Revelation 20:10 ¹⁰ And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Revelation 20:14-15 ¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And *if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

If anyone knew the details of what was meant in Genesis 6:2, by the sons of God seeing the daughters of men as beautiful and then choosing to marry the daughters of men, it would be Jesus Christ.

But our Lord Jesus in Mat.24:38 gives no indication other than that human beings, (not even limited to a special class of humans, ie., men of renown), were marrying and giving in marriage up until the flood, which was the normal practice among human beings including those *identified* with the seed of the covenant, (sons of God).

Here, Jesus could have cleared up this mystery of angels/demons cohabitating with daughters of men and being the impetus of man's evil heart thus resulting in a global flood. But there is no hint from Jesus that anyone other than human beings are responsible for such a judgment, despite the fact that the apocryphal book of Enoch, which fancifully addresses this incident, was around in Jesus' day.

In their unfaithfulness to represent God's name through their unbelief, those *identified* as the sons of God chose to deny His name, as they in practice are now *identified* with the rest of godless society. As a result God destroyed everyone and everything, except for a remnant; Noah and his family.

The argument that the phrase "sons of God" must mean demons having sexual relations, through the covenant of marriage with women, makes no sense in light of what Christ clearly says.

And this also raises questions regarding the covenant of marriage which was instituted by God on day six, and was reserved for who? Not demons and women.

Genesis 2:24 ²⁴ For this reason a *man* shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his *wife*; and they shall become *one flesh*.

Angels having sexual relations with women do not equal one flesh that could be identified as marriage, as is clearly seen in Genesis 6.

Genesis 6:2 and *they took wives for themselves*, whomever they chose.

But, so as to give further clarification of the meaning of the phrase, "sons of God" let me show how this phrase and other similar phrases are used in both Old and New Testament passages to clearly distinguish the between the two seeds of men as explicitly revealed in the early chapters of Genesis.

And for clarity it is important to understand that the N.T. is the fulfillment of the Old and what is intimated in the Old is revealed more fully in the New. Therefore, the New necessarily further explains the Old when it comes to the designation, "sons of God" to reveal a "New Testament Biblical Theology" of the phrase, if I may borrow from G.K. Beale's excellent book of the same name.

Varied Verses Addressing the Phrase, Sons of God

Matthew 5:9 ⁹ "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called *sons of God*.

Luke 20:36 ³⁶ for they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are *sons of God*, being *sons of the resurrection*.

Romans 8:14 ¹⁴ For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are *sons of God*.

Romans 8:19 ¹⁹ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the *sons of God*.

Galatians 3:26 ²⁶ For you are all *sons of God* through faith in Christ Jesus.

Luke 3:38 ³⁸ the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the *son of Adam*, the *son of God*.

John 1:12 ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become *children of God*, even to those who believe in His name,

John 11:52 ⁵² and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the *children of God* who are scattered abroad.

Romans 8:21 ²¹ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the *children of God*.

Romans 9:8 ⁸ That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the *children of the promise* are regarded as descendants.

Philippians 2:15 ¹⁵ so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, *children of God* above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,

1 John 3:1-2 ^{NAU} See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called *children of God*; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are *children of God*, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

1 John 3:10 ¹⁰ By this the *children of God* and the *children of the devil* are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

By the way, you'll notice in the above verse that John continues to carry the same theme that Moses does in Gen. 4 through 6 as the

two seeds are seen in opposition to each other, (notice the allusion to Cain and Abel in the phrase, "*who does not love his brother*"), and here John makes the point that both seeds *behave* as either children of God or children of the devil, no matter what group they are *identified* with.

1 John 5:2 ² By this we know that we love the *children of God*, when we love God and observe His commandments.

1 Chronicles 16:12-13 ¹² Remember His wonderful deeds which He has done, His marvels and the judgments from His mouth, ¹³ O seed of Israel His servant, Sons of Jacob, *His chosen ones*!

Psalms 89:4-5 ⁴ I will establish *your seed forever* And build up your throne to all generations." Selah. ⁵ The heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the *holy ones*.

Psalms 105:6 ⁶ O *seed of Abraham*, His servant, *O sons of Jacob*, His chosen ones!

Jeremiah 31:27-28 ²⁷ "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when *I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast*. ²⁸ "As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant," declares the LORD.

Matthew 13:37-39 ³⁷ And He said, "The one who sows the *good seed* is the Son of Man, ³⁸ and the field is the world; and *as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom*; and the *tares are the sons of the evil one*; ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels.

Acts 3:25-26 ²⁵ "It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND *IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED*.' ²⁶ "For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one *of you* from your wicked ways."

Galatians 3:16 ¹⁶ Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as *referring* to many, but *rather* to one, "And to *your seed*," *that is, Christ*.

Galatians 3:19 ¹⁹ Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the *seed would come to whom the promise had been made*.

By the way, if the sons of God are always associated with the covenant people of God, the seed of the woman, how is it that an unholy angel could possibly be associated with the name that is only designated with those who belong to God?

The actual phrase, “sons of God,” as some theologians identify it with angels, is only in a handful of places in the word of God found in the OT.

Five O.T. Verses with the Exact Phrase, Sons of God

Genesis 6:2 ² that the *sons of God* saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.

Genesis 6:4 ⁴ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the *sons of God* came in to the daughters of men, and they bore *children* to them. Those were the mighty men who *were* of old, men of renown.

Job 1:6 ⁶ Now there was a day when the *sons of God* came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.

Job 2:1 ^{NAU} Again there was a day when the *sons of God* came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.

Job 38:4-7 ⁴ "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding, ⁵ Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? ⁶ "On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, ⁷ When the morning stars sang together And all the *sons of God* shouted for joy?

There are a couple of N.T. passages in the letters from Jude and Peter that some use in connection with Genesis 6 to make their argument for angels cohabitating with women.

Jude 1:6 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,

NAU **2 Peter 2:4** 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;

Notice that in these NT passages, they are identified as angels, not sons of God. But because they are identified as angels many reason backward to Genesis and Job and place the two together to explain the same thing.

Therefore, according to this reasoning, if angels left their first domain and sinned by having sexual intercourse with women and also marrying them, (which is not stated in either Jude or 2Peter), this can only be adduced by forcing Genesis back into these two NT passages.

In an “article [that] first appeared in the Practical Hermeneutics column of the *Christian Research Journal*, volume 27, number 3 (2004)” Thomas A. Howe writes this:

“Other commentators appeal to Jude 6–7 to support their contention that the “sons of God” were unfallen or heavenly angels who then fell because they had sexual relations with female humans. They argue that Jude compared the prideful fallen angels to the sexually immoral people of Sodom and Gomorrah. The problem with this assertion is that it assumes what it must prove. Proponents of this argument use their interpretation of Genesis 6 to understand Jude, and then use their understanding of Jude to support their interpretation of Genesis 6. This is circular reasoning.”

If we’re going to get to the heart of the matter we must let the entire word of God speak for itself and not assume one thing that assumes something else that is not explicitly stated in either of the passages.

But, as we’ve seen in the above verses these are not the only places in the entire word of God where the phrase “sons of God” is used, but when they are used they all speak of one group called human beings who are in covenant with God by faith or in covenant by association with that group of faith.

Matthew 5:9 ⁹ "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called *sons of God*.

Luke 20:35-36 ³⁵ but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; ³⁶ for they cannot even die anymore,

because they are like angels, and are *sons of God*, being *sons of the resurrection*.

Romans 8:14 ¹⁴ For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are *sons of God*.

Romans 8:19 ¹⁹ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the *sons of God*.

Galatians 3:26 ²⁶ For you are all *sons of God* through faith in Christ Jesus.

So, what we see here is that the phrase “sons of God” is necessarily associated with human beings called into covenant union with God.

And I might add that in the NT the sons of God are identified as “the church” to which warnings are given to those in that covenant community who are acting out of accord with that covenant found in Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:18-22 ¹⁸ For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that *divisions exist among you*; and in part I believe it. ¹⁹ For there must also be *factions among you*, so that those who are approved may become evident among you. ²⁰ Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, ²¹ for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. ²² What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or *do you despise the church of God* and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this *I will not praise you*.

There are many warnings to the church for the precise reason that they were part of a covenant community that is to be faithfully representing the name of God to the world. And yet all throughout history, both before and after Christ's earthly ministry, some of those *designated* sons of God who are part of that community, were not walking after the Spirit but after the flesh.

SONS OF GOD MUST MEAN ANGELS

The argument from some however is that when the exact phrase, sons of God, is used in the O.T. it *must* mean angels.

In fact, Dr. Jonathan Sarfati (also a contributor to Creation Ministries International), in his book entitled, “The Genesis Account”, (which I might add is an excellent commentary on the

literal six day creation by God), unfortunately draws this very conclusion.

He says this regarding Job 38:4-7:

*“The Hebrew phrase for sons of God is bnei elohim. This **means** ‘angels’ in the Old Testament---indeed, the NIV renders this phrase “angels”, and the LXX has angeloi.”(pg.77) (Bold emphasis mine).*

So, Dr. Sarfati’s premise is that every time the exact phrase, “sons of God” is used in the Old Testament it necessarily means angels. At this point in the book no exegesis or hermeneutical evidence is given to arrive at that conclusion.

Later in his book (chapter 16; again with the absence of any exegesis of Genesis 6 or Job), he will use what he believes are other corroborating verses to support his position.

While, it is true that the NIV and the LXX uses the word angels in Job 38:7 as it utilizes *bnei Elohim*, as Dr Sarfati points out, this is not considered a translation at this point since the Hebrew word for angel in every other portion of the O.T uses the word *malak*.

And so, when the NIV and the LXX uses the word angel in those portions, (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7), it becomes an interpretation, or commentary, not a literal translation.

It is interesting to note that most good English modern translations, which include the NAU, NASB, ESV, NET, NKJV, all use the phrase “sons of God”, not angels, in all of the O.T. passages above.

What is also interesting is that the NIV and the LXX does not translate *bnei elohim* as angels in Gen.6:2, and Gen. 6:4, but rather translates it literally as “sons of God”.

Only in the book of Job does the NIV and LXX translate it angels, which begs the question. If the Hebrew phrase *bnei Elohim* **always means angels** in the OT, as Dr. Sarfati clearly says, why does the NIV and LXX not use the word angels in the Genesis passages?

If the NIV and LXX’s use of *bnei elohim* means angels, then it should “mean” angels in all of the passages of the O.T., including Genesis 6, despite the fact that the word “angels” is not used in any of these five passages.

Just a quick note at this point. Whenever the phrase sons of God is used in either an Old covenant or New Covenant setting one would

be hard pressed to conclude that anyone *identified* as a son or child of God, be they angel or man, necessarily means an enemy of God.

This does not mean that a human being *designated* or *identified* as a son of God, (and by that it necessarily means a covenantal relationship with God at the time of designation, son of God), cannot break covenant with Jehovah and in turn suffer His wrath.

And I think this is where some who are proponents of the “sons of God = angels” position miss the point. Again, Dr. Sarfati, who is a good representative of this overall view, is conflating the idea of consistent righteousness or godly living, with the *designation*, sons of God. They are not always equal.

But what is apparent is that the sons of God, *identified* with Seth, would not be demonstrating godly lives at the time they went into those daughters of men, *identified* with Cain.

Dr. Sarfati explains his view on the “godly seed” this way on page 475 of his book, “The Genesis Account.”

“While Seth and Enosh were godly --- there were plenty of other Sethites who were not godly.... If it were merely human intermarriage, then one would expect it to go both ways. That is, why not ‘the sons of man’ (Cainite men under this theory), and ‘daughters of Elohim’ (Sethite women)?”

“The theory is self-refuting: if the ‘sons of God meant ‘godly people’, then why were they intermarrying with godless women in the first place? While Paul would not write ‘Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers’ (2Corinthians 6:14) until thousands of years later, this seems to be a moral law written into the hearts of believers much earlier.”

The point Dr. Sarfati, (and other proponents of the sons of God = angels position), is making is that the ‘sons of God’ cannot be the godly seed of Seth because that godly seed would not have gone after the ungodly seed of Cain in marrying their women, or as Dr. Sarfati also rightly concludes, would also infer the godly seed of Seth found in those godly women going after the ungodly men of Cain.

And while it is true that thousands of years later the apostle Paul would lay down the heart of God related to being unequally yoked to unbelievers, it doesn’t automatically insure that believers or even those *associated* with believers as being part of the church, (the new covenant community), would not in fact do so.

The covenant community of Seth's and Enosh's day, *identified* as the sons of God, would also have been encouraged not to marry into the line of unbeliever's whose seed is identified with Cain, especially in light of Cain's infamy and curse from God that all would have been aware of.

Genesis 4:11, 15-16 ¹¹ *"Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand."* ¹⁵ So the LORD said to him, "Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him. ¹⁶ Then *Cain went out from the presence of the LORD*, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

But having come in to the daughters of men, the "sons of God" identified with the seed of the woman would have been introduced into a generally ungodly people along with the temptation to follow after other gods.

The premise that the "sons of God meant 'godly people'", is incorrect. "Sons of God" is a covenantal *designation* of a particular group who are *called to be godly*. That is different from saying that all people *identified* as sons of God are necessarily godly.

It is for this reason that the phrase "sons of God" does not guarantee godliness in the covenant community, or for that matter, that the seed of the serpent always exemplifies godlessness in their outward manifestations.

Paul addresses this phenomenon.

Romans 2:12-15 ¹² For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law; ¹³ for *it is* not the hearers of the Law *who* are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. ¹⁴ *For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves,* ¹⁵ *in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts*, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,

It is not unreasonable to think that during the times leading up to the flood that both the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, (sons of God), were crossing over the boundaries of each other's seeds.

In fact, Dr. Sarfati makes this same observation on page 475 of his book.

“While Cain and Lamech were certainly ungodly, some of the names in between indicate that there might have been believers in Cain’s line (‘Enoch to Lamech 4:18, Ch.14).”

In other words, some *identified* with the covenant community were breaking covenant with God and are now being *identified* with the seed of the serpent, while some *identified* with that ungodly seed may have had their eyes opened by God, as they repented of their sin and embraced the promises of God by faith, thus entering into the covenant community of God.

We see this more clearly later in redemptive history with the sons of Noah after the flood, as God reestablishes the covenant with Noah that He made with post-fall Adam.

In this sense we will see a repeat in Noah’s covenant family as we saw in the covenant family of Adam at the time of Cain’s rebellion. As with Adam, whose family was commanded by God to populate the world after the fall, so too, Noah is charged with repopulating the world through his family.

Genesis 9:1 ^{NAU} And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.

But, as with Adam’s rebellious son, Cain, who broke covenant with God, Ham will demonstrate that even those associated with the covenant community continue to break with that covenant through their rebellion as is seen with Noah’s curse on the family of Ham after he exposed the nakedness of his drunken father.

Genesis 9:24-28 ²⁴ When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. ²⁵ So he said, "Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brothers." ²⁶ He also said, "Blessed be the LORD, The God of Shem; And let Canaan be his servant. ²⁷ "May God enlarge Japheth, And let him dwell in the tents of Shem; And let Canaan be his servant." ²⁸ Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood.

All three of Noah’s sons were under the covenant that God made with Noah, but as was the case with Adam and his sons, the seed of the woman, (*identified* as the sons of God), is still being *identified* through one particular family member of Noah, as it was with Adam through Seth.

In the case of Noah's sons it would be through the line of Shem whose lineage would produce Abram, the son of Terah.

Genesis 11:27 ²⁷ Now these are *the records of* the generations of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran became the father of Lot.

And this brings me back to my point that God was not restricted in showing mercy to any person on the planet, despite their affiliation or non-affiliation with His covenant at the time, as we know that simply being identified with the covenant family does not automatically make you one of God's "believing" people.

Rather it is ultimately God who makes the first move in bringing who He will into that covenant relationship.

In fact, we are told that the family of Abram served other gods, which at least indicates that Abram himself may have served other gods when the Lord approached him.

Joshua 24:2-3 ² Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'From ancient times your fathers lived beyond the River, *namely, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods.*' ³ 'Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him through all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac.

And so, when Abram comes on to the scene God reestablishes His redemptive covenant with him but does not necessarily exclude others who are not in the direct line of the covenant family as we will see through Lot who was the son of Haran, the son of Terah.

The point is that God's people are always identified with His covenant despite the fact that not all who are part of that covenant family remain faithful. And yet God is faithful to bring even those outside of that direct covenant line into the family of God, be it Job, Abram, Lot, Rahab or whoever.

The final expression of God's choice to create a covenant family for His own possession is found in the seed promised to Abraham, Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:16 ¹⁶ Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as *referring* to many, but *rather* to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

But that seed would be birthed through another family to be called the sons of God found in Israel, who, through their father Abraham, were also given the mandate to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth with the righteousness of God.

Genesis 15:5-6 ⁵ And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶ Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Unfortunately, as was the case with the “sons of God” in the very beginning who broke covenant with God, as they went after the daughters of men of both seeds, Israel also falls in line with this pattern.

My people, Not My people

But because God entered into covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Israel), that nation can be *declared* by God to be His covenant community, and they would then be considered, sons of God, or My People.

Exodus 3:7 ⁷ The LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of *My people* who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings.

Was God mistaken to call Israel in Egypt “My people” knowing that as soon as they left Egypt they would rebel against Him and seek a false god in the golden calf? Did He not know they would rebel?

And yet, He still *identifies* them as My people. Why?

Because of the covenant promise made to Abraham many years before.

Deuteronomy 7:7-10 ⁷ "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, ⁸ but because *the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.* ⁹ "Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, *the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments;* ¹⁰ but *repays those who*

hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; He will not delay with him who hates Him, He will repay him to his face.

Therefore, the *designation*, "My people" is a covenantal *designation* based on a promise from God according to His choice, not a blanket statement identifying a supposedly godly people.

The phrase "son of God" is applied in this covenantal way when David recounts what the Lord told him about his son, Solomon.

1 Chronicles 28:6 ⁶ **"He (Yahweh) said to me**, 'Your son Solomon is the one who shall build My house and My courts; for ***I have chosen him to be a son to Me***, and I will be a father to him.

Solomon is not a son to God because he is necessarily godly or simply that he is David's son who could be next in line for the Throne in Israel. If that were the case then David could have simply made Solomon the king of Israel by fiat.

But you'll remember that that was not even the way David was chosen.

David did not secure the throne this way, but he (the least in all the kingdom) was chosen by God to be king.

1 Samuel 16:11-13 ¹¹ And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are these all the children?" And he said, "***There remains yet the youngest, and behold, he is tending the sheep.***" Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹² So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. ***And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he."*** ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and ***the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward.*** And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

So, here's the point. Covenant people of God are chosen by God according to His will to carry His Name, be they a nation that will represent Him in this world, as in Israel's case, or sons of God in the New Covenant sense identified as the church, or even in the pre-Israel sense, as the only reliable *designation* for those of the covenant seed who would be called, sons of God, after the image and likeness of Adam in his faith, as was Seth.

But in each case they retain the *designation*, sons of God, until they prove themselves not sons of God as we see with the apostatizing covenant community in Noah's day, Israel

apostatizing, and the church in the last days apostatizing from the one true faith in the Lord.

As to the church, Jesus Christ has made it clear that those in His new covenant community who refuse to humble themselves before the Lord will not be held guiltless as He pointed out to the church in Ephesus.

Revelation 2:5 ⁵ "Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place-- unless you repent.

Peter makes the same observation.

1 Peter 4:17 ¹⁷ For *it is* time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what *will be* the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Like Israel of old who rebelled against God, the Lord takes seriously His mandate for His people to carry His name faithfully, and if rebellion within that covenant community continues there are consequences as there were with Israel where they were no longer deemed "My people" but were declared by God, "not My people" because in practice they despise the Name of God.

Hosea 1:9-10 ⁹ And the LORD said, "Name him Lo-ammi, for you are *not My people* and I am not your God." ¹⁰ Yet the number of the sons of Israel Will be like the sand of the sea, Which cannot be measured or numbered; And in the place Where it is said to them, "*You are not My people*," It will be said to them, "*You are the sons of the living God.*"

Notice that Israel is declared, "not My people" in verse 9 and then in verse 10 the number of the sons of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, and it is those people who will then be declared, "*you are the sons of the living God.*"

How can this be?

Because unlike demons who, after they rebelled, were sealed for the day of judgment without any possibility of being blessed with the atoning work of Christ, human beings after they sinned are extended grace by God.

It would be a remnant of Israel, identified in Hosea 1:10, who would carry the promise given to Abraham whose seed would be as numerous as the stars of the heavens and the sands of the sea.

^{NAU} **Genesis 22:17** indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.

And we know that this is not addressing simply the physical descendants of Abraham, but that seed that is identified with Christ as they embrace the Messiah by the same faith as did Abraham.

Those who embrace the promises found in the seed of the woman, the seed of the covenant, the seed of Christ, are the true sons of God, whether they be believers in the days of Adam or today.

And yet we know that many who are *identified* with that “seed” are not necessarily the true seed as they are tares in the midst of wheat.

Those who are *associated* with the covenant promises of God are *declared* to be God’s people as they carry His name, thus the distinction between the lines of Seth and Cain in Genesis 4-6.

And by the way, Cain himself would have been considered one of the covenant sons of God up to the point where he rebelled against God’s means of true worship and subsequently killed his brother, Abel.

Like the rest of the very early covenant community that was limited to the immediate family of Adam and Eve, they too spent their lives associated with the covenant promises and as “sons of God” they came into the presence of God on a regular basis as God had instructed them as we see this pattern of worship at the beginning of Genesis 4.

Genesis 4:1-5 ^{NAU} Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with *the help of* the LORD." ² Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³ So *it came about in the course of time* that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. ⁴ Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; ⁵ but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.

Cain was given the opportunity by God to repent of his sin, of not approaching God in the prescribed way through the blood of a

sacrifice, but he refused to submit to the Lord and in his rebellious and jealous heart attacked and killed his brother.

Genesis 4:7-8 ⁷ "If you do well, will not *your countenance* be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." ⁸ Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

As a covenant son of God associated with the promises of God and following for a time the proper worship of God, Cain finally showed his true colors and essentially went from the designation “My people” to “Not My people” as God drove Cain out from among the covenant community to which he formerly belonged.

Genesis 4:14 ¹⁴ "Behold, *You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Your face I will be hidden*, and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."

Like Adam after the fall, Cain would be driven from the presence of the Lord and suffer the consequences of his actions. He would become the paradigm for how one was *designated* to be “My people” and then “Not My people” in a post-fall covenantal sense.

Cain was originally *associated* with the covenant community and a son of Adam who was created by God and later identified by the Holy Spirit as the son of God.

Luke 3:38 ³⁸ the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of *Adam, the son of God*.

Though this particular designation of Adam, “son of God” would not be inscribed in Scripture until thousands of years later it was inferred from the very beginning as Adam was made in God’s image, thus making him God’s son in that sense.

And so, very early on Seth, who was also the son of Adam, was a son of God in the covenantal sense in that he followed the promises of the covenant that Adam embraced by faith after his fall.

But because Cain was only a follower of the covenant in a lawful sense and not by faith, his later actions proved him not to be a true son of God, as he was then driven east from the land of covenant outside of Eden, just as Adam was originally driven out of Eden to the east.

Genesis 4:16 ¹⁶ Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, *east of Eden*.

And so, as is always the case, simply being *associated* or *identified* with the moniker, son of God, does not insure that someone is a holy or a true son of God as we also saw above with Hosea 1:9-10.

Therefore, if God is the one *declaring* when one is a son of God, (**My People**), and when that same individual or group is then declared by God not a son of God, (**not My people**), we are dealing with a people who must first be declared “My People” before they can be declared “not My people.”

I know this was the long way around the barn, but when we are told in Gen.6:4 that the sons of God came into the daughters of men, whatever else one might believe about angels, and if in fact these are angels, then angels in that verse would be declared by God to be in a favorable, or a **My Angels** covenant relationship with Him at that point.

So, those who promote the idea that “sons of God” = “angels” in Gen. 6 are necessarily saying that **God’s chosen angels** in Gen.6:2, (*not demons*), in a dastardly, rebellious and destructive way, took human women and corrupted their seed, which according to the adherents of this view, was instrumental in causing God to flood the world with water. This means that after this act, **My Angels**, (sons of God), became *Not My Angels*, (demons).

Now, if this is the case, then Satan continues to bring God’s chosen angels into his kingdom, (which undermines the biblical truth of God choosing unto life), so logically, God’s chosen angels, (“sons of God”), still have the opportunity to turn against God until the final day.

Remember, that Satan had to have turned against God after day 7 of creation, when on that day God saw all that He had made, all things both visible and invisible and declared them very good.

Colossians 1:16 ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him.

When God chose His angels before the foundations of the world, as He chose His people before the foundations of the world, we know that He will lose none of the angels that were given to Him

by the Father; not because He would die for fallen angels, but unlike Adam, many angels chose not to rebel, precisely because God chose them.

God Chooses

God's covenant includes Christ being chosen by the Father before the foundation of the world to be the Redeemer for His people.

1 Peter 1:18-21 ¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood of Christ*. ²⁰ For ***He was foreknown before the foundation of the world***, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you ²¹ who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

^{NAU} **Acts 2:23** this *Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross* by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

And in the predetermining, foreknowing and foreknowledge of God we know what that accomplished as it was planned before the foundation of the world. And Jesus makes it clear.

The first logical ground therefore concludes that what God plans and chooses will neither be thwarted or lost; specifically as in the case of men as we see Christ choosing a people for His own possession.

Ephesians 1:4-5 ⁴ just as ***He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world***, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

John 6:44 ⁴⁴ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and ***I will raise him up on the last day***.

God's Angels

This is the exact conclusion we must reach as we are told that God also chooses His angels.

1 Timothy 5:21 ²¹ I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of ***His chosen angels***, to maintain these *principles* without bias, doing nothing in a *spirit of partiality*.

Unless God does not choose angels and allows angels to be free autonomous agents throughout their existence, then we might conclude that angels could choose to rebel at any time in history.

But the fact is that just as the Father chose a people for Himself in the Son, before the foundation of the world, so too, did He choose His angels to carry His name forever.

God's chosen angels cohabitating with women so as to corrupt the seed of women is not part of what it means to minister to God's chosen people which is part of the eternal plan of God for His chosen angels.

Hebrews 1:14 ¹⁴ Are they [angels] not all ***ministering spirits***, sent out ***to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?***

While it is true that demons sometimes serve in the lives of God's people, according to the will of God, it is for testing our faith. Satan and his demons have only one passion as it relates to God's people; deception, and accusing the brethren with the intent to destroy, not build up.

1 Peter 5:8 ⁸ Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. ***Your adversary, the devil***, prowls around like a roaring lion, ***seeking someone to devour***.

Revelation 2:10 ¹⁰ Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, ***the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested***, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

2 Corinthians 11:3 ³ But I am afraid that, as ***the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness***, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity *of devotion* to Christ.

1 Thessalonians 3:5 For this reason, when I could endure *it* no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith, ***for fear that the tempter might have tempted you***, and our labor would be in vain.

Revelation 12:10 ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God

and the authority of His Christ have come, *for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.*

None of what we see in these passages is hardly the purpose found in the group of angels described in Heb.1:14.

If God's chosen angels are sent to minister to God's chosen people before, during and after their conversion, and these angels are in covenantal relationship with God based upon the choice God made before the foundation of the world, then these and only these angels could be regarded as sons of God for eternity.

And so, if these sons of God described in Gen.6:2 and 4 are actually chosen angels then God is not sovereign and these sons of God, (angels who have now rebelled as they cohabitated with women, and by definition become enemies of God), are worthy of the eternal bonds of destruction.

But the angels that belong to God are a group that did not and will not follow Satan.

Revelation 3:5 ⁵ He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and *I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

Those angels who followed Satan, we are told, belong to him. They are identified with him, not God.

Revelation 12:7 ⁷ And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The *dragon and his angels waged war,*

Again, these angels who follow God are explicitly identified as God's chosen angels.

1 Timothy 5:21 ²¹ I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of *His chosen angels*, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a *spirit of partiality.*

It is these angels, (we are told by the adherents of "the sons of God = angels"), who are sons of God in Genesis 6, and who had sexual relations with women to create a hybrid being that would finally be judged by God in a great flood.

The truth is however, Genesis 6:2,4 does not identify any angelic group, but are a covenantal group of human beings *identified* as the people of God who ultimately lusted after the things of this world and exchanged the truth of God for a lie and relinquished that title, son of God, and as a result they revel in their rebellion, are subsequently judged by God, even as God spares a remnant out of that group *identified* as sons of God, My people.

A Remnant

The sons of God are a called out people and *declared* to be sons who are part of a covenant community, but redemptive history, found in both Old and New Testaments, tells us that those within the covenant community, who claim to be sons of God, may in fact rebel, to where God takes a remnant of that called out community and gives those of His elect a heart of flesh as He takes out the heart of stone.

And that particular remnant person in question in our text in Genesis 6 was Noah.

Genesis 6:5-8 ⁵ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷ The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them." ⁸ But *Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.*

But what do we do with those passages in the O.T. where the title, sons of God, is clearly referring to angels, as in the case of Job?

Sons of God in the book of Job

It is interesting that some who hold to a position other than angels being the sons of God in Genesis 6 are willing to concede that the sons of God described in the book of Job are in fact angels.

Meredith Kline, who argues against angels equaling sons of God in Genesis 6:1-4, does say in his article entitled DIVINE KINGSHIP AND GENESIS 6:1-4; "*sons of God*" often denotes angels in the Old Testament."

Since his article is not primarily an argument from the book of Job, he offers no exegesis in the article on those passages, or others,

where the “sons of God *often denotes* angels in the Old Testament.” (emphasis mine). [his footnote #6 explicitly states which passages he has in mind; See Job1:6; 2:1; 38:7; *cf.* Ps.29:1; 89:7]. (I will address both psalms noted by Kline a little later in this study).

But, what may surprise us is that those references in Job do not have to be speaking about angels at all when we apply a proper exegesis to those passages. And now we’ll direct our attention to those specific passages.

Job 1:6 ⁶ Now there was a day when the *sons of God* came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.

Job 2:1 ^{NAU} Again there was a day when the *sons of God* came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.

Job 38:7 ⁷ When the morning stars sang together And all the *sons of God* shouted for joy?

The first thing to notice in all of the passages is that the phrase, sons of God is, as was noted earlier, the Hebrew phrase, *bnei Elohim*. It is not a phrase *specifically denoting angels*. It is the phrase, as we have been arguing, that is *associated or identified* with God’s covenant people and community.

And so, the question is, does this mean that the sons of God, (which I have argued is God’s covenant community made up of human beings in Genesis 6), are the same group here, also identified as the “sons of God”?

The word angel, (that Dr. Sarfati insists is what this Hebrew phrase means in the book of Job), simply doesn’t. The Hebrew word for angel is *malak* and therefore it must be implied that it defines a son of God as an angel in the context of Job.

And if Job were making the case that these who are designated sons of God are in fact angels, then *malak* would certainly be an appropriate word to use.

So, to designate the Hebrew *bnei Elohim* as *denoting* angels, it must be read back into the text. This is called eisegesis.

Let me try and explain why I believe the NIV and the LXX versions of the bible insert the word angels into these 3 passages in Job.

It is assumed that because Satan joins these sons of God, (who are presenting themselves before the Lord), that this setting is necessarily in heaven. And since it is assumed that angels come before God in heaven that this is what is actually transpiring: angels coming before God and Satan joining them in the process, in heaven.

This would be the premise upon which they would take the phrase, “sons of God” as equaling angels in the book of Job and then read that back into Genesis 6.

But this is not always the case. Yes, it is true that angels surround the throne of God and worship the Lord and are sent out from His throne as they are assigned to minister to those who will inherit salvation.

But this is assuming that only angels can present themselves before the Lord and that this can only happen in heaven.

Let me present two other options both of which can utilize the phrase “sons of God” as being human beings in both a heavenly setting and an earthly setting, where both settings can be utilized by Satan to join that group that presents themselves before the Lord.

Sons of God, human beings in Heaven, presenting themselves before the Lord

The first option of human beings presenting themselves before the Lord in heaven may be the less plausible of the two options that Job is addressing but it could still be argued from the word of God.

Consider human beings who have died and whose spirits are issued into the presence of God.

Going back to our context in Genesis we are actually given a picture of one particular human being who was shown to be fully alive after death and who was in the presence of the Lord.

Genesis 4:9-11 ⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" ¹⁰ He said, "What have you done? *The voice of your*

brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground. ¹¹ "Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.

Here's the question. What is meant by "the voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground"?

Was Abel's blood really crying? Of course not. This is an expression God utilized to tell Cain that his brother was pleading his case before God that he was murdered unjustly.

So, am I suggesting that Abel's spirit was with the Lord and that he was presenting himself before the Lord expressing himself in a way where the Lord could hear his cries?

Absolutely. And if it hasn't yet dawned on you where I am going with this line of thought let me remind you of others who were murdered unjustly for their faith as they too come into the presence of the Lord and plead their cases.

Revelation 6:9-11 ⁹ When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar *the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God*, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; ¹⁰ and *they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"* ¹¹ And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.

Though the book of Revelation is vision and apocalyptic language, which is often symbolic in nature, biblical symbolism always represents reality in some form.

The apostle John is in the presence of God and is shown a reality that includes real human beings who were murdered for their faith and are communicating with their God and Savior.

Could John have literally been brought into the very throne room of God, even if this is only a vision?

Absolutely. Even Paul wasn't convinced that he had not also been taken into heaven even while he was in his body.

2 Corinthians 12:2-5 ² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago-- whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows-- such a man was caught up to the third heaven. ³ And I know how such a man-- *whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows*-- ⁴ was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak. ⁵ On behalf of such a man I will boast; but on my own behalf I will not boast, except in regard to *my* weaknesses.

And so, our text in Revelation places John peering into heaven and seeing the altar of God, which represents the seat of our salvation where Christ, who shed His blood, is portrayed as the Lamb.

And so, those who were slain are seen before the sacrificial Lamb, whose life blood was shed on their behalf, presenting themselves before the Lord to do what?

To *present themselves before the Lord* so as to get an audience with the Lord. They are very much alive and they are very much interested in the justice they seek because of how their lives were cut short, just like Abel.

These are not angels presenting themselves before the Lord, but by definition, because they have been clothed with Christ's righteousness as seen in the white robe each was given, they are human beings who have died in Christ, thereby designated, sons of God.

Galatians 3:26 ²⁶ For you are all *sons of God* through faith in Christ Jesus.

But what we see in the book of Revelation seems to be a setting where the saints presenting themselves before the throne are those who are part of the new covenant in Christ after His resurrection.

What about those who died before Christ came into the world to redeem men from every tribe, tongue and nation? Did they have access to the throne of God after they died in their faith that a Messiah would atone for their sin?

If Abel's blood crying from the ground is a picture of one who is fully alive pleading for justice then it stands to reason that he is the first human being to ever enter into heaven by faith in the promises of God and join the angelic host of heaven, as they rejoice with Abel, (though absent from the body Abel is present with the Lord.)

Keep in mind that Abel was apparently murdered shortly after coming into the presence of the Lord as he brought a blood sacrifice before the Lord. Abel crying before the Lord in heaven is only possible if his faith on earth was in the promise of a Messiah who would die for him to redeem him unto a restored relationship with his God and a restored Paradise, which was the hope Adam and Eve longed for.

But, though Abel was the first he would not be the last to be absent from the body as a believer who would then be present with the Lord.

By the way, the idea of heaven is not a new covenant concept. Heaven as the place where God dwells with His angels and people as part of His created universe is found all throughout the O.T.

In fact, His very name is associated with heaven as He is referred to as the God of heaven.

Genesis 24:7 ⁷ "*The LORD, the God of heaven*, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me and who swore to me, saying, 'To your descendants I will give this land,' He will send His angel before you, and you will take a wife for my son from there.

Here, the designation, "The LORD, the God of heaven" is associated with a name to seal the covenant that God made with Abraham.

But could this name, God of heaven, be a designation that God is the God of the heavens that simply speak of the space on which the Lord hung the stars and planets for example?

Well, it would certainly include that designation, but when the Lord identifies Himself as the God of heaven He also has in mind that *place* in which the angels reside with Him in paradise.

Genesis 28:12 ¹² He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth *with its top reaching to heaven*; and behold, *the angels of God were ascending and descending on it*.

Genesis 28:17 ¹⁷ He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and *this is the gate of heaven*."

The inference here is that the gate of heaven is the entryway into the presence of the Lord where angels are obviously coming in and out.

When Moses speaks of God's habitation, His dwelling place, he identifies it with the actual place called heaven.

Deuteronomy 26:15 ¹⁵ *'Look down from Your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel, and the ground which You have given us, a land flowing with milk and honey, as You swore to our fathers.'*

Solomon acknowledges that the house He built for the Lord is a dwelling where God resides among His people, but still he makes clear that no place on earth and no heaven above, be that the vast space above or any dwelling in heaven, could contain the Almighty God.

1 Kings 8:27 ²⁷ "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, *heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You*, how much less this house which I have built!

Finally, for the sake of establishing that heaven is a *place* of God's chosen habitation among His people and angels, prior to the incarnate Christ, we see that it is the default destination for one particular person who never saw death.

2 Kings 2:1 ^{NAU} And it came about when the LORD was about to *take up Elijah by a whirlwind to heaven*, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.

2 Kings 2:11 ¹¹ As they were going along and talking, behold, *there appeared* a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. *And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven.*

The other person who never experienced physical death also went to be with the Lord and his destination is inferred as the same place as Elijah.

Hebrews 11:5 ⁵ *By faith Enoch was taken up* so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE **GOD TOOK HIM UP**; for he obtained the witness that before his *being taken up he was pleasing to God.*

This is the same heaven that Jesus Christ, (not yet dead and resurrected), identifies as the present Paradise to the repentant thief

on the cross where both the spirits of him and Jesus would be that very day.

Luke 23:43 ⁴³ And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

It is this Paradise to which the resurrected Jesus would return in His glorified flesh forty days later as He returned to the Father's house.

John 14:1-3 ^{NAU} "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also.

And so, what we see is that God created the present heaven, not for Himself, but for His chosen one's who would share that heaven with Him, those who are angels, along with men and heavenly animals as we see in the case of Elijah being taken up in a chariot pulled by horses, along with the seraphim and cherubim who are also heavenly animals (**see my study on Seraphim and Cherubim**).

The point is this. Human beings who have died in the faith from Abel on, have all gone to be with the Lord in the present heaven as their spirits depart from their bodies, and in two cases where body and spirit were taken to heaven. We are told many times that these people are alive and well and they think, speak, pray and sing praises to God.

Matthew 22:32 ³² 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB '? ***He is not the God of the dead but of the living.***"

If this is the case then what would prohibit these sons of God in the present heaven from presenting themselves before the Lord on a constant basis as they bow before Him in praise and adoration? And then what would prevent Satan from also presenting himself to come before God to do God's bidding?

By the way, if Satan was permitted to present himself with the sons of God, (in this case deceased saints in heaven), is it also not possible that his accusing of the brethren was not limited to those saints on the earth but quite possibly included those saints who

died in the Lord who now surround the throne as Satan comes before God to accuse both Job and the sons of God in heaven out of spite for the grace extended to them?

In any event, the only one who would allow Satan to present himself before his creator would be God Himself. And it appears that God allowed Satan to do just that as the sons of God, (whoever they are), presented themselves before the Throne.

Some argue that God could and did prevent Satan from continuing this privilege in a heavenly setting.

Revelation 12:7-10 ⁷ And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, ⁸ and they were not strong enough, and ***there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.*** ⁹ ***And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*** ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.

Could this be the time at which Satan was no longer allowed to come before the throne of God to accuse the brethren as he did with Job?

Possibly, though, as we will see, being thrown to the earth may have actually been the means by which Satan will be allowed to approach God with men of and on the earth.

Again, I'm not saying that the above argument for deceased saints presenting themselves before the throne of God is what is being declared in the book of Job, only that in those three passages where the phrase, sons of God, is used in connection with presenting themselves before the Lord, it does not have to be limited to angels but could actually be human beings who are absent from the body but present with the Lord.

Sons of God, human beings on earth, presenting themselves before the Lord

But let's look at a second option which can be just as exegetically viable and that is, human beings, *designated* sons of God, who are on the earth as they present themselves before the Lord.

The idea of presenting oneself before the Lord goes back quite some time with His people on this present earth. And it is always in the context of humbling oneself before God in worship, or acknowledging that God was in their presence as the Lord bore witness to their presence.

Just after the fall it was God, not man, who presented Himself in the Garden to specifically seek out Adam and his wife.

But the phrase, “in the presence of the Lord” in Job 2, could be literally translated, to set, or station oneself upon Jehovah.

The idea here is to consciously move yourself to such a place that it could be designated “the” place where Jehovah is to be found. It could be an altar that was constructed by Noah, for example, where he intended to worship God and hear from the Lord.

Genesis 8:20-21 ²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹ The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.

In this case, “the presence of the Lord” was at the spot where Noah built an altar to the Lord, and in response “the presence of the Lord” is seen to result in God being pleased with Noah’s approach as He makes a promise to Noah with an oath.

Interestingly enough, Noah’s presenting himself before the Lord is on the top of a mountain where God speaks to Him.

Of course, this is similar to the experience where Moses was commanded by God to go to the top of Mt. Sinai to meet with God in His presence.

Exodus 34:1-2 ^{NAU} Now the LORD said to Moses, "Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered. ² "So be ready by morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and *present yourself there to Me on the top of the mountain.*

Here, Moses presents himself before the Lord, with the express purpose of hearing from God as he humbles himself before the Lord.

In both cases, of Noah and Moses, these were actual places set aside to present themselves before the Lord on planet earth.

God always desires to meet with His people and the word of God often lays out the terms under which God will command His people to present themselves before Him.

Deuteronomy 14:23 ²³ *"You shall eat in the presence of the LORD your God, at the place where He chooses to establish His name,* the tithe of your grain, your new wine, your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and your flock, so that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always.

Numbers 11:16-17 ¹⁶ The LORD therefore said to Moses, "Gather for Me seventy men from the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and their officers and *bring them to the tent of meeting,* and *let them take their stand* there with you. ¹⁷ "Then *I will come down and speak with you there,* and I will take of the Spirit who is upon you, and will put *Him* upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear *it* all alone.

The Hebrew word used in Num.11:16 for stand (*yatsab*), as in, "let them take their *stand* there with you" is the exact same word used in Job 2:1 where the sons of God, along with Satan, "present" themselves before the Lord.

Let's look at one more example where the sons of God, in this case, those of Israel, present themselves before the Lord in a designated place to meet with their God.

Deuteronomy 31:14-15 ¹⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, the time for you to die is near; call Joshua, and *present yourselves at the tent of meeting,* that I may commission him." So Moses and Joshua went and *presented themselves at the tent of meeting.* ¹⁵ *The LORD appeared in the tent in a pillar of cloud,* and the pillar of cloud stood at the doorway of the tent.

Here the tent of meeting is obviously that designated place where God has chosen to accept His people who present themselves before the Lord.

But does presenting oneself before the Lord always have to be restricted to the sons or children of God meeting with the Lord in only one designated place?

Not necessarily. In fact, there are instances where the people of God as a group, wherever they are on earth, can be the place where they present themselves before the Lord.

Numbers 32:29 ²⁹ Moses said to them, "If the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben, everyone who is armed for battle, will cross with you over the Jordan *in the presence of the LORD*, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession;

Here the place is presumably somewhere near the banks of the Jordan River as the assembly of Israel prepares to cross the Jordan for battle as they enter the Promised Land, "in the presence of the Lord."

Here the Hebrew word for presence is *panim* which means face. So, as they come into the presence or the face of the Lord, they are gathered together as sons of God, children of Israel.

Another thing to consider is that even when the sons of God present themselves before the Lord it does not mean that they literally meet God in heaven or that God's presence with them must necessarily be on the earth. Though the sons of God may be on earth, the Lord's presence can be in heaven, where believe it or not, He can actually still hear His people.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2 ^{NAU} Guard your steps as you go to the house of God and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil. ² Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter *in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth*; therefore let your words be few.

By the way, we know that Christ has opened the door to present oneself before the Lord in worship, not in any one particular place, but rather anywhere where one is in Christ.

John 4:19-21 ¹⁹ The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. ²⁰ "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you *people* say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." ²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is

coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

The point is that the phrase, “present themselves” or “present himself” in Job 1:6 and 2:1 does not have to be addressing angels at all, but could be the people of God who are *identified* with the promises of God, called the sons of God, who often came into the presence of God on this earth to worship Him.

In the case of Job 1:6 and 2:1 it appears that in the midst of the assembly of the sons of God presenting themselves before God to worship, pray and or hear from God, Satan was allowed to be part of that gathering with the express purpose of tempting one of the sons of God, Job.

Job was likely part of an assembly of believers prior to the establishment of the nation of Israel outside of Egypt, since he is identified as one residing in the land of Uz with friends and family, who are like-minded concerning the things of the Lord, as Job functioned as a priest interceding on behalf of his family and possibly the covenant community of which he was a part.

This does not in any way disqualify him, or anyone else at that time, from being designated a son of God, who regularly presented himself before the Lord.

In fact, it is within the immediate context of Job coming into the presence of the Lord, offering incense to the Lord, as he worshipfully approached his God with such offerings, that we see Satan also coming into the presence of God.

Job 1:5-6 ⁵ When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, *Job would send and consecrate them*, rising up early in the morning and *offering burnt offerings according to* the number of them all; for Job said, "Perhaps *my sons* have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." *Thus Job did continually.* ⁶ *Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.*

It is hard to escape the immediate context of Job worshipping the Lord as he comes into God's presence, and Satan also coming among them, the sons of God, of which Job is a part. It just seems disjointed to move from a human being, worshipping God with his burnt offerings as he comes into God's presence, to angels coming into the presence of God in heaven.

By the way, in the context of verse 6, the sons of God are juxtaposed with Satan in an opposing fashion, which clearly delineates between good and evil, which is to say, that the sons of God in this context, (if in fact these are angels), are righteous angels.

If these are righteous angels and we are using this portion of Scripture to support the idea that Genesis 6 is also describing the sons of God as angels, then we are back again to the problem of righteous angels acting wickedly toward the daughters of men by cohabitating with them, where some also use Jude as a proof text for this act, which forces these righteous angels to leave their proper abode as God judges them.

Jude 1:6 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,

So, once again, we are back to righteous angels being able to lose their righteous standing long after the initial angelic rebellion of those who followed Satan, prior to him tempting Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

But, back to our text regarding Satan joining in with the sons of God in His presence, a question is asked of Satan addressing the issue as to where has he has been during the time prior to presenting himself before the Lord?

Job 1:7 ⁷ The LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it."

Some have suggested that Satan is telling God where he has been on earth as if to distinguish himself from the location where he presumably is now in verse 7, in the presence of the Lord in heaven.

But we know that one does not have to ascend to heaven to be in the presence of the Lord, and neither did Satan. His response simply tells the story of where he spends his time; roaming the earth and walking around on it with the express purpose of coming against the sons of God, who present themselves before the Lord, which is his ultimate goal.

Revelation 12:9 ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, *who deceives the*

whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

As we saw earlier this verse describes the humiliation of Satan and his rebellious angels being expelled from heaven and relegated to an existence where they are allowed by God to deceive the whole world, including God's covenant people.

In essence, Satan is telling God in Job 1:7 that he is continuing to carry on his mission to roam the earth while deceiving the nations. And this does not require Satan ascending to heaven to make this statement.

By the way, Satan still roams the earth seeking those he may destroy

1 Peter 5:8 ⁸ Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

It is this same Satan who sought to destroy Job as God allowed him to be used as a tool to accomplish His will in Job's life. And interestingly enough God still allows Satan to be used in similar ways to accomplish His will, even in the lives of the sons of God who have placed their faith in Christ.

Revelation 2:8-10 ⁸ "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: ⁹ 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, ***the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested***, and you will have tribulation for ten days. ***Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.***

Satan doesn't need to ascend to heaven to come into the Lord's presence to be used by God, any more than the sons of God did in years gone by, or in the present times, for we who are sons of God in Christ today.

We as believers in Christ, sons and daughters of God, are encouraged to present ourselves before the Lord continually, no matter where we are, because our presence before the Lord, as in days gone by, is never really dependent on the sons of God trying

to approach God, but rather God allowing it as He provided the means to approach Him.

In other words, He presents Himself before us to bring us to Himself.

Galatians 4:9 ⁹ But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

1 John 4:19 ¹⁹ We love, because He first loved us.

^{NAU} **1 John 4:10** In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

Sons of God, angels, presenting themselves before the Lord in the book of Job

I would now like to address the notion of angels being designated sons of God who present themselves before the Lord in the book of Job. But let me first call to our attention the glorious reality of Christ presenting Himself before the Father on our behalf.

Hebrews 9:24 ²⁴ For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a *mere* copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, ***now to appear in the presence of God for us;***

This is the only reason anyone can present themselves before the Lord as sons of God.

The sons of God, whether they lived in the days of the patriarchs, during the time of Israel's wanderings, or even in the glory days of Israel, as seen with King Solomon and the Temple, where God dwelled among His people, there is only one reason anyone could be designated a true son of God and that is because God chose them and brought them near to Himself, enabling them by His Spirit to present themselves before the Lord with the express purpose of worshipping Him in spirit and in truth.

Satan may still be used of God in ways that refine the faith of His people, but he in no way can be called a son of God who worships the Lord, nor can his angels, the demons.

To designate demons, (who cohabit with the daughters of men), as sons of God, is an insult to all angels called by God to be ministers to the sons of God who are chosen for salvation.

You and I in Christ have a very unique position as we are told that our present citizenship is in heaven.

Philippians 3:20-21 ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Ephesians 2:4-7 ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

There is no excuse for any son or daughter of God not to present ourselves before our Lord and Savior at the Throne of God. It is our home and our future and our hope in the age to come.

Luke 18:29-30 ²⁹ And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, ³⁰ who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life."

In my estimation, there is no question that when Moses records for us in Genesis 6, that the sons of God came into the daughters of men, that these sons are the covenant community *identified* with Adam, the son of God, who came to faith in the promises of God after the fall.

But is there not the possibility that the sons of God in the book of Job could be angels?

Well, we know that angels certainly have access to their God and Lord as they stand in His presence.

Luke 1:19 ¹⁹ The angel answered and said to him, "*I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God*, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.

^{NAU} **Matthew 18:10** "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that *their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven.*

Luke 15:10 ¹⁰ "In the same way, I tell you, there is joy *in the presence of the angels of God* over one sinner who repents."

1 Timothy 5:21 ²¹ I solemnly charge you *in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels*, to maintain these *principles* without bias, doing nothing in a *spirit of partiality*.

Yet, nowhere in the entire word of God is there any specific reference to angels being identified as "sons of God" unless we assume that this is what Job is addressing, despite the fact that the word angels is not used to describe this group in the passages we have been looking at in Job.

And yet, many, including Dr. Sarfati, continue to make the case that there are additional references to support the idea that sons of God = angels. And not only are they angels in the biblical references Dr. Sarfati will quote, but the phrase, according to him, must necessarily include the type of angel who would defile human women.

Again, he goes back to the premise that "the Hebrew is *bnei ha Elohim*" (and that) "*this is consistently used of angels in the Old Testament, both good and bad.*" (bold emphasis mine)

But again, to describe sons of anyone is to designate the progenitor of that one and who they are associated with. Therefore a son of God, be they angel or man, is one who is *associated* with God in a covenantal sense.

Again, we see this distinction of all people in the world as belonging to one father or the other. Simply because we are human beings made in the image of God we cannot all call God, Father. And Jesus makes this clear.

John 8:42-44 ⁴² Jesus said to them, "*If God were your Father, you would love Me*, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. ⁴³ "Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. ⁴⁴ "*You are of your father the devil*, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth

because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

The same would be true of angels. To allow the phrase, sons of God, as Dr. Sarfati does, to identify both bad and good angels, strips the name Father from its proper place as being Father of His elect, be they angels or men.

To lump both good and bad angels under the heading “sons of God” is simply not following the biblical understanding of covenant.

But to make his point, Dr. Sarfati then quotes Ps.29:1 and 89:6 as passages with a similar meaning to sons of God and uses these to identify both good and bad angels. The phrase he ties to “sons of God” is the phrase, “sons of the mighty”, which is a phrase found only in the two passage he quotes.

Psalm 29:1 ^{NAU} A Psalm of David. Ascribe to the LORD, O *sons of the mighty*, Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

There is nothing in this psalm to explicitly suggest that the *sons of the mighty* are good angels, let alone bad angels.

In fact, when we see the accompanying phrase at the beginning of Ps.29:1, “Ascribe glory to the Lord”, which is also used elsewhere in the Old Testament Scriptures, it is always identifying the covenant community who are to call upon the name of the Lord, in this case, Israel.

^{NAU} **1 Chronicles 16:28** *Ascribe to the LORD*, O families of the peoples, *Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength*.

These are not angels being described here, but the families of the people.

What families are these? These are the sons of God, sons of the mighty, sons of the covenant, the children of God; Israel. But then Dr. Sarfati uses Psalm 89:6 to continue to make his case that both good and bad angels are described by similar terms like “sons of the mighty.”

Psalm 89:6 ⁶ For who in the skies is comparable to the LORD? Who among the *sons of the mighty* is like the LORD,

Here the psalmist is praising God who is creator of heaven and earth and that all creation is to worship Him.

And in this verse it certainly may look like the *sons of the mighty* could be associated with those who are in the skies, (angels?).

But a little context gives us a different picture as we examine other parts of this same psalm.

Psalm 89:1-8, 14-17 ^{NAU} A Maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite. I will sing of the lovingkindness of the LORD forever; To all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth. ² For I have said, "Lovingkindness will be built up forever; In the heavens You will establish Your faithfulness." ³ ***"I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, ⁴ I will establish your seed forever And build up your throne to all generations."*** Selah. ⁵ The heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; ***Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the holy ones.***

⁶ *For who in the skies is comparable to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty is like the LORD,*

⁷ A God greatly feared in the ***council of the holy ones***, And awesome above all those who are around Him? ⁸ O LORD God of hosts, who is like You, O mighty LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You. ¹⁴ Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Lovingkindness and truth go before You. ¹⁵ ***How blessed are the people who know the joyful sound!*** O LORD, they walk in the light of Your countenance. ¹⁶ In Your name they rejoice all the day, And by Your righteousness they are exalted. ¹⁷ For You are the glory of their strength, And by Your favor our horn is exalted.

The Psalmist is describing the covenant people of the Lord with an eye to the future seed in whom David's throne will be established forever.

Verse 6, that Dr. Sarfati uses to make his case that the 'sons of the almighty' are necessarily angels, good or bad, is in the context of a type of Hebrew parallelism describing the same event in two different ways in two different verses. Look again at verse 5 that precedes Dr. Sarfati's proof-text.

Psalm 89:5 ⁵ The heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; Your faithfulness also in the ***assembly of the holy ones.***

Here the psalmist is using language to describe the heavens declaring the glory of God. And then in the very next part of this verse, keeping in mind the context that is describing God making a covenant with ***His chosen people in verse 3***, He identifies this same group called the ***assembly of the holy ones*** in verse 5 which is parallel to verse 6.

Psalm 89:6 ⁶ For who in the skies is comparable to the LORD?
Who among the sons of the mighty is like the LORD,

This is all covenant language describing God's chosen people, here in the form of Israel.

We see very similar language in other psalms, like Psalm 96, describing God's people who are called upon to bring their praises before the Lord, who are to join the heavens in praising God, or as in the case of the other verse Dr. Sarfati uses in Psalm 29:1, "Ascribing glory and strength to the Lord."

^{NAU} **Psalm 96:7** Ascribe to the LORD, O ***families of the peoples***,
Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. ⁸ Ascribe to the LORD
the glory of His name; Bring an offering and come into His courts.

The ***families of the peoples*** in this psalm are the identical "people" described as "sons of the mighty" in Ps. 29:1 that Dr. Sarfati uses to identify both good and bad angels.

But the families of the peoples and the sons of the mighty are both commanded to do the same thing in the same context: "Ascribe glory and strength to the Lord" in the context of worship.

In fact, the end of Psalm 29 wraps up the description of our glorious God in creation as He connects the first part of Psalm 29 with the very last verse of Psalm 29 as His people, not angels.

Psalm 29:11 ¹¹ The LORD will give strength to ***His people***; The LORD will bless ***His people*** with peace.

Dr. Sarfati then uses one final passage to wrap up his case that the term sons of God must refer to angels.

Daniel 3:24-25 ²⁴ Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, "Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?" They replied to the king, "Certainly, O king." ²⁵ He said, "Look! I see four men

loosed *and* walking *about* in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like ***a son of the gods!***"

Here in Dan.3:25 we have the Aramaic phrase for son of the gods which is *bar elahin*. And Dr. Sarfati simply identifies this phrase and then says, "This term also means 'son of God' and is used of angels."

He then goes on to acknowledge the fourth person in the fire with Daniel's three friends as being supernatural, whether angel or pre-incarnate Christ.

Now, it is true that a couple of verses later Nebuchadnezzar connects the fourth person with what he believes to be an angel of the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Daniel 3:28 ²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be ***the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him***, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God.

But, simply for Nebuchadnezzar to make the connection that the God of these three Hebrews would send one of His angels to rescue them, does not automatically equate the phrase "son of the gods" with angels in every other place in the OT, as Dr. Sarfati concludes: "*So, the OT and cognate languages use 'sons of God' to mean 'angels' everywhere else. It looks like special pleading to treat Genesis 6 as one exception to this general rule. This should not be done without very good reason.*"

I think I've already given a number of good reasons.

I would argue that all of the proponents of the "angels = sons of God" position, as described by Dr. Sarfati, fall short of any meaningful exegesis, with the evidence he's provided in his book, "The Genesis Account," (which, aside from his perspective on the sons of God, is an excellent commentary on the first few chapters of Genesis).

Rather all references point to sons of God equaling God's covenant people, because as we have seen all of those references are better understood in a covenantal sense addressing the called out people of God who are commanded to bear that name as they call upon the name of the Lord in faithfulness.

Only in three passages in Job can someone suggest that these might be angels despite the fact that the phrase, “sons of God” is used, not the word angels.

On the other hand, there are myriads of references from Genesis to Revelation and everything in between where the phrase, sons of God, and its derivatives, is used of God’s covenant community in both an Old Testament and New Testament setting.

My contention is that from a sound hermeneutical perspective the more clear verses, where “sons of God”, and its similar phrases are used, identifies God’s people, and they should be the verses used to identify “sons of God” in every other place in the OT including the book of Job, with one possible exception.

Last Holdout for Angels Being Sons of God

Job 38:4-7 ⁴ "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding, ⁵ Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? ⁶ "On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, ⁷ *When the morning stars sang together And all the sons of God shouted for joy?*

If we are going to exegete verse 7 it must be done within the context of the entire passage which has the creation of the universe as its foundational premise. Only with this in view can we begin to arrive at a proper biblical conclusion regarding the sons of God in verse 7.

The first thing to note is that the passage that is connected to Job 38:7 is inextricably linked to chapters 38-41 where the Lord admonishes Job with the reality that God is bigger than anything that Job may be experiencing in the earth, which is designed to put his life into perspective, and to demonstrate that God does everything with a purpose, to His glory.

Even a casual look at these four chapters will show how God is using language that explains His creation using architectural characteristics that humans would utilize in construction, along with other anthropomorphisms, (the attribution of human characteristics or behavior to a god, animal, or object).

Job 38:4-5 ⁴ "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding, ⁵ Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it?

Job 38:8 ⁸ "Or *who* enclosed the sea with doors When, bursting forth, it went out from the womb;

The sea obviously is not enclosed with doors any more than the waters burst forth from the womb of a woman.

Job 38:9-10 ⁹ When I made a cloud its garment And thick darkness its swaddling band, ¹⁰ And I placed boundaries on it And set a bolt and doors,

The sea does not have a bolt and doors to keep it in its place.

Job 38:22 ²² "Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, Or have you seen the storehouses of the hail,

Snow and hail is not deposited in storehouses.

Job 38:29 ²⁹ "From whose womb has come the ice? And the frost of heaven, who has given it birth?

Ice and frost are not delivered as in childbirth.

Job 38:31 ³¹ "Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades, Or loose the cords of Orion?

Could Pleiades or Orion be held in place in the universe by chains and cords?

Job 38:35 ³⁵ "Can you send forth lightnings that they may go And say to you, 'Here we are'?

Does lightning speak?

Job 39:19 ¹⁹ "Do you give the horse *his* might? Do you clothe his neck with a mane?

Job 39:25 ²⁵ "As often as the trumpet *sounds* he says, 'Aha!' And he scents the battle from afar, And the thunder of the captains and the war cry.

Does the horse speak to himself and conclude now is the time for battle?

Job 40:15,18 ¹⁵ "Behold now, Behemoth, which I made as well as you; He eats grass like an ox. ¹⁸ "His bones are tubes of bronze; His limbs are like bars of iron.

Is the behemoth a giant robot with bronze and iron as integral parts of his being?

Job 41:1,27 ^{NAU} "Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook?
Or press down his tongue with a cord?

²⁷ "He regards iron as straw, Bronze as rotten wood.

Does Leviathan eat iron and bronze?

The point to this whole section of Scripture is that God is using different forms of speech to make a point to Job. Much of this language is rhetorical and cynical in nature and is not meant to be taken literally, though the language definitely speaks to literal realities concerning God and His creation.

He is the almighty God who is not only the creator of the universe but is the Savior of all of His people, including Job, who is called upon by God to trust that He is faithful toward His people, despite our lack of understanding of His ways and will, which at times may be implemented for our good and His glory.

It is this God who promised to Adam and Eve that He would send a Savior, born of a woman, who would restore Paradise and advance a Kingdom where righteousness dwells forever.

Colossians 1:15-20 ¹⁵ *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.* ¹⁶ *For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him.* ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, ²⁰ and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

This is the One, Jesus Christ, who miraculously orchestrated the symphony we know as the entire physical creation that declares the glory of God.

And part of what we read in the book of Job, especially in this section from chapters 38-41, is a word picture of this creation leaping into existence at the command of God as the Lord uses this

colorful and descriptive language that is meant to *personalize* His creation in a way that shows God's special touch.

The symbolism being used in this section is purposeful and so to assume that this non-literal language, all throughout these chapters, now becomes literal at Job 38:7, to describe angels as participating in the witnessing of this creation, becomes, at the very least, questionable.

Having said that I would personally like to believe that the phrase, sons of God in Job 38:7, is actually describing angels in this verse and that they had the unique perspective of God's creative handiwork, but that is different from saying that an exegesis of this passage, in light of the context, precludes that they must be angels, especially when we place the other references to "sons of God" in Job in the light of other possible interpretations based on sound hermeneutics.

So, if these are not angels witnessing God's handiwork prior to man being created on day 6, what other possibility is there for identifying these sons of God in **Job 38:7** "When the morning stars sang together *And all the sons of God shouted for joy?*"

Again, when we place this verse back into the context of the creation being reported by God to Job, with the symbolic language that is utilized to paint a picture for Job, we can begin to see a little different image.

The first question I have is, who are the morning stars?

I know that many believe that the sons of God are angels in this verse, but is God describing angels as morning stars as well?

In typical Hebraic form this is certainly a possibility as we have already seen with some of the verses throughout this section.

Job 38:5 ⁵ Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it?

These are two separate questions in the very same verse that are identical in nature; that of measuring.

Job 38:6 ⁶ "On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone,

Here again, two separate questions in the same verse communicating the same thing as it relates to a building project being set on a firm foundation.

And we see this same pattern all throughout this section. And so, I think we are on safe exegetical ground to surmise that the morning stars and the sons of God are the same group described in two ways in the same verse.

Of course, this still doesn't directly answer the question, who are the players in this verse?

By the way, for those who do not equate the morning stars with the sons of God, it is suggested that the morning stars are allusions to Jesus Christ or even Lucifer.

Revelation 22:16 ¹⁶ "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. ***I am*** the root and the descendant of David, *the bright morning star*."

Isaiah 14:12 ¹² "How you have fallen from heaven, ***O star of the morning***, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations!

It is obvious that if the morning stars in Job 38:7 were either Jesus Christ or Lucifer they were certainly witnesses to the creation. But this seems to me to be forced upon the text as well as the context found in chapters 38-41.

But as we consider the context and the symbolic language employed in this section it is not unreasonable to arrive at another conclusion not limited to sentient beings, be they angels or God Himself.

In fact, as we have already touched on, this kind of anthropomorphic language describes the very inanimate creation we have before us in Job.

Job 38:29 ²⁹ "From whose womb has come the ice? And the frost of heaven, who has given it birth?

Is ice and frost birthed from the womb of a woman?

Unless we ignore the use of special language that God is employing we would have to say, yes, ice and frost are birthed

from the womb of a woman, since God suggests that it is. And who are we to question God and His word?

Is it possible that the creation itself can speak human words?

Job 38:35 ³⁵ "Can you send forth lightnings that they may go And say to you, 'Here we are'?"

Again, unless we ignore symbolic language that God employs, the literalistic implication is that lightning speaks the same dulcet tones of any person on earth, albeit in lightning language, whatever that is.

Of course, the book of Job is not the only place where this kind of anthropomorphic language is attached to the physical universe.

Psalms 98:8 ⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands, Let the mountains sing together for joy

Isaiah 55:12 ¹² "For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap *their* hands.

What is God suggesting in these two passages?

Well, if we look at Psalm 98 we see that it is a psalm of praise and adoration to God for His faithfulness and salvation to His people as they are encouraged to sing and shout to the Lord.

Psalms 98:1-4 ^{NAU} A Psalm. O sing to the LORD a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. ² The LORD has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. ³ He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. ⁴ Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth; Break forth and sing for joy and sing praises.

In these passages that lead up to verse 8, where the rivers and mountains join the host of Israel in praise, it is obvious that people are being addressed, but creation is also encouraged to join in this praise for precisely the same reason since God is creator of all things, including both man and earth.

We see the same thing in Isaiah where God is calling a people to Himself as they are encouraged to turn from their wickedness and embrace the grace that God is extending to them.

Isaiah 55:6-7 ⁶ Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. ⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

It is in light of this truth that not only Israel, but the entire creation joins in to honor the God of all creation just a few verses later in the same section of Isaiah 55.

Isaiah 55:12 ¹² "For you [the people of God] will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap *their* hands.

God identifies creation itself as capable of giving praise and adoration to the Lord who created it.

However, God is not suggesting, like those of the pantheistic persuasion, that the physical stuff that makes up the earth, the moon, the sun and the stars is sentient. But what He is declaring is that both man and the universe share in the glory of God because they are both made to honor the Lord, and the Creator can employ His creation to proclaim that truth.

Therefore, both can be viewed side by side as responders, in a sense, to the goodness of God as He declares what is true of His nature and His power.

Psalms 19:1 ^{NAU} For the choir director. A Psalm of David. The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

In this sense, the heavens do in fact speak as the Lord speaks through it and this is why men are without the excuse that they have not heard from God.

Romans 1:20 ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

And this is why God always connects His entire creation, together with men, as He will redeem both on the last day as He raises His people to resurrection life.

Romans 8:19-22 ¹⁹ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

Again, notice how Paul equates creation and man as both capable of yearning and waiting to be set free from slavery to glory.

Paul, like David and Isaiah, never thought for a moment that the creation itself was sentient and had actual thoughts of being redeemed, but he uses language that attributes qualities to the creation that only man can personalize as he shows how both creation and man are inextricably tied together and made for each other as both declare the glory of God, in Christ.

So, I raise the question. Is it possible that in Scripture human characteristics can be attributed to the creation itself, and if so, is it possible that the morning stars singing, and the sons of God shouting, in Job 38:7, don't have to be describing sentient beings, like angels?

Is it possible that the creation itself is glorying in the handiwork of God as the Lord is using language to bring a life of its own to what He is doing in the span of six days in the beginning?

I would submit that this is precisely what the text is saying, in light of the larger context, and this is why we can connect morning stars singing, in the first part of the verse, to the sons of God who shout for joy, in the last part of the verse, as the parallelism becomes complete, where both are identical and declaring the glory of God.

Just as lightning can speak, (Job 38:35), so too can individual stars or planets or even universes, that are birthed, if you will, by the word of God. And in that sense they can be described as sons of God who praise their Creator.

Here's my point. Job 38:7 is not found in an exegetical vacuum. The surrounding context must be brought to bear when looking at

passages where less clear language must be defined by more clear passages.

As we consider the book of Job we must not place back into a passage, like Job 38:7, our preconceived idea as to what we think it should say. Rather, let's take the evidence we have and make observations that the context allows us to use.

Is it possible that the morning stars and the sons of God are angels who are declaring the glory of God? As I said earlier, I like the idea of angels being special witnesses to the handiwork of God, despite the fact that the word angels is not used in that passage.

The Scriptures don't tell us anywhere as to when the angels were created, though it is certainly inferred that it must have been somewhere within that six day period as on the seventh day the Lord ceased His special creative work, of which angels were necessarily a part.

And so, it is certainly possible that angels were created before man and before the end of the creative process as they rejoiced over the universe being spoken into existence by God.

But, is it also not possible, in this section relating to God's ability to miraculously create ex nihilo, that the creation itself can declare the glory of God during creation week as the Lord uses anthropomorphic language to personalize His loving touch on every corner of His universe, which is the immediate context of this passage in Job?

The jury may still be out on Job 38:7, but if we are coming to the table to use the phrase, "sons of God" as a pretext for defining this phrase in all of the OT as being equated with angels, then it is going after a bridge too far in my estimation.

Conclusion

Here's the bottom line. Exegesis and sound hermeneutics must be brought to bear when it comes to taking the very words of any biblical passage and placing those words in the context in which the writer meant them to be taken and what God intended to say.

When you look at the actual phrase, "sons of God" in Genesis 6, for example, and conclude that it must mean a certain thing without putting those words in the very context in which they're found, with an understanding that an historical account of the seed

of the woman and the seed of the serpent are being explained in the immediate context, then you cannot assign that phrase a meaning outside of that context unless the passage explicitly demands it.

To move from human beings being condemned by God because of Adam's rebellion, (albeit through the temptation of a rebellious angel), and following the history of the promised seed of hope given to Eve, and then to drop into that context a completely novel idea not previously, or afterward, identified anywhere in the word of God, (namely, angels having sexual and marital relations with women), is simply inconsistent with any meaningful exegesis.

And I don't believe human beings desiring to have sex with angels, in the case of Lot harboring angels in his home in Genesis 19:5, in any way corroborates what obviously did not take place in that setting with what did take place in Genesis 6.

This is the same problem that we run into with those promoting some form of Theistic evolution whereby they take the actual words of Genesis 1 and 2, and turn them on their head.

If we actually exegete those passages in the beginning of Genesis, (as Dr. Sarfati masterfully does in his book), there is no way you can conclude that the ordinal numbers accompanying the phrase, "evening and morning", together with the word, "day", expresses long periods of time as the proponents of old earth theology contend.

The words Moses chose under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit were meant to communicate an actual historical fact that only God knew first hand in the beginning. To suggest that God was using figurative language in some poetic form to hint at what may have actually been a period of millions or billions of years shatters any aspect of perspicuity.

The only way you can arrive at long periods of time with what is communicated in Genesis one and two is to ignore the actual words and the historical context and impose on that portion of Scripture a biased cosmology that excludes the plain meaning of the text.

And I believe this is the same problem we run into with the phrase, "sons of God" in Genesis 6 and the book of Job.

The actual words used cannot give you a clear definition that "sons of God" in those passages are angels. It must be assumed,

according to a preconceived idea, that only angels will fit into those portions of Scripture.

But when you exegete those passages in their context, which I have attempted to do in this study, it becomes apparent that angels are not the only solution to who the “sons of God” may be in the passages in question, and I contend are not the solution based on what I’ve shown above.

The sons of God in Genesis 6, (and I would include Job 1:6 and 2:1), are the sons of Adam who are in covenant relationship with God and His promises. Those sons of Adam are commanded to carry the name of God throughout the earth to the glory of God as they separate themselves from the world and its gods.

2 Corinthians 6:15-18 ¹⁵ Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE." ¹⁷ "Therefore, ***COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,***" says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you." ¹⁸ "And I will be a father to you, ***And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,***" Says the Lord Almighty.

But redemptive history tells us that many of those designated “sons of God”, starting with Adam, rebelled at some point and God judged them.

In His mercy and grace God chose a remnant before the foundation of the world, starting with Adam, and through God’s Spirit, has given them a new heart with a new life and a new hope of Paradise restored in the new heavens and new earth through faith in the Son sent from the Father.

It is this remnant who are declared, “My People”, by God, who are the true sons of God at any time in history.

Hebrews 8:10-13 ¹⁰ "FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND ***THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.***" ¹¹ "AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH

EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. ¹² "FOR ***I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE.***" ¹³ When He said, "A new *covenant*," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

It is in the last Adam, Jesus Christ, in whom we place our hope of that coming age, where death is finally swallowed up in victory and God's very presence comes down to man where heaven and earth become one.

Revelation 21:1-5 ^{NAU} Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "***Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people,*** and God Himself will be among them, ⁴ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." ⁵ And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for ***these words are faithful and true.***"