

# DIVINE REBELLIONS

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and their fallout



# Tradition Disconnection

**Why is humanity so depraved?**

**Why is the world so wicked?**



# Answer

## Traditional Christianity

- **The Fall (Gen 3)**

## Biblical Period

- **The Fall (Gen 3)**
- **Sons of God  
(Gen 6:1-4)**
- **Babel (Deut 32:8-9;  
cp. Psalm 82)**



# Three Rebellions

## Rebellion

- The Fall (**Gen 3**)
- Sons of God  
(**Gen 6:1-4**)
- Babel (**Deut 32:8-9;**  
**cp. Psalm 82**)

## Fallout

- Death, estranged
- Lethal threat;  
demons; depravity
- Abandonment;  
idolatry; misery



# GENESIS 3

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**The original rebel**



# Eden: The Cosmic Mountain

- a supernatural rebel, not a mere snake
- Genesis 3 isn't trying to teach us about zoology (or evolution)
- Ezekiel 28, Isaiah 14 make this clear
- Prompts humanity to rebel
- Cp. Rev 12:9; 20:2



## THE DIVINE COUNCIL CONTEXT

Hebrew Term	English Meaning	Concept	Important Verses
<i>elim, elohim</i> (plural)	"gods"	council members	Gen 3:5, 22; Psa 82:1, 6; Ezek 28:2
<i>beney elim</i> <i>beney elohim</i> <i>kokebey boqer</i> <i>kokebey el</i> <i>helel ben-shachar</i>	"sons of God" "morning stars" "stars of God" "shining one, son of the dawn"	council members  shining appearance	Job 38:7; Pss 29:1; 89:6; Isa 14:13; Ezek 28:13 (gems)
<i>gan</i>	"garden"	divine abode, council meeting place	Gen 2:8–10, 15–16 Gen 3:1–3, 8, 10, 23–24 Ezek 28:13
<i>ʾed</i> <i>nahar</i> <i>yamim</i>	"(watery) mist" "river" "seas, waters"	description of the well-watered garden of the council	Gen 2:6, 10–14 (Zion); Ezek 47:1–12 (Jerusalem temple; cf. Zech 14:8); Ezek 28:2
<i>tsaphon</i> <i>yarketey tsaphon</i> <i>bamot</i>	"north" "heights of the north" "heights"	mountain range where divine council met	Psa 48:1–2 (Jerusalem temple; cf. Ezek 40:2); Isa 14:13–14
<i>har</i>	"mount, mountain"	mountain range where divine council met	Exod 24:15 (Sinai; cf. Psa 68:15–17; Deut 33:1–2); Isa 14:13; 27:13 (Zion); Ezek 47:1–12 (Jerusalem temple)
<i>adat</i> <i>sod</i> <i>moʿed</i> <i>moshab</i>	"assembly" "council" "meeting" "seat" (governing)	the divine assembly	Pss 82:1; 89:7; Isa 14:13; Ezek 28:2



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# The “Fallout” of the First Rebellion

- Estrangement from God
- Humanity not at home with God; a broken home (**chaos**)
- Death / mortality
- The serpent is “cast down” to the Earth / Underworld (*'erets*)
- Lord of the Dead (everything dies)



# The “Fallout” of the First Rebellion

The realm of death =

- De-creation
- Dis-order (chaos)
- Anti-Eden
  - Inhospitable, threatening
  - Desert wilderness, barrenness, creatures associated with death (cf. Isa 13)
  - Azazel, Rephaim spirits, etc.



# GENESIS 6:1-4 (5)

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**Usurping the image, accelerate depravity**



# Genesis 6:1-4

## Controversial Passage

- Failures of dominant view (“Sethite”) in *The Unseen Realm*

## Greatest flaw:

- 2 Peter 2:4-5
- Jude 6



# Genesis 6:1-4

What did you notice from Peter and Jude?

“angels that sinned”

“cast them into hell”

“chains of gloomy darkness”

- Peter drawing on material not in OT, something that actually provides the original context to Gen 6:1-4



# Genesis 6:1-4

Peter and Jude are drawing directly on ancient Jewish books like 1 Enoch, Jubilees, and the Book of Giants. (2nd Temple period)

- All witnessed in the Dead Sea Scrolls

Those books in turn are drawing on ancient Mesopotamian material about the great flood that was the original context for Gen 6:1-4 (and the biblical flood story).



## Genesis 6:1-4

Well known (since the 19<sup>th</sup> century) that Mesopotamian flood stories pre-date Genesis.

The biblical story is both historical and theological (i.e., it has a theological purpose that goes beyond “new reporting”).

It's responding to Mesopotamian religion.



## Genesis 6:1-4

Books like 1 Enoch preserve the original back story to Genesis 6:1-4 ... and verse 5.

Gen 6:5 - The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.



# Genesis 6:1-4

**Ever wonder** why that verse follows all that sons of God & nephilim stuff?

2nd temple Jews (including NT writers) believed that **human depravity was amplified** by fallen sons of God (= Watchers).

- Cf. **Mount Hermon**

Watchers transgress with women, and teach humanity to destroy themselves, idolatry.



# Genesis 6:1-4

Enoch **lists the things** the Watchers taught humanity:

- tools of warfare
- potions and drugs for altered states
- art of seduction
- astrology
- idolatry



# Genesis 6:1-4

In Mesopotamian thought, the apkallu =

- the **culture heroes** from before the Flood
- Seven sages created in the river (Akk = watery Abyss)
- ensured the correct functioning of the plans of heaven and earth
- they taught mankind “**wisdom**”, “**medicine**”, “**craftsmanship**”



# Genesis 6:1-4

- The “wisdom” taught by the *apkallu* to Babylonians **corresponds precisely** to the forbidden knowledge that 1 Enoch says corrupted humanity and drove humanity away from Yahweh to idolatry
- *apkallu* figurines in building foundations (= Akkadian *matserēy* = “watchers”)



# Genesis 6:1-4

- The higher gods decided to destroy humans with a flood
- *apkallu* found a way to preserve their knowledge within humanity
- Mesopotamian (cuneiform) tablets tell us how ... (Erra Epic is a key source)



# Genesis 6:1-4

- List seven pre-flood kings, each of them accompanied by an assisting *apkallu*, the divine sage who gave the king the knowledge necessary for civilization.
- After the flood, there are four post-flood *apkallu* mentioned
- Described as being “of human descent.”
- The fourth post-flood *apkallu* is further described as being only “two-thirds *apkallu*.”



# Genesis 6:1-4

- same description given to **Gilgamesh**, who is called “lord of the *apkallu*” in one text.
- Gilgamesh was a **giant** in Mesopotamian texts.
- Gilgamesh also mentioned by name in Qumran’s *Book of the Giants*.



# Genesis 6:1-4

- Marduk, the high god (Erra Epic) decides to punish the *apkallu* by imprisoning them in the Abyss to never return.
- Every item in Gen 6:1-4 (and really v. 5) is accounted for ...
- This original context was preserved in ancient Jewish books witnessed at Qumran and was known to Peter and Jude.



# Genesis 6:1-4

- Pre-flood apkallu were wholly divine
- Post flood apkallu are of human descent
- Dispensers of divine knowledge to humans
- Hybrid apkallu were giants
- The higher gods (Marduk) displeased
- Original offending apkallu sent to Abyss, out of council



# Genesis 6:1-4

- The messiah must reverse what happened in Gen 6:1-5 (depravity, and even the giants)
- Giants taken care of by the **three OT archetypal precursors** to Messiah:
  - Moses
  - Joshua
  - David
- Depravity dealt with in a different way



# Genesis 6:1-4

- Messianic role telegraphed cryptically (except for those literate 2<sup>nd</sup> temple Jews who knew what to look for)
  - Timing of Jesus' birth (Date, Noah traditions)
  - Four women in Jesus' genealogy
  - Galatians 3:19-20
  - Doom of the Watchers commemorated in baptism (1 Pet 3:18-22)



# GENESIS 11:1-9 / DEUT 32:8-9

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**The gods of the nations;  
cosmic geography**



# Babel (Gen 11; Deut 32:8-9)

- The story we know: Gen 11:1-9
- The story we don't know (it's never taught): Deut 32:8-9



# Sons of God or Sons of Israel?

Michael S. Heiser, "Deuteronomy 32:8 and the Sons of God," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 158 (January-March 2001): 52–74.

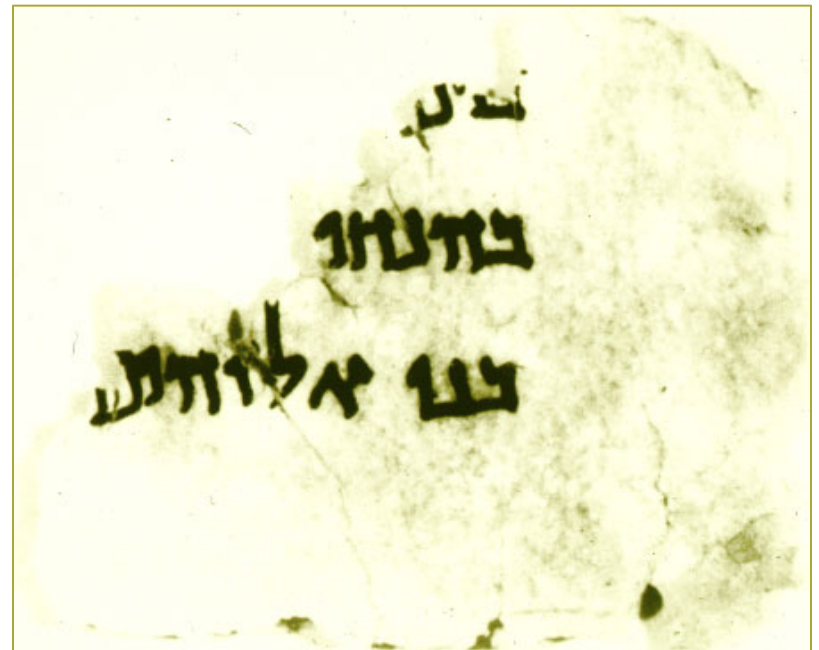
## Col. XII, Deuteronomy 32:7–8

32:7 12 ] בֵּינֵנוּ

8 13 ] לַהֲנַחֵנוּ

14 ] בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים

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# Babel & Deut 32:8-9: What's Up?

Nations divided at tower of **Babel**

Nations = **Gen 10** "Table of Nations"

Israel **didn't exist** at the time

"sons of Israel" makes no sense.



# Babel & Deut 32:8-9: What's Up?

- Disinheriting of the nations (Gen 10)
- **Not permanent**
  - Genesis 12 = Call of Abram to create a new for Himself (His “portion” – Deut 32:9)
  - Promised seed / blessing (Gen 12:3)
  - Exod 19:5-6 - “kingdom of priests”
  - Acts 17:24-27
- Disaster of **Psalm 82**



# OT Cosmic Geography

- Explains a number of passages.
- For example:
  - Daniel 10:13, 20-21 (cp. Dan 12:1)
  - 1 Sam 5:1-5
  - 1 Samuel 26:17-19
  - 2 Kings 5:17-19