

ANGELS THAT SINNED “CHAINED IN DARKNESS”

2 Peter 2:4 & Jude 6, (#5)

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With this 5th paper, we are going to continue this often neglected subject, which many twist and contort until no reasonable rationale can be made of it. With this edition, we shall resume with Clifton L. Fowler's *The Angels That Sinned*, written in 1929, and reprinted by Dan Gayman of the Church of Israel in 1992. Again, as we will see, Fowler was amazingly way ahead of his time on this subject, although he did have blind spots in certain areas which I will address. He divided his 31 page booklet into seven subchapters thusly:

“I. The Angels That Sinned Were At One Time Angels Of Righteousness And Glory.

“II. The Angels That Sinned Were Disobedient In The Days Of Noah.

“III. The Angels That Sinned Are The Same As The Sons Of God Of Genesis Six.

“IV. The Angels That Sinned, Sinned In Like Manner To Sodom And Gomorrha.

“V. The Angels That Sinned Became The Progenitors Of The Giants.

“VI. The Angels That Sinned Particularly Aimed At The Pollution Of The Women Of The Race.

“VII. The Angels That Sinned Are Now Imprisoned In Tartarus Awaiting Judgment.”

On pages 11-16, Fowler addressed a misconception of Scripture under the subtitle:

“III. The Angels That Sinned Are The Same As The Sons Of God Of Genesis Six.

“The passage in Genesis 6 has been for many a long day, a theological battleground. However, in the light of the self-interpreting feature of the Scriptures, it seems quite unnecessary that such multiplicity of these theological battles should ever have been waged. The passage follows:

“And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And

Yahweh said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown', (Genesis 6:1-4).

"The question over which the severest disputation has occurred is – 'Who are these 'sons of God,' who saw the 'daughters of men,' and proceeded to marry them?' The answer which has become most familiar is that they are the 'sons of Seth' and that the 'daughters of men' are the 'daughters of Cain.'

"This startling position presents considerable difficulty. Let us face some of the problems which such an interpretation engenders. Why should the 'sons of Seth' be called the 'sons of God' and his daughters not even mentioned? Or does it mean that the daughters of Seth were so evil that they could not be called the 'daughters of God,' or that Seth didn't have anything but sons? Or does it mean that since Seth was a godly man, all his sons were also godly? And if this were the case, how does it happen that so unusual and amazing an instance is not given special mention in Scripture? And since interpreters feel so free to assume that this large company of supposed godly ones were the 'sons of Seth,' what other examples in Scripture can they cite in which all the sons of a godly man were godly? Would they turn our attention to the sons of Eli? And why should the 'daughters of Cain' be called the 'daughters of men,' and all Cain's sons be left out? Or did Cain have nothing but daughters? And if the sons of Seth were the 'sons of God,' does that indicate that the sons of Seth were saved and the daughters of Cain lost? And if it doesn't mean that the sons of Seth were saved, then what particular value can attach to being among the 'sons of God'? And by what Scripture passage or Biblical law do they prove that because Cain was evil, all of his children were evil too? And how did it happen that Cain had nothing but daughters; or if he had sons, why are they left out of the Scripture record? ... The passage says their offspring were 'Nephilim' or giants. Since when has the marriage of believers and unbelievers produced monstrosities? Although God's Word plainly commands a believer to avoid the unequal yoke of marriage with an unbeliever, there is not the slightest hint either in revelation or experience that should such a marriage take place the reproductive function would operate so unusually as to produce a family of 'Nephilim.'

"Is it the least bit likely that all of Seth's offspring were men and all of Cain's offspring women? Since such a conjecture is not even remotely probable, the interpretation which calls for that thought becomes perceptibly unlikely. To accept this naive interpretation of this passage instantly plunges the student into a mass of tangles and problems from which there is not logical scriptural extrication. To put it mildly, the 'sons-of-Seth' and 'daughters-of-Cain' notion of Genesis 6 is rather a weak piece of theological subterfuge, invented to throw dust in the air and interfere with a frank and open handling of the passage in the light of the balance of Scripture.

"What is the significance of the expression 'sons of God' in the Old Testament? The Holy Spirit does not leave much room for doubt or question. In the one book of Job the expression occurs three times and in such a connection as to exclude controversy.

“The statement in Job 38 in which the expression ‘sons of God’ occurs sheds much light on the subject.

“... who laid the corner stone thereof [of the earth]; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?’ (Job 38:6-7).

“The answer to this question is, God! It was God who laid the cornerstone of the earth. God is the Creator. And when did He create the earth? Genesis answers this question. God created both the heavens and the earth ‘in the beginning.’ This statement is valuable to us because it reveals how exceedingly early was the activity of the ‘sons of God.’ They were alive, ready to shout ‘in the beginning’ when God laid the corner stone of this old earth.

“Verse seven is a Hebrew parallelism. In the commonest of the forms of parallelism there are two lines with similar meaning but employing differing words and expressions. Two or three examples will serve to illustrate this interesting Hebrew literary formation:

**“‘The king shall JOY in thy strength, O Lord;
and in thy salvation how greatly shall he REJOICE!
Thou HAST GIVEN him HIS HEART’S DESIRE,
and HAST NOT WITHHOLDEN the REQUEST OF HIS LIPS’ (Psalms 21:1-2).**

**“‘Fear not; for THOU SHALT NOT BE ASHAMED: neither be thou confounded;
for THOU SHALT NOT BE PUT TO SHAME:
for thou shalt FORGET THE SHAME of thy youth
and SHALT NOT REMEMBER THE REPROACH of thy widowhood any more’
(Isaiah 54:4).**

**“‘Hearken unto me, YE THAT KNOW RIGHTEOUSNESS,
the people IN WHOSE HEART /S MY LAW;
FEAR YE NOT the reproach of men,
NEITHER BE YE AFRAID of their revilings.
For the MOTHS SHALL EAT THEM up like a garment,
And the WORM SHALL EAT THEM like wool:
but MY RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL BE FOREVER,
AND MY SALVATION FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION.’ (Isaiah 51:7-8).**

**“‘INCLINE YOUR EAR, and come unto me:
HEAR, and your soul shall live;
and I will make an EVERLASTING COVENANT with you,
even the SURE MERCIES of David.’ (Isaiah 55:3).**

“Observe that the outstanding words in the first line of each couplet answer to the outstanding words in the second line, and that the corresponding words are intimately related as to meaning. When we turn to Job 38:7, we see another Hebrew parallelism.

**“‘The morning stars sang together,
and all the sons of God shouted for joy.’**

“The ‘stars’ sang! A rather strained effort has been made to make this singing of the ‘stars’ a reference to the fact that light and sound are produced by the same kind of ether waves. But this kind of handling of the passage is imaginative, proves nothing for

either Science or the Scripture, and utterly destroys the Hebrew parallelism. ... The 'stars' that 'sang' in the first line are the angels, and the 'sons of God' that 'shouted' in the second line of this beautiful parallelism are the same as the stars in the first line. The occasion for this jubilee of the 'stars' and the 'sons' was the laying of the corner stone of this old earth. Their singing and shouting took place before man was created. The expression 'sons of God': in the Old Testament cannot refer to the 'sons of Seth' for his sons were men. The expression 'sons of God' means angels, and the passage (Job 38:7) is simply teaching us that the angels sang and shouted in exultation and worship when God created the earth.

"It is a unique and convincing fact and remarkably confirmatory of the passages which we have just investigated, that an ancient reading of Genesis 6:2 in the Codex Alexandrinus of the Septuagint was, 'The angels of God saw the daughters of men.' Thus we see that the Scriptures teach that the expression 'sons of God' in the Old Testament is a name for the angels. The voice of scholarship lends helpful confirmation to this conclusion. The *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia* says:

"'The sons of God were the angels of high estate who fell', (*Schaff-Herzog*, Volume 4, page 482).

"Pointing to the same conclusion is the telling observation of the great F.W. Farrar:

"'The rare expression 'sons of God' certainly means angels in Job 38:7; 1:6; 2:1, and that SUCH IS THE MEANING IN GENESIS 6:4 also, was the most prevalent opinion both in the Jewish [sic Judaeen] and early Christian church', (*Smith Dictionary*, page 10).

"Among the towering Puritan Divines there are none who stand ahead of the great John Owen – philosopher of vast learning, Bible student of no mean insight, personal friend of Oliver Cromwell, and vicechancellor of Oxford. Preaching in Cambridge, England, three hundred years ago, he said:

"'The angels – they are the 'sons of God', (*John Owen's Works*, Volume 2, page 209).

"Another great English scholar whose testimony on this point is clear, is Dean Alford:

"'The angels committed fornication with another race than themselves, thus also going after strange flesh', (*New Testament*, Dean Alford, page 232).

"The truth that the 'sons of God' of Genesis 6 were indeed angels was observed by practically all the early church Fathers, writing within the first 300 years after the ascension of Christ. Justin, Athanagoras, Alexander, Clement, Tertullian, Commodians, Origen, Irenaeus – these and others of the Fathers sound one harmonious note declaring that the now theologically buffeted 'sons of God' were angels.

"And turning to German and French scholarship, we find the testimony remains the same – the brilliant Franz Delitzsch says, 'The angels who fell ... OF WHICH GENESIS 6 SPEAKS ... fell by an unnatural violation of the divinely appointed limit (*System of Biblical Psychology* by Delitzsch, page 149).

"One of the most distinguished scholars of the past century was Francois Lenormant – a Frenchman. Unfortunately he was modernistic in thought, but so vast

was his learning in history, archaeology, and ancient languages, that his opinion as to the significance of this 'sons of God' passage is not without weight. He said in discussing Genesis 6:

“The great majority of modern exegetes, and especially all those who evince the most profound philological knowledge of the Hebrew, have been justified in agreeing to recognize the fact that, as employed in this language, the terms ‘sons of God’ and ‘daughters of men’ CAN SIGNIFY ONLY ANGELS AND DAUGHTERS OF EARTH’, (*The Beginning of History*, by Francois Lenormant, page 3:18).

“With this array of conclusive testimony let there be heard one other voice – the voice of James M. Gray. Here is a man who is endeared to the hearts of thousands because of his loyalty to God’s Word and because of his ripe and reliable scholarship. He declares:

“The ‘sons of God’ is a phrase used in the Old Testament, of angels’, (*Bible Problems Explained*, James M. Gray, page 120).

“The ‘sons of God’ in Genesis 6 are angels. The ‘daughters of men’ are the women of the human race. To this conclusion we are forced by the language of Scripture itself, and with this conclusion we find the great writers since the days of the Apostle Paul in fullest agreement.

“Hence we find but one pathway open to us. It is the pathway which will strip the passage of difficulty, open up many other vistas of truth, and solve the unnecessary tangles presented by man’s imaginative use of the passage. The pathway which is opened is the one which has been indicated by our investigation, and leads to this inescapable conclusion – sons of God in Genesis 6 are the angels that sinned, and the angels that sinned are the sons of God of Genesis 6. Things equal to the same thing are equal to one another.”

While I rate Clifton L. Fowler’s work, *The Angels That Sinned* significantly ahead of his time in 1929, nevertheless it was necessary to edit out with ellipses two sentences that were out-of-context, stating: (1) “And if this absurd idea of the godly sons of Seth marrying the wicked daughters of Cain be true, why should their offspring be any different than the offspring of any other marriage?” Fowler, not aware that Cain was fathered by Satan rather than Adam, and not knowing that Gen. 4:1 is a corrupted passage, proves Cain’s offspring would be just as evil as the offspring of the fallen angels cohabiting with Adamic women! (2) “The symbolic significance of ‘stars’ throughout Scripture is ‘spirit beings,’ and in the Revelation the definite statement appears, ‘the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches’, (Revelation 1:20).” I don’t know from what kind of lexicon Fowler got his definition of “spirit being”, but W.E. Vine has: “... a messenger (from *angelo*, to deliver a message), sent whether by God or by man or by Satan” Strong’s *Greek Dictionary* states in part for #32, “... by implication a *pastor*:– angel, messenger.” Spiros Zodhiates has two definitions for #32 thusly: “(I) A messenger, one who is sent in order to announce, teach, perform, or explore anything ...” (II) An angel, a celestial messenger, a being superior to man” Surely, the angels to the seven churches of Revelation were “pastors”, rather than celestial “spirit beings”! Otherwise, Fowler did quite well in most of his other thoughtful conclusions!

The reader will notice that Fowler cited Oliver Cromwell along with other British clerics, showing that Fowler himself was probably from the UK. In order to comprehend how Cromwell fits into the picture, I will quote from *The World Book Encyclopedia*, vol. 15, pp. 803-804, concerning him and his Puritans:

“**PURITAN** is a name that is often misunderstood and, in consequence, badly misused. It was applied to any person who was numbered among a great body of Protestants in England. Puritan religious beliefs were first expressed in England in the late 1500’s. The name *Puritan* was first used about 1566.

“**Basic Beliefs.** Although Puritans differed greatly among themselves, they all had one common idea. They held to a simple religious belief, a simple manner of worship, and a simple method of church organization. Differences among Puritans were differences of degree. Most of the Puritans wanted to *purify* churches of priestly vestments and elaborate ceremonies. Some wanted to do away with statues and colored windows in churches, and with religious music.

“Some of the Puritans followed many of the religious principles of the French religious leader and reformer, John Calvin. They said their views on church organization and government came from the Bible itself and from the practices of the early Christians. Most of the Puritans firmly believed that all clergymen should be of equal rank.

“They were equally firm in their belief that no bishop or other high church official should have any control over pastors of lower rank. Some Puritans said that each congregation should be independent of all others, and free to choose its own pastor.

“**History.** For a long time, beginning in the late 1500’s, all Puritans were opposed by officials of the Church of England and also by the English government which had supervision of religious affairs. Some of the democratic ideas of the Puritans finally won a place for themselves after many years of oppression, persecution, a civil war, and a period of political and religious dictatorship. But even after all these events took place, the Church of England continued to have a system of church government that was controlled by clergymen of differing rank.

“King Henry VIII started to take away power from the Roman Catholic Church in England about 1536. He made various changes in church government, but many of the changes did not satisfy any of the Puritans. Some of the Puritans wanted to abolish the priesthood as well as do away with bishops. Others believed that any member of a congregation had the right to preach. Groups of Puritans began to disagree among themselves because some held stricter views than others. Some small groups completely broke away from the practices of the Church of England during the reign of King James I. These independent groups were called *Separatists*, or *Brownists*, after Robert Browne (1550?-1633?), one of their early leaders.

“Some of these Separatists were among the Pilgrims who traveled across the Atlantic in 1620 and settled Plymouth Colony in New England. Other Puritans, less radical in their religious views, later established settlements elsewhere along the shore of Massachusetts Bay. The early Separatist colonists influenced later Puritan settlers who held different ideas, and who, before the influence of the Separatists, thought of themselves as faithful members of the Church of England.

“For a time in the 1600’s, the Puritans played an important part in English politics. Their influence lasted during the struggle between Charles I and his Parliament over the question of the divine right of kings. Parliament executed Charles I in 1649 and the Commonwealth was established under the devoted Puritan Oliver Cromwell. The Puritans at this time were called *Roundheads* because they cut their hair short. The political power of the Puritans came to an end in 1660, with the return of the Stuart dynasty. But the influence of the Puritans in strengthening Protestantism, and in increasing political freedom in England, has lasted until the present day.”

By-and-large the Puritans became the epitome (i.e., ideal example or role-model) for a clean-cut America by believing Paul’s admonition at 1 Cor. 11:14: “... **if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him ...**” This passage became the source of their becoming known as “Roundheads”, which lasted until the evil-satanic influence of the Canaanite-jew, Ed Sullivan and a Canaanite-jew singing group, the Beatles. Whatever moral greatness the Puritans had established, this wrecking-crew tore down in **MANY EVIL-SATANIC WAYS!**

In 1929, Fowler was laboring with limited resources, and without the knowledge of today’s genetic engineering, causing him to err in certain areas. For a better perspective on the subject of “the angels that sinned”, read William Finck’s *The Problem With Genesis 6:1-4*.