FALLEN

The Sons of God and the Nephilim

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FALLEN
THE SONS OF GOD AND THE NEPHILIM
TIM CHAFFEY
And it came about, when mankind began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful. And they took for themselves wives from any they chose.
And Yahweh said, “My spirit will not remain with man indefinitely, in that he is flesh; his days will be one hundred twenty years.” The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—whenever the sons of God went in to the daughters of men, who bore to them children. They were the mighty men of antiquity, men of renown.

Genesis 6:3–4
Key Terms

- Key terms and concepts
  - daughters of men
  - sons of God
  - took wives
  - Yahweh (YHWH)
  - 120 years
  - Nephilim
  - mighty men
  - when or whenever
How do people usually interpret this passage?
The Sons of God: Three Major Views

- **Sethite**
  - Descendants of Seth (sons of God) married female descendants of Cain (daughters of men)

- **Royalty**
  - Wicked kings, tyrants, or judges who viewed themselves as divine (sons of God) took common women (daughters of men) as wives

- ** Fallen Angel**
  - Heavenly beings (sons of God) married women (daughters of men)
  - Some think these fallen angels possessed men who married women
The Sons of God: Three Minor Views

- **Cainite**
  - Descendants of Cain (sons of God) married female descendants of Seth (daughters of men)

- **Liberal**
  - The passage is borrowed from pagan mythology, likely a polemic with no historical reality

- **Demon-possessed men**
  - The sons of God were fallen angels who possessed the men who married the daughters of men
Examining the Sethite View
Sethite View: Positive Arguments

- Genesis 4 and 5 discuss the descendants of Cain and Seth.
Sethite View: Positive Arguments

- We know some Sethites (Enoch and Noah) were godly and that some Cainites were ungodly (Cain and Lamech).
Sethite View: Positive Arguments

- The dominant view in church history from 4th century until early 20th century.
Sethite View: Weaknesses

- Inadequate explanations for other biblical passages
  - Numbers 13:33
  - 1 Peter 3:18–20
  - 2 Peter 2:4
  - Jude 6
Sethite View: Weaknesses

- Why would the offspring be unique?
Sethite View:
Weaknesses

- Why would a common sin bring about such harsh judgment?
Sethite View: 
Weaknesses

- Why would godly men continually marry ungodly women?
Where does the Bible ever tell us that Cain’s line was ungodly and that Noah’s line were godly?
Sethite View: Weaknesses

- Ungodly Cainites?
  - Cain
  - Enoch
  - Irad
  - Mehujael – “smitten by God”?
  - Methushael – “man of God”?
  - Lamech
And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of Yahweh.

Genesis 4:26, NKJV
Wethite View: Weaknesses

- Does “sons” of God imply godliness?
Now the sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, “Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?”

2 Kings 2:3, NKJV
Sethite View: Weaknesses

- Not found in the text
And it came about, when mankind began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them,
that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful. And they took for themselves wives from any they chose.

Genesis 6:2
And Yahweh said, “My spirit will not remain with man indefinitely, in that he is flesh; his days will be one hundred twenty years.”

Genesis 6:3
The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—whenever the sons of God went in to the daughters of men, who bore to them children. They were the mighty men of antiquity, men of renown.

Genesis 6:4
Then Yahweh saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Genesis 6:5, NKJV
Sethite View:
Weaknesses

- No explanation for post-Flood Nephilim
Examining the Royalty View
Royalty View: Positive Arguments

- Some kings in ANE thought of themselves as divine
  - Pharaoh considered a god
Royalty View: Positive Arguments

- Offspring could be known as “men of renown”
Royalty View: Positive Arguments

- Nimrod was a king and was called a *gibbor* (Genesis 10:8–10)
Royalty View: Positive Arguments

- 'elohim is translated as “judges” in Exodus a handful of verses
Royalty View: Weaknesses

- Overestimating the “divine” view of kings in the Ancient Near East
Royalty View: Weaknesses

- No specific mention of kings, judges, etc., in Gen. 1–6
Royalty View: Weaknesses

- “Took wives” is an idiom for marriage—not force
  - Abram & Sarai
  - Abraham & Keturah
  - Isaac & Rebekah
Royalty View: Weaknesses

- Not developed until allegorical hermeneutic became popular among Jewish interpreters
Royalty View: Weaknesses

- ‘elohim is better understood as a term for an inhabitant of the spiritual realm
  - God
  - Members of the divine council
  - Angels
  - False gods / demons
  - Departed spirit of Samuel with Saul and medium (1 Sam. 28)
’elohim in the Bible

- God – over 90% of the time
“In the beginning God [’elohim] created the heavens and the earth.”

Genesis 1:1
’elohim in the Bible

- Members of the divine council
  - Angelic beings
  - Sons of the Most High
God [‘elohim] has taken his place in the divine council [‘adat ’el]; in the midst of the gods [‘elohim] he holds judgment:

Psalm 82:1, ESV
‘elohim in the Bible

- It can refer to angels
“For You have made him a little lower than the angels [‘elohim], and You have crowned him with glory and honor.”

Psalm 8:5, NKJV
‘elohim in the Bible

- It can refer to demons
“They sacrificed to demons, not to God, to gods [‘elohim] they did not know, to new gods, new arrivals that your fathers did not fear.”

Deuteronomy 32:17, NJKV
“They sacrificed to demons that were no gods, to gods [ʼelohim] they had never known, to new that had come recently, whom your fathers had never feared.”

Deuteronomy 32:17, ESV
‘elohim in the Bible

- It can refer to the departed spirit of a person
“And the king said to her, ‘Do not be afraid. What did you see?’ And the woman said to Saul, ‘I saw a spirit [ʼelohim] ascending out of the earth.’”

1 Samuel 28:13
Royalty View: Weaknesses

- ’elohim is better understood as a term for an inhabitant of the spiritual realm
  - God
  - Members of the divine council
  - Angels
  - False gods / demons
  - Departed spirit of Samuel with Saul and medium (1 Sam. 28)
Are There Other Gods Besides Yahweh?
“You shall have no other gods [’elohim] before Me.”

Exodus 20:3, NKJV
What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.

1 Corinthians 10:19–20, NJKV
And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am Yahweh. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name Yahweh I was not known to them.

Exodus 6:2–3, NJKV
“For Yahweh is a great God, a great King above all gods ['elohim].”

Psalm 95:3, NJKV
Yahweh, who is like You among the gods [ʼelohim]?
Who is like You, majestic in holiness, revered with praises, performing wonders?

2 Chronicles 2:5, NJKV
For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12, NJKV
The Divine Council
God [‘elohim] has taken his place in the divine council [‘adat ’el]; in the midst of the gods [‘elohim] he holds judgment:

Psalm 82:1, ESV
“How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?”

Psalm 82:2, ESV
“Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”

Psalm 82:3–4, ESV
“They have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.”

Psalm 82:5, ESV
“I said, ‘You are gods [’elohim], sons of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince.’”

Psalm 82:6–7, ESV
“I and My Father are one.”

Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.

John 10:30–31, NKJV
Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’?”

John 10:34, ESV
If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?”

John 10:35, ESV
“Arise, O God [’elohim], judge the earth; for you shall inherit all the nations!”

Psalm 82:8, ESV
God Will Inherit All Nations
“Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you.

Deuteronomy 32:7
When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God [bene ’elohim].*

*Masoretic Text has “sons of Israel [bene yisrael].

Deuteronomy 32:8, ESV
But Yahweh’s portion is his people,
Jacob his allotted heritage.
bene ’elohim or bene yisrael?

- Masoretic (Leningrad Codex)
  - “sons of Israel” (bene yisrael)

- Dead Sea Scrolls
  - 4QDeut\(^i\) has bene ’elohim
  - 4QDeut\(^q\) has bene ’el___

- Septuagint (c. 3\(^{rd}\) cent. BC)
  - “angels of God” (aggelōn theou)
Rebellion at Babel

- “Let us go down there and confuse their language.” (Gen. 11:7)
Rebellion at Babel

- God disinherits the nations
  - The pagan gods are allotted to the nations.
    (Deut. 32:8, cf. 4:19; 29:26)
Rebellion at Babel

- Yahweh gets Israel, the nation He will found with one man beginning in the Bible’s next chapter.
Not Polytheism

- Polytheism generally places all the gods at roughly the same class
- Henotheism is like polytheism, but only one of the gods is worshiped
Not Polytheism

- The Bible teaches:
  - Many ’elohim (gods), but there is only one Yahweh
  - Yahweh is an ’elohim but no other ’elohim is Yahweh.
  - Only Yahweh is eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, etc.
Examples of the Divine Council in the Bible
Micaiah and the Divine Council
Then Micaiah said, “Therefore hear the word of Yahweh: I saw Yahweh sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. And Yahweh said, ‘Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?’ So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner.

1 Kings 22:19–20, NKJV
Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD and said, ‘I will persuade him.’ Yahweh said to him, ‘In what way?’ So he said, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And Yahweh said, ‘You shall persuade him, and also prevail. Go out and do so.’”

1 Kings 22:21–22, NKJV
The Divine Council in Isaiah
In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple...And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.”

Isaiah 6:1, 8, ESV
“The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.”
“It is a decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king...”

Daniel 4:17, 24, ESV
The Divine Council in Psalms
Let the heavens praise your wonders, O Yahweh, your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones! For who in the skies can be compared to Yahweh? Who among the heavenly beings [bene ’elim] is like Yahweh,

Psalm 89:5–6, ESV
a God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all who are around him?

O Yahweh God of hosts, who is mighty as you are, O Yahweh, with your faithfulness all around you?

Psalm 89:7–8, ESV
No other ‘elohim besides God?
Thus says Yahweh, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, Yahweh of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god ['elohim].”

Isaiah 44:6, ESV
Declare and present your case; let them take counsel together!
Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old?
Was it not I, Yahweh?
And there is no other god [‘elohim] besides me,

Isaiah 45:21, ESV
“See now the I, even I, am he, and there is no god ['elohim] beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.”

Deuteronomy 32:39, ESV
Incomparability not Contradiction

- The Bible uses the language of incomparability
  - Compared to Yahweh, these other ‘elohim are nothing.
  - Same type of language used about people and nations
... for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth;

Daniel 4:34–35, ESV
All the nations are as nothing before him, they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness.
“Hear, O Israel: Yahweh our God, Yahweh is one. You shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

Deuteronomy 6:4
Babel and the Table of Nations

- Japheth 14
- Ham 30
- Shem 26
- Total = 70 people groups depart from Babel
Ugarit and Canaan

- **Ugarit**
  - Language very similar to Hebrew
  - El had 70 sons ("bn ’il") or gods
  - Congregation of the stars

- **Canaan**
  - Baal held council over the gods
  - El was his son and equal
“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north (tzaphon);”

Isaiah 14:12–13
Mountains of the Gods

- Olympus
  - Zeus—Greeks
- Hermon (Sirion, Senir)
  - Deuteronomy 3:9
  - El of the Ugaritic people
- Tzaphon (Zaphon)
  - Baal of the Canaanites
  - See Isaiah 14:12–13
Examining the Fallen Angel View
Fallen Angel View:
Positive Arguments

- Genesis 4 and 5 discuss the descendants of Cain and Seth.
Fallen Angel View: Positive Arguments

- *Bene ‘elohim* ("sons of God") refers to angelic beings
“When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God [bene ’elohim] shouted for joy.”

Job 38:7
Now there was a day when the sons of God [bene ha’elohim] came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.
Again there was a day when the sons of God [bene ha’elohim] came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord.

Job 2:1
“When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God [bene ’elohim].”

Deuteronomy 32:8, ESV
Fallen Angel View: Positive Arguments

- *Bene ’elohim* (“sons of God”) refers to angelic beings
  - Aramaic equivalent does too
“But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods [bar elahin]...Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants...’”

Daniel 3:25,28, ESV
Fallen Angel View: Positive Arguments

- *Bene ’elohim* ("sons of God") refers to angelic beings
  - Aramaic equivalent does too
  - Similar terms also refer to angels
Let the heavens praise your wonders, O Lord, your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones! For who in the skies can be compared to the Lord? Who among the heavenly beings [bene elim] is like the Lord, a God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all those who are around Him?

Psalm 89:5–7
Ascribe to Lord, O heavenly beings [bene elim],
ascibe to the Lord glory and strength.
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness.

Psalm 29:1–2
Fallen Angel View: Positive Arguments

- New Testament passages seem to confirm this view
“For Christ died also 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; in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah...”

1 Peter 3:18–20
For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them to hell (tartarosas) and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.

2 Peter 2:4–5
“Now I desire to remind you...that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe. And the 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.”

Jude 5–6
“Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all...”

Jude 14–15
Fallen Angel View: Positive Arguments

- Earliest Jewish view
  - Septuagint (c. 3rd cent. BC)
  - 1 Enoch
  - Book of Jubilees
  - Genesis Apocryphon
  - Damascus Document
  - 2 Baruch
  - Judith
  - Testament of Reuben
  - Testament of Naphtali
Fallen Angel View: Positive Arguments

- Earliest Christian view
  - (c. 150) Justin Martyr
    1 Apology 5
  - (c. 200) Irenaeus of Lyons
    Heresies 16.2
  - (2nd cent) Athenagoras
    A Plea for the Christians, 24
Fallen Angel View: Positive Arguments

- Earliest Christian view
  - (c. 200) Clement of Alexandria *Miscellanies* 5.1.10
  - (c. 200) Tertullian *Idolatry* 9; *Veiling* 7
  - (c. 220) Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions*, I.29
Fallen Angel View: Positive Arguments

- Earliest Christian view
  - (c. 250) Commodianus
    *Instructions*, #3
  - (c. 300) Lactantius
    *Divine Institutes*, 2.15
  - (c. 325) Eusebius of Caesarea
    *Preparation*, 5.5
Fallen Angel View: Positive Arguments

● Consistent hermeneutic
● Explains severe judgements
  ○ Flood
  ○ Reduced Lifespan
● Explains origin of Nephilim
Can Angels Take Human Form?

- **Old Testament examples**
  - Gabriel to Daniel (Daniel 9)
  - Two angels to Abraham and Lot (Genesis 18)

- **New Testament examples**
  - Angels at the tomb (Matthew 28)
  - Entertaining angels unaware (Hebrews 13:2)
Angels Are Not Formless

- Angels are localized
  - Not omnipresent
  - A spiritual body
- They are frequently described in Scripture
  - Not invisible, bodiless beings
Are Angels Capable of Procreating with Humans?
Can Angels Procreate?

- Angels perform human acts
  - Ate and drank with Abram
  - Grabbed Lot by the hand

- What about fallen angels?
  - Did Satan manifest during temptations of Jesus?
  - Are demonic “plagues” of Revelation 9 physical?
  - They might even create...
“Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and they, the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts. For each man cast down his staff, and they became serpents.”

Exodus 7:10–12
Does this Violate the Principle that Kind Brings Forth After its Kind?
Violation of Kinds?

- Genesis doesn’t say this about humans
- The issue is whether angels took on human form
  - The offspring were men
- Are angels made in the image of God?
Would God really allow such evil and disgusting actions?
God Would Never Allow It?

- The Yuck Factor
  - False idea of what it was like
  - Hypocritical for those who aren’t disgusted by Thor and Jane, etc.
- God allows all sorts of evil
  - Rape, murder, incest, etc.
Would the Bible Really Call this Marriage?
Marriage?

- Not Ideal
  - Polygamy is called “marriage”
  - Non-ideal can still be marriage

- True worship and false worship
  - It is still called worship
Why Would the Bible Call Ungodly Beings Sons of God?
Ungodly Sons of God?

- Christians are sons of God
  - Yet we still sin
- “Sons of” refers to a class
  - Sons of God may not refer to all angelic beings but just a special class of them
Did Jesus Say that Angels Cannot Marry?
“For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels of God in heaven.”

Matthew 22:30
Can Angels Marry?

- Jesus spoke about the angels *in heaven*
  - He did not address those that left heaven
- He said godly angels “do not” marry
  - He did not say whether they were capable
“For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.”

Mark 12:25
Can Angels Marry?

- In Luke’s version Jesus may have endorsed the Fallen Angel view
  - He connected angels with sons of God
Jesus answered and said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

Luke 20:34–36
Was Fallen Angel View Borrowed from Pagan Mythology?
Genesis 1–11 in Pagan Cultures?

- Creation accounts
- Fall accounts
- Flood accounts
- Babel accounts
- Gods and demigods
Borrowing from Pagans?

- Allegorical hermeneutic arose among Greek philosophers to “save” the stories of their gods
  - The gods and their actions were reinterpreted to stand for something else
Borrowing from Pagans?

- The Sethite and Royalty views were developed after the rise of the allegorical hermeneutic
Why Would the Fallen Angels Do This?
Why Would Angels Do This?

- They saw women were beautiful and longed for them
- Perhaps an attempt to taint the Messianic bloodline
- Perhaps an attempt to attain immortality
120 Years: Three Views

- **Countdown**
  - A popular idea that God gave man a 120-year period to repent before He sent the Flood.

- **Jubilees**
  - A Jubilee is a 50-year period. This view states that man will be on earth for 120 Jubilees (6,000 years).

- **Lifespan**
  - God pronounced that man’s lifespan would be reduced from 900+ years to a maximum of 120 years.
Lifespan View

- Curbing man’s potential for wickedness
- Only one person (Jehoiada) lives past 120 after Moses
Lifespan View

- The Bible stops recording age at death shortly after Moses
- Answers why we don’t live 900+ years and why we don’t surpass 120 today.
The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—whenever the sons of God went in to the daughters of men, who bore to them children. They were the mighty men of antiquity, men of renown.

Genesis 6:4
The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—*whenever* the sons of God went in to the daughters of men, who bore to them children. They were the mighty men of antiquity, men of renown.

Genesis 6:4
Who Were the Nephilim?

- The offspring of the sons of God and the daughters of men
- They were *gibborim* (mighty ones), but not all *gibborim* were Nephilim.
What Does Nephilim Mean?

- Does not mean “fallen ones”
  - Hebrew verb *naphal* would become *nophelim* or *nephulim* if used as a noun (participle)
- Aramaic noun *naphila* becomes *nephilin*
  - Hebrew form would be *nephilim*
  - Plural noun means *giants*
“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.”

Numbers 13:33
Did the Spies Lie about Giants?

- Nephilim described as giants in Numbers 13:33
  - Anakim are of the Nephilim
  - Spies compared themselves to grasshoppers
Did the Spies Lie about Giants?

- Cowards but they didn’t lie about the giants
  - “True report” of bad tidings; compare with Joseph’s report in Genesis 37:2
  - The spies did not lie about giants in the land; the narrator, Moses, tells us that the sons of Anak were in Hebron
“So they went up and spied out the land from the Wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, near the entrance of Hamath. And they went up through the South and came to Hebron; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, were there.”

Numbers 13:21–22
Why Were the Israelites Afraid?
Then they told him, and said: “We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there.”

Numbers 13:27–28
“We are not able to go up against the people for they are stronger than we.”

Numbers 13:31
And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out saying, “The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature.”

Numbers 13:32
Man-eating Giants?

- “Devours its inhabitants...”
- Common idea in literature
  - Jack and the Beanstalk (giants live between heaven and earth)
- Common in ancient Jewish literature
  - Book of Enoch, Jubilees, etc.
Mythological Connection?

- Joshua drove them toward the Mediterranean
- Roughly 200 years later, the battle of Troy took place
  - Odysseus’ first stop was the island of the Laestrygonians
  - Second stop was the island of the Cyclops
  - Both featured man-eating giants
What Happened to the Nephilim?
And at that time Joshua came and cut off the Anakim from the mountains: from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities. None of the Anakim were left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod.

Joshua 11:21–22, NKJV
What Happened to Them?

- Joshua eliminated them from the Promised Land except in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod
What Happened to Them?

- David and his mighty men apparently finished them off.
- The giants were under the *kherem* (devoted to destruction).
Got Questions?
Where Were the Nephilim Based?

- And they went up through the South and came to Hebron; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak were there. (Numbers 13:22)
- What else was Hebron called?
  - Kirjath (Kiriath) Arba – “city of Arba”
  - Mamre
Hebron – Village of the Patriarchs

• “Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron...” (Genesis 13:18)
So Sarah died in Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron)...Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. (Genesis 23:2, 19)
Hebron – Village of the Patriarchs

- Then Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt. (Genesis 35:27)
Then he said to him, “Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks, and bring back word to me.” So he sent him out of the Valley of Hebron, and he went to Shechem. (Genesis 37:14)
Hebron – Village of the Patriarchs

- So his sons did for him just as he had commanded them. For his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre... (Genesis 50:13)
In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is by the wilderness.

Genesis 14:5–6, NKJV
Then Yahweh said to me, “Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as a possession.”

Deuteronomy 2:9–11, NKJV
(The Emim had dwelt there in times past, a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anakim. They were also regarded as giants, like the Anakim, but the Moabites call them Emim...)

Deuteronomy 2:9–11, NKJV
And when you come near the people of Ammon, do not harass them or meddle with them, for I will not give you any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot as a possession.

Deuteronomy 2:19–21, NKJV
(That was also regarded as a land of giants; giants formerly dwelt there. But the Ammonites call them Zamzummim, a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anakim. But the LORD destroyed them before them, and they dispossessed them and dwelt in their place...)

Deuteronomy 2:19–21, NKJV
Giant Clans

- Anakim
- Nephilim
- Rephaim
- Emim
- Zuzim (Zamzummim)
- Amorites
Yet I destroyed the Amorite as Israel advanced; his height was like the cedars, and he was as sturdy as the oaks; I destroyed his fruit above and his roots beneath.
Did They Suffer from Gigantism?
Gigantism?

- Entire clans of giants in Scripture
- Modern “giants” are usually the result of a tumor on the pituitary gland
  - Do not have “giant” children
  - Suffer from numerous health problems and are not like warriors
Robert Wadlow - 8’11”
How Tall Was Goliath?

- Goliath
  - 6’9” or 9’9”?
  - Ancient textual evidence slightly favors shorter Goliath
  - Internal evidence seems to suggest the larger Goliath
  - Coat of mail – 125 pounds
  - Spearhead – 15 pounds
Brian Shaw (left)
Hafthor Bjornsson (right)
Hafthor Bjornsson with wife Kelsey 6’9” and 5’2”
How Tall Was Goliath?

- Goliath
  - Was he measured by David’s cubit? Was David short?
How Tall Were the Israelites?

  - Page 3, “...short in stature (averaging about 5 feet tall for males)”
  - No documentation other than generic reference to burials
  - Describing people in Patriarchal period—not David’s time
How Tall Were the Israelites?

  - Khirbet Nisya cave (period of Judges)
  - 792 teeth plus jaw fragments
  - Average height about 5’6”
  - “Estimates from other sites (including nearby Jerusalem 400 years later) suggest males ranged from 5’4” to 5’8” in height.”
How Big Was David?

- He wielded Goliath’s sword
- Older brother was big
- Saul offered his armor to David
- Called a mighty man of war before Goliath
- Had already killed a bear and lion barehanded
How Tall Was Goliath?

- Goliath
  - Egyptian records speak of the Anakim and describe them as being up to 8’7”
  - Shasu spies are depicted as being very tall
Shasu spies
(kneeling in center)
For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the giants. Indeed his bedstead was an iron bedstead. (Is it not in Rabbah of the people of Ammon?) Nine cubits is its length and four cubits its width, according to the standard cubit [i.e. “by the cubit of a man”].

Deuteronomy 3:11, NKJV
How Big Was Og?

- Og
  - Bed – 6’ x 13’6”
  - If Og were as tall as his bed is long, and built to my proportions (6’9” and 250 pounds), then he would have weighed 2000 pounds
Got Questions?