
Lesson 14 — The Nephilim



“The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.”

[Genesis 6:4]

In our last lesson, we discovered that the sons of God (angels) abandoned their proper domain, crossed the fixed boundary between heaven and earth, assumed human form, and committed forbidden acts of sexual immorality with the daughters of mankind. The Bible also directly connected this angelic rebellion with an explosion of wickedness and acceleration of evil on the earth in the days of Noah prior to the flood.

The violence and corruption of mankind had become so ubiquitous and universal in scope that the LORD resolved to put an end to all flesh. The reservoir of God’s wrath would build for 120 years before breaching the dam of His mercy, entirely cleansing the earth of evil. No thing and no one with the breath of life would survive. Only Noah and his family found grace in those days. The rest of the ungodly would die in their sins. God’s judgment was absolute.

Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” [Genesis 6:11-13]

But why was God’s judgment so severe? The global flood is the historical account of untold millions, if not billions, being wiped from the face of the earth. Worse still, the Bible characterizes those judged by the flood as ungodly and spiritually lost in sin. The universal scope of the flood has caused some to question the nature of God, as if such judgment was somehow unjustified. Some have gone as far as accusing God of arbitrarily committing genocide, as the flood not only killed men and women, but also children.

What was so wicked about Noah’s generation that justified the total annihilation of “all flesh” on the earth? Does the Bible provide any clues about those days that helps us understand why God was so grieved and angry? Thankfully, the answer is yes, and you may be surprised to discover that it has everything to do with the offspring of Satan.

Giant Problems

The subject matter of Genesis 6 is divided into three distinct groups. First, the sons of God — the angelic beings who sinned. Second, the daughters of Adam — normal human women who were taken as wives. And third, the *Nephilim* — the giant offspring of this forbidden union. *Nephilim* is an ancient Hebrew word that simply means giants. The *Nephilim* giants were exceptionally tall and of extraordinary strength, but that's just the half of it.

As the Biblical story unfolds, we discover that the giants were a superior hybrid race — part divine/part human. They are called the mighty ones of old [Hebrew *gibborim*]. They became known as the ancient, warrior kings of great fame and notoriety, who ruled the earth before the flood. The *Nephilim* appear in the legends of virtually every other ancient culture, such as the "Titans" and "demigods" of ancient Greek myths. Only the Bible, however, provides the true story. Being fathered by fallen angels and born of corrupt seed, these giants embodied demonic spirits and sought to devour all mankind. They were evil incarnate.

The *Nephilim* were the very spawn of Satan — the expressed seed of the Serpent on the earth — which helps explain how the hearts of mankind were totally given over to evil and also how all flesh became utterly corrupt in those days [Genesis 6:5-12]. Not only had man succumbed to all forms of spiritual evil, but also the human race had become compromised genetically. By directly introducing this evil race of giants on earth, Satan intended to eliminate Adam's line and destroy all godly offspring.

The giants were not fully human, which means that they did not bear the image of God! The LORD was grieved in His heart because He no longer recognized His own children. The image of God had been corrupted and replaced with the seed of the Serpent, both inside and out. All life was heading down the path of self-destruction and had passed the proverbial point of no return. There was only way to save the human race — Noah and ark.

*"For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but **preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.**" [2 Peter 2:4-5]*

While there was still time, the LORD chose to save the last spiritually and genetically "pure" family left on the earth. The future birth of the Messiah depended on it! The only way God could eradicate evil from the earth would be to drown the ungodly and wash the planet clean of Satan's seed, especially the giants. The flood delivered a decisive blow to Satan and rid the earth of the ruthless giants, but it wouldn't be the last of them. The Bible warned that the same giant problems that plagued Noah's day would resurface [Genesis 6:4]. As we will discover, the giants play a much "**bigger**" role in the Biblical story than what meets the eye.

The Giant Clans of Canaan

God chose Moses to write the book of Genesis, which would have given Moses the accurate history of the world before the flood. It was essential for Moses to know the true origin of the giants before the flood because he would encounter them first hand. The seed war between God and Satan was at the very heart of the Conquest of Canaan. By the time Moses and the Israelites approached the Promised Land, a complex and diverse network of giant clans had settled in the land. This contamination of the holy land can be traced back as far as Abraham's day and continued until the days of King David. Interestingly enough, the only other time the LORD dedicated men, women, and children to total destruction after the flood was during the Conquest of Canaan. What connects the two judgments? The giants.

The Bible provides the names of over two dozen giant clans and mentions over 20 individual giants by name. We will only focus on the primary giant clans for this study.

- ❖ **Nephilim** — Read Numbers 13:25-33. Why did the majority of the spies bring back a bad report after spying the land of Canaan? How did they describe the *Nephilim*?

- ❖ **Amorites** — Read Genesis 15:12-21. How does the LORD connect His covenant with Abraham and the "iniquity" of the Amorites? What does the LORD promise to the "offspring" of Abraham? Read Amos 2:9-10. How does the LORD describe the Amorites?

- ❖ **Rephaim** — Read Deuteronomy 3:1-13. What two primary nations/kings did Moses and the Israelites defeat and what did they do to them, according to verse 6? How big was the bed of the giant King Og? What did they call the land of Bashan (v. 13)?

- ❖ **Anakim** — Read Deuteronomy 9:1-3. How are the Anakim described? What does the LORD promise to do to them? Read Joshua 11:10-12, 20-23. What did Caleb ask? What did Joshua do to the Anakim? When did the Promised Land finally have rest from war?

- ❖ **Emim & Zamzummim/Zuzim** — Read Genesis 14:5-7 and Deuteronomy 2:8-12, 19-22. How do these passages connect all the giant clans? Who destroyed them in v. 21?

Facing the Giants

The popular Christian movie by Sherwood Films, *Facing the Giants* [2006], tells an amazing story of how God's people can overcome adversity through faith and experience spiritual victory against all odds. While it is profitable to spiritually apply the concept of "slaying the giants" in our lives, the Biblical narrative tells quite a different story. Consider just for one moment that the greatest heroes in the Bible actually faced and fought real giants!

Noah faced the giants ... Abraham faced the giants ... Moses faced the giants ... Joshua faced the giants ... Caleb faced the giants ... and King David faced the giants.

- ❖ Read 1 Samuel 17:1-11, 34-37, 45-47. Why was David so confident that he would defeat Goliath?
- ❖ Read 2 Samuel 21:15-22. What was the legacy of David and his mighty men?

As impressive as this list of giant slayers may be, we cannot forget that the Conquest of Canaan was accomplished primarily by the LORD Himself — the Almighty — who took physical form and waged war against the giants on behalf of His people Israel [*Joshua* 23].

And I commanded Joshua at that time, "Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings. So will the LORD do to all the kingdoms into which you are crossing. You shall not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who fights for you." [Deuteronomy 3:21-22]

As in the Days of Noah

When Jesus described His return, He used two main examples to help us understand what to expect. One was the flood of Noah's day and the other was the destruction of Sodom [see *Luke* 17:22-37]. It is interesting to ponder why Jesus compared the last days with the "days of Noah?" Could this mean that the demonic armies of the Beast (Antichrist) will include some type of "hybrid" race of super warriors, or even giants? Could the gene editing and engineering taking place today be connected to the genetic compromise in Noah's day?

- ❖ List as many similarities you can between our present generation and Noah's day.
- ❖ Read Joel 2:1-10. Why is this last-days army potentially more than mere human?