

“Is the Genesis Story of ‘The Sons of God’ True?”

Pertaining to the old days when the watchers went astray and married women and bore giants—are these stories of any truth?

In the days of Noah, when a man in years was nearing his death, say a just man, are there any hints as to what awaited them in the afterlife of that period?

Is there something, or has there ever been something, commented on in scripture which disturbs the dead in their rest?

Thank you for writing Probe Ministries. My own understanding of Genesis 6:1-4 leads me to believe that “the sons of God” mentioned here were indeed fallen angels. Whether or not the offspring of their union with the daughters of men were the giants referred to in v. 4 is difficult to say. The text may indicate that at least some of these giants existed prior to the sexual union of the sons of God with the daughters of men. For my part, I certainly believe these stories are true. It is quite possible that the sons of God in Genesis 6 are the angels referred to by both Jude (v. 6) and Peter (2 Pet. 2:4).

There is not a great deal of biblical revelation concerning the afterlife of the righteous in the days of Noah. But here is something to consider. In Genesis 5:21-24 we have the story of Enoch. Verse 24 states, “And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.” Although this verse does not give us much information, it certainly suggests an afterlife in the presence of God for the just and righteous who, like Enoch, walked with God. [Note: also see [Probe Answers Our E-Mail: Is There a Specific Reference to Heaven or Hell in the OT?](#)]

Finally, although I’m not entirely sure what you are asking about in your third question, there is an account in 1 Samuel

28 about King Saul and a medium, in which Saul asks the medium to call up the prophet Samuel from the dead. In this case, God allowed Samuel to return to deliver to Saul a message of judgment against both he and Israel. When Samuel appears, he asks Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" (v. 15). Thus, this may be the sort of example you were looking for. Of course, it's important to point out that this is an exceptional event. Normally, the dead are not permitted to return to the land of the living after death (see Luke 16:19-31). However, in particular cases the sovereign Lord may, for His own purposes, permit such a thing (as in the case of Samuel).

God bless you,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

"If Jesus Was Crucified on Friday, How Was He Dead for Three Nights?"

I am looking for an answer to the "three days, three nights in the tomb" prophecy. Jesus was only in the tomb three days and TWO NIGHTS. I have seen the day portion of this prophecy explained. However, I have never heard a convincing explanation of how Friday and Saturday night can be three nights. Help!

There are several views that address this question. One view is that Jesus was crucified on Wednesday. 72 hours later later, Saturday evening, He rose and the empty tomb was

discovered on Sunday.

Another view is that Jesus died on Thursday. I take the view Jesus was crucified on Friday and rose on Sunday. All prophecies state He will rise on the third day. (Matthew 16: 21, 17:23, 20:19, 27:64, Luke 9:22, 18:33, etc...) The events of the gospels seem to correlate best with a Friday crucifixion. Only one passage talks about him being in the grave three days and three nights, Matthew 12:40. If not for this one passage, all scholars would agree on a Friday crucifixion. So we are really dealing with the question of one passage and how is that related in light of all the other passages?

In Jewish thinking, a part of a day is equivalent to a whole day. Genesis 42:17 states that Joseph held his brothers in prison for three days and in verse 18 states he spoke to them on the third day and released them. 1 Kings 20:29 says Israel and Syria camped for 7 days and then on the seventh day they began battle. Other passages—Esther 5:1, 1 Samuel 30:12—show similar thought. So Old Testament language shows the expression “three days,” “third day,” and “three days and three nights” are used to express the same period of time. Rabbinic literature shows the same thing. Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah wrote in 100 A.D., “A day and night are an Onah (period of time) and the portion of an Onah is as the whole of it.”

So we conclude the expression “after three days,” “on the third day,” and the “three days and three nights” are all one and indicate the same time span.

Pat Zukeran
Probe Ministries

“How Did John the Baptist Get the Idea to Baptize People?”

Where did John the Baptist get the idea to dunk people in water and call it baptism? It can't be the same as our baptism today, depicting the death, burial, and resurrection; that hadn't happened yet. He preached baptism for the remittance of sin. But where did the idea come from?

Thanks for your question. D.S. Dockery has a good discussion of this issue in his article on “Baptism” in the *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* [eds. Joel Green and Scot McNight (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1992), 55-58].

Although the Jews practiced a form of proselyte baptism, “there is no clear evidence prior to A.D. 70 that proselytes underwent baptism as a requirement of conversion” (Ibid., 56). Dockery presents the following arguments against the view that Jewish proselyte baptism served as the model for John's baptism (ibid., 56):

1. There is no clear reference to Jewish proselyte baptism in the OT, Philo, or Josephus.
2. Jewish proselyte baptism was self-administered; John's baptism was administered by John.
3. There are grammatical differences between how the term “baptism” is used in the NT and how it is used in texts mentioning Jewish proselyte baptism.
4. John baptized *Jews*, conditioned on their repentance; Jewish proselyte baptism was only for Gentiles.

But if John did not get this idea from Jewish proselyte baptism, where did he get it? Dockery thinks a more likely borrowing occurred from the Qumran community. He does not, however, commit John to having been an Essene. In support of his thesis, Dockery offers the following arguments (Ibid., 57):

1. Both the Qumran community and John stressed the importance of repentance in relation to baptism.
2. Both viewed their ministries in terms of Isaiah 40:3.
3. Both baptized Jewish people.

However, there was one important distinction between the Qumran community and John regarding baptism: the Qumran rite was self-administered and practiced frequently, while John's baptism was administered by John and was a one-time rite of initiation.

Thus, Dockery believes John got his idea for water baptism from the Qumran community. Of course, it's important to note that if John originally received this idea from Qumran, he nonetheless revised and adapted it to fit his own unique purpose and calling as the one who was preparing the Jewish nation to receive her Messiah. Also, it's important to remember that this is simply one scholar's expert opinion. I happen to think it a good one, but as he himself observes, "...the background of John's baptism remains fiercely debated" (Ibid., 56).

God bless you,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

"Who Are the Angels Mentioned in the Bible?"

You mentioned that there are only a few Angels mentioned in the Bible, and I was wondering if you could help me in relation to them. Would you give me a list of the Angels'

names mentioned in the bible, and books or web sites where I can learn about them.

Just two holy angels, Michael and Gabriel, are mentioned in the Bible. Here are the references:

Michael—Daniel 10:13, 10:21, 11:1, 12:1; Jude 1:9, Rev. 12:7.

Gabriel—Daniel 8:16-18; Luke 1:19, 1:26, 1:28.

Two unholy angels are named: Apollyon, the angel of the abyss in Revelation 9:11 (the Hebrew term is Abaddon), and Satan, who is an evil, fallen angel.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

“What Makes the Bible a Reliable Text on Angels?”

You cite the bible as a source of insight into angels. What makes the bible a better source than any other fiction book that has been written by anyone at anytime? Say I wrote a book about angels because I wanted to get people to believe in something they have never seen or felt or touched or smelled or tasted. If I aged it 2 or 3 thousand years and there were people like you around, would they believe it? What if I gave it a prolific name like The Word, or Holy Text, or The Greatest Truest Book Ever Written, does it then become more plausible? What are your thoughts?

Hi _____,

My thoughts are that the Bible gives more than “insight” about angels; it gives actual revelation—information from “outside the box,” so to speak.

You can choose to call the Bible a book of fiction, but that would only be because you haven’t considered the evidence that shows it’s not. For instance, fulfilled prophecy alone is a staggering evidence that it was divinely inspired, for who else could write history in advance other than the God who is outside of time?

I invite you to try and debunk the truth and validity of the Bible. Many others have, and they have become its most convinced defenders. If it truly can be debunked, then it’s not worth believing in. But if it’s true, and I completely believe it is because of the evidence, then it’s worth paying attention to.

I have a suspicion you have an opinion of the Bible that is not based on anything more than a contempt for God and possibly for the people who believe in the Bible. (And allow me to concede, regretfully, that a lot of religious people say and do things that make God wince because they misrepresent Him so egregiously, and it has a negative impact on others who are watching—people like you? I think God grieves over this.)

You might consider shoring up your reasons. Our website is full of resources that provide good evidence that Christianity, and the Bible, are both true. If you don’t care to check anything out, then at least I would hope you would be honest enough to admit that your unbelief is based on a refusal to investigate and not because there are good reasons for it.

Respectfully,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Does Lucky Mean Lucifer Has Smiled on Me?”

I would like to know the meaning to the word LUCKY. I have been told that it means Lucifer has smiled on me and blessed me. If this is true where do I find this information?

If you go to dictionary.com, this is what you'll find:

lucky

adj. luckier, luckiest

1. Having or attended by good luck. See Synonyms at happy.
2. Occurring by chance; fortuitous.
3. Believed to bring good luck: *hoped to draw a lucky number.*

There's nothing there about Lucifer. What you heard is something someone made up, and there's nothing to it.

From a Christian worldview, there IS no such thing as luck, because God is in control of everything. There's such a thing as blessing, but not luck. God is in control; Satan is not. In fact, at the cross he was stripped of all real power (see Col. 2:15). All he has is wiles and lies, and if we arm ourselves with the truth we can fight him all the time.

Hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

“Are Militant Angels Good, Bad or Ugly?”

Dear Sue,

Just recently we have been looking at some old photos of when we first moved into our old house and there was a sign out the front that said “BEWARE MILITANT ANGELS GUARD THIS PROPERTY.” And I was just wondering what this meant. Are these good, bad or ugly angels? Please email back even if you don’t come up with anything.

Boy, the people who had the house before you had quite a sense of humor! There are no such things as militant guardian angels, since militants are people who are angry and rebellious. The demons who fell from heaven were militant against God, but they’re into destruction, not protection. And the holy angels who protect us are submissive, not militant.

I think the sign is in the same category as the humorous signs I’ve seen that say “This property protected by an attack cat,” and they mean a household kitten.

At any rate, your e-mail made me smile, and I appreciate it. Let me encourage you that it’s cool and you have nothing to worry about.

Warmly,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Are Angels Male or Female?”

I've read your article [“Angels: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly,”](#) and I have a doubt about the angel story that describes an angel taking care of a child and her mother, but the angel appeared to be a hospital nurse.

I mean, is an angel a he or a she? Or can they be either man or woman?

Angels are not sexual beings; the Lord said they do not marry (Mark 12:25), and sexuality and gender would seem to be an element of humanity, not angel beings. So angels can take on human appearances of both males and females. It's like taking on a role in a play, complete with costume.

That being said, all biblical references to angels use the masculine pronoun “he.” That doesn't mean they can't appear as female, but it's good to know the baseline from scripture.

Hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Which Is It: Man's Free Will or God's Omniscience?”

A friend of mine posed this question to me. I would like to pass it along for your reflection:

When we say that God “knows the future”, are we saying that

He possesses knowledge of all future events? My premise is that in order for free will for Man to exist, then it is impossible for God to know all future events. In other words, these concepts are mutually exclusive. If that is true, then which one exists – free will in humans, or knowledge by God of all future events? (Or is my premise wrong?) My opinion is that free will exists, and therefore God cannot know all future events. Furthermore, Christians should not be troubled by the concept of a God that does not possess knowledge of all future events. They should rest assured that – one way or another – He will execute His plan and carry out His promises.

Thanks for any insights that I could pass along to him.

This is a big issue in theological circles today—sort of the “God version” of the “what did he know and when did he know it?” question. The debate over the extent of God’s foreknowledge is called “open theism.” (Check out Rick Wade’s article called [“God and the Future”](#)).

But I can tell you what we believe. God does, indeed, know every single detail of the future, which is why the Bible contains accurate prophecy of future events—because not only did God know they would (and will) happen, but because He is sovereign, He superintends them.

I think many people misunderstand the concept of “free will,” which is not a biblical term. The reality is that while we have the ability to make truly significant choices, we don’t have truly “free” will. You cannot, for example, choose to wake up tomorrow morning in China when you go to bed in Chicago. Or wake up speaking Chinese when all you know is English. You cannot choose to be a different gender than what God made you. (Yes, I’m aware of sex-change operations and know people who’ve had them—we’re not even going there! <smile>) But we can make choices that make a difference: for

example, in our attitudes, in who we marry and most importantly, which God we serve. We have limited freedom in our choices, and God does not force us to choose things His way; He respects our choices. But we do not have totally free will.

I think your friend misunderstands the concept of God's sovereignty ("one way or another – He will execute His plan and carry out His promises") if he thinks that God can have a plan and execute it if He doesn't know everything that's going to happen. You can't have it both ways. A God who is not omniscient cannot be sovereign. A sovereign God MUST be omniscient.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Is It Wrong to Be a Sperm or Egg Donor?”

Dear Sue,

Quick question. What is your view on sperm/egg donations? Do you think it is wrong to be a donor? Why or why not? This is an interesting topic.

Quick answer. Yes, I think it's wrong to seek—or be—a donor. Because the creation of a new human being is supposed to be the product of love and commitment in a marriage relationship, not a consumer commodity that we produce simply because we want a baby. Any time there is a sperm or egg donor, that means people are going outside the marriage relationship to

get what they want, which means a type of adultery.

In the case of infertility, this is a difficult and emotional issue, but I think we should remember that no one has the "right" to have a baby. It's like saying, "OK, God, You're not cooperating to give me what I want, so I'm going to get it my way." Same thing for people who want to be parents but aren't married; having a baby is about getting what they want, not about what's in a child's best interests (which is always going to be a mother and father in a stable marriage).

This is a great example of why the "technological imperative" is wrong; simply because we CAN, doesn't mean we SHOULD.

Thanks for asking.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries