

# The Nephilim: Their Origins and Evolution

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Since the very beginning of biblical study the נפלים (*n<sup>e</sup>philîm*) have been the topic of great controversy. Who are they and what do they represent? Are they biblical giants? What does the term literally translate to, and why does the brief mention of them in the Book of Genesis show resemblance to other mythologies? Many scholars, both independent and accredited, have dedicated much of their lives to answer the questions listed above. It wasn't until the discovery and translation of the Book of 1Enoch<sup>1</sup> that we were finally given a better understanding of these *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*; but is it a proper understanding? I was intrigued by these *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* and wanted to know more. Independent researchers have inappropriately linked them with ancient astronauts, an elder culture that long predated our own, to even builders of the pyramids. As I will explain below, these theories hold no grounds and the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* had a specific role which eventually corrupted over time. This detailed analysis will incorporate the theology during the proposed time of writing for the verses, grammatical study in Hebrew and Aramaic word forms, and even external influences that would have played a role in the region; but before I delve into these topics I would like to inform the reader that I am an advocate of the Documentary Hypothesis to which it proposes that the biblical scriptures which we have come to know as the Pentateuch have been written and edited by more than one scribe over time, disproving any notion of Mosaic authorship. I cover a lot of this evidence against a Mosaic authorship, more detailed information on the Documentary Hypothesis, and the topics of the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* in my book, *An Adopted Legacy: Neo-Assyrian Origin to Hebrew Lore*. I would also like to recommend the following books on the Documentary Hypothesis:

Friedman, Richard E. The Bible with Sources Revealed. 1st ed. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003.

Friedman, Richard E. Who Wrote the Bible?. 2nd ed. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997.

Campbell, Antony F., and Mark A. O'brien. Sources of the Pentateuch. Minneapolis: Fortress P, 1993.

## *An Identification to the Race in Question*

The easiest way to start this topic is by briefly explaining what the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* are not and reveal the evidence as this research progresses. Note that I am not attacking these authors but merely pointing out their misinterpretations and misunderstandings. The *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* are not, as Zecharia Sitchin proclaims, (1) those who came down from above, (2) those who were cast down, and (3) people of the fiery rockets. The Hebrew verb for 'to go' or 'to come down, descend' is ירד (*yārad*)<sup>2</sup> which shows no relation to the term in

question. He then goes on to identify the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* with the Sumerian deities, claiming that the Sumerians knew of their existence and that they came from a planet called Nibiru.

A quote taken from Andrew Collin's book, *From the Ashes of Angels*, shows that some confuse the the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* with the sons of God and use the term interchangeably to signify one and the same race:

This implies that *nephilim*, a word meaning the 'fallen ones', or 'those who have fallen', was the *original* name given by the Israelites to the fallen angels. Strange confirmation of this suggestion comes from rereading Genesis 6. Verse 2 speaks of the Sons of God coming unto the Daughters of Men, while in contrast verse 4 states firmly that: 'The Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men.'

It would seem that most of these authors attempt to link the root word for the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* with the Hebrew word of נָפַל (*nāphal*). *Nāphal* means 'to fall' or 'to fall in battle, by the sword', 'to be killed', 'to be fallen' and also 'to fall unto/upon'; all of these definitions display characteristics not held by the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* or, as I make the argument in my book, the sons of God.

We first read of the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* in Genesis 6:4. This is one of two verses to mention the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* three times throughout the entire Pentateuch. These three occurrences have been credited to the Yahwist (**J**), a scribe that originated from the Southern Kingdom of Judah to which a good part of the Pentateuch has been written by. In my research, I have personally dated **J** from the middle of the Neo-Assyrian Empire to just before its decline; starting just after the fall of Samaria and Exile of the Israelites at the hands of Sargon II<sup>3</sup>. Genesis 6:4 reads<sup>4</sup>:

The Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; the same were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.

The biggest clues to the identification of the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* will come from Numbers 13:33<sup>5</sup>:

And there we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak, who come of the Nephilim; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Taking an interpretation of the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* as the 'people of the fiery rockets' again holds no credibility when examining the term itself and the surrounding grammar of Genesis 6:4 and Numbers 13:33. Historically, the Hebrew word was left untranslated by the Revisers, the name of one of the Canaanite tribes. The Revisers have, in fact, translated the Hebrew גִּבּוֹרִים (*gibbōrîm*), in Genesis 6:4, as 'mighty men'; which will be a key point in the coming conclusions. When the Old Testament was first translated to the Greek language, the word for *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* read γίγαντες (*gigantes*), the Greek word for giants. This is confirmed in Numbers 13:33<sup>6</sup> with the description of the Israelites when compared to the race of giants.

It is extremely important for the reader to understand that in Hebrew grammar the singular *nāphal* cannot form the plural *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*. If we were to follow grammatical rules within the language we would end up with the plural *nōph<sup>e</sup>lîm*. Clearly this is not the same as *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*, and we can now see that it is impossible for *nāphal* to be the root word used. A detailed analysis of the characteristics held by the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* will further prove this in the section below. One other area of concern is that *nōph<sup>e</sup>lîm* is not in the plural passive form but instead a plural active indicating that these beings are ‘falling’ and have not ‘fallen’. Now what have the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* fallen from? The answer is nowhere. If a link were to be established for someone(s) falling from God’s grace it would have to go to the sons of God as is apparent in the Post-Exilic and not in the Pre-Exilic literature. The biggest clue to the identification of the word’s root can be found in Numbers 13:33. In the Masoretic Texts (MT), the word *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* is used twice in this verse, but oddly enough is spelled differently. Many have wondered what this could mean. In the first occurrence we find:

נפילים  
NFYLYM

The spelling comes with the *matres lectiones* throwing in an extra י (yod) to give us a proper pronunciation of the word *nef-ee-leem*. This is the only instance of this spelling found throughout the entire Old Testament. The second spelling holds (which is consistent with Genesis 6:4):

נפלים  
NFLYM

This is without the extra *yod*. It is extremely important to understand how these *matres lectiones* (or mother of words) work and Hebrew orthographical analysis to see the evolution of these *matres lectiones*. The purpose of the *matres lectiones* was to preserve the proper pronunciation of words in the consonant only Hebrew language. Specific characters are used to act as vowels. For example, a *yod*, depending on the structure and form of the word can be used to indicate an ‘ey’ or ‘ee’ sound. In this case we see the ‘ee’ forming the second syllable’s vowel. Orthographical analysis of the evolution of these *matres lectiones* show that the Israelite script, which evolved from the Phoenician, did not originally use their characters as vowel markers. We do not see this until the 9<sup>th</sup> century BCE<sup>7</sup> in the surrounding regions. Literary evidence seems to indicate that the role of the *matres lectionis* originated from regions to the south of Phoenicia and Israel, more specifically Moab and Judah. Our earliest examples of it come from the Meša` Stela. Scholars studying Hebrew orthography in the Old Testament have noted attempts by many scribes, when copying texts over time, rewriting older words with newer spelling forms so that they may be able to preserve pronunciations for future readings. There have been cases where we have seen that scribes would overlook words to rewrite and it would seem that the verses containing the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* were no exception. This is why we see a modified spelling in Number 13:33. Oddly enough all three occurrences of the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* in the Samaritan Pentateuch preserve only the latter form of spelling. This may hint at a

revision of the spelling taking place during the Post-Exilic period and after the Samaritan adoption of the Pentateuch; believed to have taken place ca. 400 BCE.

This quickly brings to mind a point to which Michael S. Heiser made in his argument with a Sitchinite named Erik Parker<sup>8</sup>. Heiser made a reference to the Aramaic written Book of Job found at Qumrân, part of the Dead Sea Scrolls collection. The constellation of Orion is written as נפילא (*n<sup>e</sup>phîlā*). This is the feminine form of the Aramaic masculine נפיל (*nāphîl*). Coincidentally enough *nāphîl* literally translates to ‘giant’ and its Aramaic plural form registers נפילין (*n<sup>e</sup>phîlîn*). To make this a Hebrew word, we must take the ending character ך (*nun*) and alter it to a ם (*mem*). We then end up with נפילים. It would come to no surprise if early orthography would reveal that even in the Aramaic, there is a possibility that *n<sup>e</sup>phîlîn* may have not always had the *yod* in its second syllable, which would have looked like this: נפלין. This evidence helps to make sense of it all. We can see how the Greek Septuagint (LXX) labeled these *n<sup>e</sup>phîlîn* as giants and why they were constantly described as giants in Numbers 13:33 and their Post-Exilic references. Numbers 13:33 is a lot clearer with this understanding because we can now see how a race of giants (*n<sup>e</sup>phîlîn*) gave birth to another race of giants (Anakim) followed by the birth of a third race of giants (*n<sup>e</sup>phîlîn*), who towered over the Israelites. Now the question is, was this originally an Aramaic word? If so, at what point in history did the Hebrew language adopt this loan word? I cover a possible answer to this at the conclusion of this paper.

### *The Roles and Evolution of the Nephilim*

It is extremely important to start looking at some of the grammatical clues followed by characteristics of the *n<sup>e</sup>phîlîn* detailed in these 2 verses. Even though the evidence clearly suggests that the word signifies ‘giants’, I still feel that there is something most scholars miss when it comes to the *n<sup>e</sup>phîlîn*. To review, the *n<sup>e</sup>phîlîn* were a product of the sons of God and the daughters of men. Breaking the last part of this verse (Genesis 6:4) down even further, and studying the grammar, we find that it literally translates to the following:

הגברים אשר מעולם אנשי השם

...the mighty ones who from old, men [of] name.

These *n<sup>e</sup>phîlîn* are clearly spoken of with great honor. Could this be a Biblical *Age of Heroes* identical to what Hesiod spoke of in his *The Works and Days*<sup>9</sup>?

...Zeus, son of Kronos, created yet another fourth generation on the fertile earth, and these were better and nobler, the wonderful generation of hero-men, who are also called half-gods, the generation before our own on this vast earth. But of these too, evil war and the terrible carnage took some; some by the seven-gated Thebes in the land of Kadmos as they fought together over the flocks of Oidipous; other war had taken in ships over the great gulf of the sea, where they also fought for the sake of lovely-haired Helen. There, for these, the end of death was misted about them. But on others, Zeus, son of Kronos, settled a living and a country of their own, apart from human kind, at the end of the world. And there they have

their dwelling place and hearts free of sorrow in the islands of the blessed by the deep-swirling stream of the ocean, prospering heroes, on whom in every year three times over the fruitful grain land bestows its sweet yield.

Much like the hero-men, who were *also called half-gods*, the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* were also a product of semi-divinity; the sons of God and the daughters of men. When analyzing this piece of scripture even further, the *Epic of Gilgameš*, quickly runs through my head. I will be explaining and discussing this epic later on in this paper. While these clues are not concrete enough to form a final conclusion, we must now look at all the other evidence.

The post-exilic literature has revealed to us a different perspective of the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*, one unlike the writings of Genesis 6:4. It is in the later literature that we see a dark side to the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*; one of blood-thirst and sin. It is also in the Post-Exilic writings that we find the sons of God (a.k.a. the Watchers) and the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* leading mankind to their corruption and destruction.

The Ethiopic version of Enoch was discovered in the land of Ethiopia by the freemason James Bruce, in 1773 CE. This book is believed to have been compiled around the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, and was written in the Ethiopic language of Ge'ez. 1Enoch details the fall of the Watchers who in turn also give birth to the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*. The fallen angels then went to Enoch to intercede on their behalf with God. The remainder of the book describes Enoch's visit to heaven in the form of a vision, and his revelations. Here we have an excerpt concerning both the sons of God and the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*:

**6:1** And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied that in those days were born unto them beautiful and comely daughters.

**6:2** And the angels, the children of the heaven, saw and lusted after them, and said to one another: 'Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men and beget us children.'

[skipping chunk of irrelevant text]

**7:1** And all the others together with them took unto themselves wives, and each chose for himself one, and they began to go in unto them and to defile themselves with them, and they taught them charms and enchantments, and the cutting of roots, and made them acquainted with plants.

**7:2** And they became pregnant, and they bare great giants, whose height was three thousand ells:

**7:3** Who consumed all the acquisitions of men. And when men could no longer sustain them,

**7:4** the giants turned against them and devoured mankind.

**7:5** And they began to sin against birds, and beasts, and reptiles, and fish, and to devour one another's flesh, and drink the blood.

**7:6** Then the earth laid accusation against the lawless ones.

This is obviously not the famous and mighty *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* that we read about in the Book of Genesis. As it is clearly seen, blame for mankind has quickly been taken off man and placed towards the *children of heaven*<sup>10</sup>. This is a topic that I will be getting to in more detail by the conclusion of this paper.

The Book of Giants<sup>11</sup> holds more detailed accounts on the interactions between both Enoch and the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*. We still start off with the wicked angels bringing forth knowledge and havoc to mankind; performing unnatural acts. As time progresses, the offspring of these angels, the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*, were suddenly troubled by a series of dreams and visions. Enoch's main role was as an interpreter of these dreams. I would like to mention the existence of a *Gilgameš* as being one of the giants.

I dwelled on this problem for a long time. Why were the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* regarded as beings of such high stature and prestige in one source, while demonized in others? It took a while before I heard about and picked up the Book of Jasher. Readers and scholars of the Bible have often been intrigued by other books mentioned within the scriptures. The Book of Jasher is one of them; mentioned in both Joshua 10:13 and 2Samuel 1:17. It is these scholars, including myself, that fantasize as to what is held within these books being referenced. Many scholars place this compilation as early as the 5<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE; just after the Babylonian Exile and before the Persian influence that swept the nation. In the very beginning of the second chapter, we read:

**1** And it was in the hundred and thirtieth year of the life of Adam upon the earth, that he again knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bare a son in his likeness and in his image, and she called his name Seth, saying, Because God has appointed me another seed in the place of Abel , for Cain has slain him.

**2** And Seth lived one hundred and five years, and he begat a son; and Seth called the name of his son Enosh, saying, Because in that time the sons of men began to multiply, and to afflict their souls and hearts by transgressing and rebelling against God.

When you read on, there is no mention of the sons of God coming unto the daughters of men and bearing giant children who also brought corruption to the known world. It was mankind who corrupted themselves<sup>12</sup>, a parallel to the Genesis account. Moving on to chapter 3, the author begins to speak of Enoch and how Enoch reigned over all of mankind. We learn of his life and how *he was taught the instructions of the Lord*<sup>13</sup>; but there is still no mention of the sons of God and the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*. This brings me back to the Yahwistic (**J**) account of the sons of God and the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* in Genesis. Rereading chapter 6 verses 1-8, we can clearly see that there is no real connection between the sons of God, the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*, and the corruption of mankind leading to the Flood of Noah.

**6:1** And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

**6:2** that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives, whomsoever they chose.

**6:3** And YHWH said: 'My spirit shall not abide in man for ever, for that he also is flesh; therefore shall his days be a hundred and twenty years.'

**6:4** The Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; the same were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.

**6:5** And YHWH saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

**6:6** And it repented YHWH that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart.

**6:7** And YHWH said: 'I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and creeping thing, and fowl of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them.'

**6:8** But Noah found grace in the eyes of YHWH.

Focusing in on Genesis 6:4 and 6:5, there is no connection and can safely assume that the story trails away from the sons of God and the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* into another direction: mankind's corruption. The author of the Book of Jasher may have known this and, seeing no real point in mentioning the heavenly beings and their offspring, decided to omit it. The Book of Jasher also helps to answer another anomaly. If the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* were part of the cause of the corruption, then why are they still present in Numbers 13:33? Genesis 6:4 does state that *the Nephilim were in the earth in those days and also after that*. After what; the Flood? Going with the belief that the sons of God and the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* stood apart from the corruption of man would help make the verses in Genesis and Numbers easier to comprehend. Following the Priestly (P) and Yahwistic text regarding the repopulation of man<sup>14</sup> from the seeds of Ham, Shem and Yapheth, we also discover that there is no text to account for the Anakim and the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* spoken of in Numbers 13:33; an event which took place after the Flood. How were these giants brought back to the land? The answer is that they were never wiped out.

We must now start to shift our focus away from biblical sources and onto Mesopotamian and Levantine mythology. It is in the Standard Babylonian Version (SBV) of the *Epic of Gilgameš* that we find important and coincidental similarities with the primeval history of the Book of Genesis<sup>15</sup>. In the middle of the first column and at the very beginning of the second of the first tablet, we discover *Gilgameš*'s background:

Wild calf of Lugalbanda, Gilgamesh, is perfect in strength,  
Suckling of the sublime wild cow, the wild cow Ninsun  
Towering Gilgamesh is uncannily perfect...  
...Two-thirds of him was divine, and one-third of him was human...

With knowledge of the Sumerian King List, we find out that Lugalbanda was once a king of Uruk. Many older Sumerian poems exist pertaining to Lugalbanda. He was a mortal who had joined with the deity Ninsun to produce *Gilgameš*. At first glance, one may wonder why the strange division of divinity and mortality. This may be due to the fact that Lugalbanda may have started off human, but was deified in the years to come. Reasons or events for this transformation are unknown. Other than his partial divinity, a lot of emphasis is placed on *Gilgameš*'s (and the later Enkidu who was created by the gods) height throughout the rest of the narrative<sup>16</sup>.

[...] stately in feature,  
[...] in body, lofty [...]  
His foot was a triple cubit, his leg six times twelve,  
His stride was six times twelve cubits,  
His thumb was [...] cubits.

His cheeks had a beard like [...]  
The locks of his hair grew thick as a grainfield.  
He was perfection in height,  
Ideally handsome [...]

This emphasis on height was also extremely significant in the many other translations of the story; such as the Hittite version in which *Gilgameš* is described as being *eleven yards in height and his breast was nine spans in breadth*. Normal humans in the epic(s) were never mentioned as being the same height as these demigods. In fact, the everyday citizens of Uruk were constantly astonished at the heights of both *Gilgameš* and Enkidu. The demigods found in the ancient Mesopotamian world display undeniably similar traits to the *n<sup>e</sup>philim*. They are heroic and spoken of with high prestige, as is present within this epic; a lot of attention is directed towards their height; and these semi-divine beings existed before and after the Flood. In the next section, I will be providing evidence of how the deities themselves may also have been of high stature by referencing Ugaritic mythology, which will eventually lead us to believe that the sons of God including God himself may have been viewed as giants at one point in history.

References to deities of the Ugaritic<sup>17</sup> pantheon point to gigantism. Most of these references are directed towards one specific deity, *Ba'al Haddad*. Judging by the Ugaritic sources, *Ba'al Haddad* was the principal deity established as the main cult of worship at Ugarit. In the story entitled *Ba'al and Mot*<sup>18</sup> we see such an example. From the very beginning of the story, a grudge between *Ba'al* and Mot is present. *Ba'al Haddad* was a mighty storm and fertility deity, and Mot is the god of death, pestilence and plague who ruled the Underworld. Constant references are made to Mot causing *the heavens to wilt and collapse* and with his deathly powers scorching *the crops and the fruit of the trees*; features exactly opposite of *Ba'al Haddad*, who as mentioned earlier symbolized fertility. Mot ends up thinking he killed *Ba'al*<sup>19</sup>, and *Ba'al* disappears. Athtar, another deity, attempts to take the storm god's place on the throne at mount Zephon. Athtar seats himself on *Ba'al's* throne, but finds that he is not tall enough to occupy it.

He (Athtar)<sup>20</sup> sat on the seat of the mightiest *Ba'al*,  
(But) his feet did not reach the foot-stool,  
his head did not reach its top.

In all his statues and stone carvings, *Ba'al Haddad* was constantly depicted as a giant holding a smiting position; while everything else surrounding him was shorter in height. Even in front of the leader of the Ugaritic pantheon El, the mighty *Ba'al Haddad* towered over him. In a similar fashion, we have the same traits presented in other ancient artifacts around the world. To list a few, we have the Narmer Palette and the Victory Stela of Naram-Sin, in which both kings are deified to such a degree where we see Narmer<sup>21</sup> towering over his servants and enemies holding a smiting position, and in Naram-Sin's stela, not only is Naram-Sin<sup>22</sup> superior in height compared to the rest of the individuals depicted on the stela, but he has also been known to deify himself by writing his name with the proto-Akkadian sign of *il*, standing for god; as is seen in his victory stela. Even in simple cylinder seal impressions we see the same motifs, where the gods are taller in



stature than mankind. In the figure, the gods are represented with the horned cap while the humans are bearing most of the workload and are smaller in height.



**Figure 1 – Impression of cylinder seal showing the building of a structure with both man and gods depicted in the scene, ca. 2246-2160 BCE. BLMJ Seal 377**

With a deeper investigation of the main Pentateuchal literature to the post-Exilic writings followed by the mythology of the surrounding regions, we now know how originally the children of the sons of God were spoken of as heroes and mighty warriors, as opposed to the demonized giants we find later on. These same heroes were given features of gigantism, which symbolized strength or warrior/ ruler type status and semi-to full divinity. It is now important to understand how this change took place.

### *Conclusions*

At what point in history did the Judahite Hebrew scribe adopt the Aramaic term *nāphîl*? The answer is, during the Neo-Assyrian Period, under the Neo-Assyrian Empire. While Akkadian was still in use under the Neo-Assyrian regime for political purposes, the language of the people was an Aramaic one. It is possible that after the fall of Samaria, the conquest of most of Judah at the hands of Neo-Assyria, and Hezekiah's surrender to Sennacherib resulting in him merely serving as a vassal to the Assyrian king created an opportunity for this Aramaic tongue which had been spreading as the official language of the empire to reach to Israelite/ Judahite territories. The Aramaic language, extremely similar to the many other variations of Semitic languages, was easily adopted and lasted from Mesopotamia to as far west as Egypt until the Hellenistic Period.

The fact that these *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* were still on the earth many generations after the Flood of Noah seems to prove that they played no part in the corruption of mankind. These themes would have been adopted at a later date, more specifically the Post-Exilic period. The Book of Jasher confirms this. Literary evidence clearly points the evolution of the sons of God<sup>23</sup> and the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm* to the time of the Persian Empire. In Zoroastrianism we have the similar ahuras and daêvas. Ahura is the Avestan word for God/gods and angels while daêvas was later corrupted to mean demons or anything having to do with evil. The original meaning for daêva comes from the root *div*, which means 'to shine'; leading daêvas to originally translate as 'the shining one(s)'. Oddly enough, what has taken a negative tone in Indo-Iranian culture is just the opposite in the neighboring Indian culture, which was a term

used regularly to denote any deity. Scholars believe that the reason for such a word play may come from the opposing beliefs of the two cultures. While one side promoted monotheism, the other polytheistic side went against everything the first stood for. Anything or anyone not recognizing the supreme Ahura Mazda as the one and only good deity must be evil, and that is probably why a general and most commonly used term for God/ gods in one culture meant something evil in the other. That may be a reason as to why we find Hindu deities such as Indra labeled as a daêva. It was the worship of the daêvas that brought suffering and distress to mankind, creating the classical situation for a prophet to arise and offer salvation through consolation and hope for the people; this role was taken by Zarathushtra. During the post-Exilic period, when Zoroastrianism was at its highest influence, it is extremely possible that the Jews of the time adopted such themes. Starting to take a more dualistic approach in their own religion<sup>24</sup>, it can easily be seen that anything going against the supreme YHWH was evil, including those very sons of God that came onto the daughters of men, bringing forth their “evil” offspring, the *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*. Coincidentally enough, the angels spoken of in the post-Exilic literature are described as pure and bright as Heaven; they are said to be formed of fire, and encompassed by light<sup>25</sup>. Could the scribe have seen this and taken the once heroic warrior demi-gods and demonized them? Mankind couldn't have been at fault, the scribes would have thought; evil forces must have been introduced to influence humans to commit evil things. The reader must also understand that before the Post-Exilic period and the introduction of Zoroastrianism into the Levant, Hebrew lore never incorporated any evil entity. You had the corruption and introduction of *Sātān* and his role to God, Belial, and Mastema; all evil spirits opposing the great YHWH, a role never assigned beforehand.

Now the question is, aside from the famed mighty warriors looked upon to such a high degree, as seen in Genesis 6:4, were there any surrounding and now lost mythological stories concerning these *n<sup>e</sup>philîm*? Were they instead divine kings who ruled mankind at its earliest stages of civilization, as is seen in the Sumerian King List, the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and in more historical stories?

*If you have any comments or questions regarding this article please direct them to comments@petroskoutoupis.com. Or just visit www.petroskoutoupis.com.*

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<sup>1</sup> The phrase Book of Enoch refers to 1Enoch, which is wholly extant only in the Ethiopic language. There are also 2 other books called Enoch, 2Enoch (surviving only in Old Slavonic, c. 1st century CE) and 3Enoch (surviving in Hebrew, c. 5th-6th century CE.) The numbering of these texts has been applied by scholars to distinguish the texts from one another.

<sup>2</sup> I first noticed this in an untitled paper from Michael S. Heiser found at <http://www.sitchiniswrong.com/>.

<sup>3</sup> Reference my book *An Adopted Legacy*; I cover these details within. A lot more evidence and analysis will be given in the second installment of the series to confirm all the findings in the first.

<sup>4</sup> JPS translation.

<sup>5</sup> JPS translation.

<sup>6</sup> See above.

<sup>7</sup> It is highly recommended to read the extensive research on Hebrew Orthography under the direction of Frank Moore Cross and David Noel Freedman in their book *Early Hebrew Orthography: A Study of Epigraphic Evidence*.

<sup>8</sup> Michael S. Heiser is a scholar of Ancient Hebrew and Semitic Languages.

<http://www.michaelsheiser.com/>

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<sup>9</sup> Lattimore, Richmond, trans. *Hesiod: The Works and Days/Theogony/The Shield of Herakles*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan P, 1959. 37.

<sup>10</sup> Read below.

<sup>11</sup> 4Q203, 1Q23, 2Q26, 4Q530-532 and 6Q8

<sup>12</sup> Read below.

<sup>13</sup> A variation of this is covered in 1 Enoch.

<sup>14</sup> Gen. 10-11.

<sup>15</sup> i.e. the *n<sup>e</sup>philim* and the Flood of Noah and parts of the Eden narrative.

<sup>16</sup> These gigantic features can also be seen in tablet IV, on the path to Humbaba in the Cedar Forest; tablet VI, the battle with the Bull of Heaven; and tablet X, the ferry ride to Ut-napishtim.

<sup>17</sup> Ugarit, modern day Ras Shamra.

<sup>18</sup> CTA 4

<sup>19</sup> Mot swallows Ba'al. Although many translations of this story imply that Ba'al used a substitute, disguised in his clothing, and hid in the shades of Mot's realm, the underworld. When Anat searches for him later on, she searches for her brother's shade.

<sup>20</sup> Author's note.

<sup>21</sup> Narmer (c. 3100 BCE) is a Pre-Dynastic king of Egypt, where under his leadership the unification of both Upper and Lower Egypt took place. His capital was found at Hierakonpolis (Nekhen) and the artifact was found in the 'Main Deposit' of the same site.

<sup>22</sup> Naram-Sin (c. 2250 BCE) was a king and the grandson of Sargon of Agade, king and creator of the Akkadian Dynasty and empire. Expansions of the empire were made under his reign, and he was given the title of *King of the 4 Quarters/Corners*, which meant 'king of the (known) world.'

<sup>23</sup> In *An Adopted Legacy* I also cover a detailed analysis on the role of the sons of God.

<sup>24</sup> The Jewish religion was starting to adopt more of a dualistic theme; paralleling that of the Zoroastrians. Now, if there was good, then there always was evil. Zoroastrianism was the first to introduce an evil entity always opposing the good; the supreme deity was the Ahura Mazda, while the opposing force was the Angra Mainyu, which literally translated to 'evil spirit'.

<sup>25</sup> cf. Ps. 104:4