

The Nephilim

Now it came to pass, when men 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 wives for themselves of all whom they chose. And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came into the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown. Then the LORD 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. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

-Genesis 6:1-8

Here we have one of the most interesting, yet hotly debated passages in the entire Bible. There have been reams and reams of paper devoted to understanding these few mysterious verses. For some, this sounds like something straight out of a fantasy or science fiction novel as they interpret this to mean that a fallen angelic race descended from heaven and began to interbreed with human women and create a monstrous race of "men" that began to oppress and devour others. For others, while the language is extreme, they see this as a usage of mythical language to describe a fall of Seth's godly lineage as they began to create families with the line of Cain. Then there is the debate about the flood. Is this talking about a global flood, or a local flood that covered the area of ancient Mesopotamia?

While I think there is some merit to arguing these points, overall, this section like the rest of these first few chapters of Genesis were not written to give us a strictly historical account of events. By using heavily symbolic language, these first few chapters give us a symbolic view of man in our history and tendencies and therefore are some of the most insightful chapters in our bibles. This chapter is no different. While I believe this is describing a real historical event, these passages are informative to us today because they give us the blueprint of how a "world" can end. When I say "world" here I am not necessarily talking about the world at large, but a "world" can be as small as a single life, or a family, or a society, or even be as big as the creation itself. At its core though, a world can end when it imbibes wickedness until it literally drowns itself. And this knowledge is given to us in understanding the beings that we now call the "nephilim".

The Nephilim and Societal Collapse

So who are the nephilim? The literal translation of this word would be something like the “fallen ones” and has become the Hebrew equivalent of the “giants” found in most other mythologies like that of the Greeks. When we think of giants today we may think of beings who are just a little bigger than us, but in the ancient world, giants were monstrous, inhuman creatures with a specific representative role within their stories which we will break down through the course of this paper. The presence of these giants, as well as the ubiquity of flood stories wiping out civilizations as divine judgment (like the story of Gilgamesh and Atlantis) throughout the ancient world also gives credence to the fact that this story is representing a real history, and that this event left a mark on the conscience of man.

But let’s take some time to investigate giants and their significance in this story. On the whole giants represent an improper union between heaven and earth, as such they symbolize three main problems within a given society. First they represent improper, or mutated growth, second insatiable greed, and finally oppressive power. In order to understand these points more clearly I think it’s best that we turn to an apocryphal work known as the book of Enoch.

The Apocrypha and the Book Of Enoch

However, before I quote from this book I do think that it is important to take a quick detour in order to explain the significance and the controversy surrounding the apocrypha. The apocrypha (a term taken from the Greek meaning “secret” or “hidden”) were a group of books written between the writing of the last book of the Old Testament, somewhere in the middle of the four hundreds B.C., and the coming of Christ in the early first century A.D. These books are very interesting and were considered very valuable by early Jews as they contained important history and wisdom. However, we know from writings of men like the historian Josephus that the Jews never considered these books Scripture.

The reason is because the Jews had a standard for which writings were considered Scripture and that standard was that they had to be written by a prophet. And unfortunately there were no prophets in Israel from the time of Malachi, to the time of John the baptist. Beyond this, some of the books are what we call “pseudepigraphal”, meaning that they bear the name and perspective of someone different than the actual author. The book of Enoch fits into this category since it was written as though it were written by the same Enoch of Genesis 5. Yet we know historically that it was actually written around 300 B.C. which is obviously long after the death of the real Enoch.

For these reasons, many throughout church history have considered these writings the same way that the Jews did, important but not Scripture. While others considered these writings to be Scripture, creating a major controversy within the church regarding these books. Even within those who accept the apocryphal writings as Scripture, not all these books are considered Scripture by them. For instance, the book of Enoch is not considered Scripture by Eastern Orthodox or Catholic Christians. But this controversy has grown and developed throughout church history and really came to a head during the protestant reformation when the reformers officially stated that they rejected all of the apocrypha from being Scripture. This caused pushes in the eastern and western parts of the world to make an official canon list that included some of these writings, creating a further divide between the Protestants and the Catholics and Eastern Orthodox. So as I quote from this book, this is not an endorsement of this book as Scripture, but instead a recognition of its historical and symbolic importance.

While the full book of Enoch is quite long, even containing wisdom literature much like the Proverbs, the earlier parts of Enoch retell the chapters in Genesis dealing with the Nephilim and the flood of Noah, giving greater detail and symbolic hints to what the Nephilim represent in this story. In the early chapters you see certain angels, named the “Watchers” decide to leave their estate as mere “watchers” of human affairs and instead choose to marry women on the earth:

“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. And they became pregnant, and they bare great giants, whose height was three thousand ells: Who consumed all the acquisitions of men. And when men could no longer sustain them, the giants turned against them and devoured mankind. And they began to sin against birds, and beasts, and reptiles, and fish, and to devour one another's flesh, and drink the blood. Then the earth laid accusation against the lawless ones. And Azazel taught men to make swords, and knives, and shields, and breastplates, and made known to them the metals of the earth and the art of working them, and bracelets, and ornaments, and the use of antimony, and the beautifying of the eyelids, and all kinds of costly stones, and all colouring tinctures. And there arose much godlessness, and they committed fornication, and they were led astray, and became corrupt in all their ways. Semjaza taught enchantments and root-cuttings, Armaros the resolving of enchantments, Baraqijal taught astrology, Kokabel the constellations, Ezeqeel the knowledge of the clouds, Araqiel the signs of the earth, Shamsiel the signs of the sun, and Sariel the course of the moon. And as men perished, they cried, and their cry went up to heaven.”

-Enoch 3:7-14

Even though I don't believe this gives us a real historical account of what happened, it does flesh out the symbols present in Genesis and really helps us understand those three points I mentioned earlier; namely that giants represent an improper union of heaven and earth that results first in mutated growth, second insatiable lust, and third oppressive power.

The Improper Union of Heaven and Earth

It seems that since man was cast out of the garden of Eden and cut off from the fruit of the tree of life, we have had a deep longing to unify ourselves with the divine once again. Thankfully, this is a desire shared by God and has been a major goal for Him in the course of man's history. He made this partially possible first through the Jewish Law, and then fully realized through the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

"Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body."

-Romans 8:23

It is by receiving forgiveness for our sins through Christ that someone can be unified to God once again through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This union has been called "theosis", or "deification" historically by Christians. This is not the promise that we will become "gods" but instead it refers to man's ability, through Christ, to once again partake in the divine nature. This gives the Christian the ability to develop our intimacy with God through growing in our obedience to Him and it also gives us assurance that we will be fully united back to God when we go to heaven.

But, God's solution for us presents man with two major problems. First is that in order to experience this union we have to submit to God, which man doesn't want to do, and second even if we seek this union in Christ, we won't have the fullness of it until we go to heaven. For this reason, men have been tempted to an improper union with the divine facilitated by demons instead of the true and living God.

"Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons..."

-1 Timothy 4:1

This is what the pagan religions of the past have been. They are means by which man tries to reunify himself with heaven through rituals and ceremonies that are all mutated

imitations of the truth that God has given us. So instead of seeing animal sacrifice as a prefiguration of Christ dying for our sins, the pagans would sacrifice animals and humans to brutal deities who demanded blood to be satiated. Instead of experiencing God through His Spirit who is sent to explain to us the reality that we inhabit and how the spiritual interacts with us, pagans would inebriate themselves through hallucinogenic drugs or utilize trance inducing meditative practices in order to enter into “spiritual visions”. And, instead of waiting for God to come in the incarnation, pagans would try to “incarnate” their pagan gods through sexual rituals within their temples and believed their kings and heroes to be “demigods”, half men, half god who were intended to manifest the presence of the divine of this earth.

“that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.”

-Genesis 6:2

This is what the pagans believed themselves to have been doing. They thought that they could actually unify themselves with their gods through these rituals and they really saw their kings and their mythical heroes of old to be the products of these rituals. Now whatever is happening in Genesis 6 seems to be a more twisted version of what pagans later practiced, so we don't really know whether this was a literal coupling or not. But regardless it prefigures for us the pagan rites of old and explains why, for the biblical authors, they did not see the products of these unions as good, but monstrous.

The reason why giants are always depicted as being large in size, (in the book of Enoch they are depicted as being around 450 feet tall) is because they symbolize this improper union between heaven and earth. The giants have grown to try to reach the heavens, but have failed in their goal. They are still creatures of the earth and therefore can't actually reach heaven no matter how tall they get. But because they are so ridiculously large, they are also disconnected from the earth and are no longer men. So in the book of Enoch, the coming of the Nephilim is also signified with the demons giving men technology and mystical practices like astrology. This symbolizes the creation of paganism and the effects of paganism. Paganism promises to help us transcend our humanity and bring us to the divine, but it can't actually bring men to God and instead it makes people less human through their barbaric practices and twisted morality.

Although our current culture is not following explicit idols like the pagans of old, their doctrine is fundamentally no different than the pagans. Instead of ceremony and rituals, we believe that we can transcend our humanity through knowledge and technology. This belief system is called “transhumanism” and while it isn't particularly new, it's popularity is growing at a rapid pace. There is a reason why transgenderism, while it is

an issue that affects a relatively small portion of our population, has swallowed up our national discourse. This issue has forced its way into our current moment because it represents this promise. That we can transcend the natural boundaries of our DNA. That through technology we can be masters of our own destiny.

This is what C.S. Lewis was worried about in the last century and wrote about extensively both in his philosophical works like “The Abolition Of Man” and also his fictional works like “That Hideous Strength”. He saw the current secular movement as being more religious than the most zealous pagans and more dangerous than all of them, because through technology we can actually achieve in reality what paganism promised. In his essay “Is Theology Poetry” he says this about the “heaven” that secular humanism is seeking to achieve:

“A race of demigods now rules the planet—and perhaps more than the planet—for eugenics have made certain that only demigods will be born, and psychoanalysis that none of them shall lose or smirch his divinity, and communism that all which divinity requires shall be ready to their hands. Man has ascended his throne. Henceforward he has nothing to do but to practice virtue, to grow in wisdom, to be happy.”

-C.S. Lewis - Is Theology Poetry?

Quotes like that seemed a little grandiose in the mid 1900’s, but look at this quote from a modern secular philosopher Yuval Harari in his book “Homo Deus”:

“No clear line separates healing from upgrading. Medicine almost always begins by saving people from falling below the norm, but the same tools and know-how can then be used to surpass the norm.”

-Yuval Noah Harari, Homo Deus

The means of our transcendence has changed, but the aim of man remains the same. We seek a union of heaven and earth through our power, but the result will always be a mutation and never the utopia that we envision. The technology that we are creating now is in some ways making our lives better, but in others, like in our development of nuclear weapons, it is threatening our very existence. Not because the technology is bad, but because our desires to attain this power are twisted and perverted away from our purpose in God. For the most part, we aren’t creating these things in submission to God, but instead in an attempt to be “gods”, and as a result, we become both more distant from God and our own humanity.

The reason why Jesus compares himself in John 1:51 to the ladder that Jacob saw in Genesis 28 is because it is only through Him that heaven and earth can be brought

back together. It is on Him that angels can properly descend to man, bringing His message to us and not a distorted one that demons have cultivated, and that man can properly ascend to God. Not through our efforts, but through His forgiveness and grace. The reason why man was always killed by trying to come near to God in the Old Testament, is because our nature could not incorporate God's nature due to our sin. But Jesus incorporated the nature of man into His being and by becoming fully human and rising bodily from the dead, Jesus has forgiven the sin of man and made it possible for us to be filled with the divine again. Jesus has come, not to make us less human, but more human and to restore us to what we were supposed to be, that we might be reunified to heaven in a fulfillment of His will and not in a perversion of it.

Hybrids

"There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came into the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown."

-Genesis 6:4

Since "giants" represent the improper union of heaven and earth, they also signify improper hybridization, or mutation from our intended form. When God created heaven and earth He created particular boundaries in His creation. He formed a border for the sea and the land, He formed a boundary for the sky and the earth, and He formed a boundary within the genes of all living things that they can procreate according to their "kind". This is why ancient man has had visions of "hybrid" creatures that are monstrous and fierce. Things like the hydra, the minotaur, and the chimera, are all examples of terrible hybrid monsters that signify a mutation from the intended order of creation.

Even the giants in most ancient myths are terrifying hybrids. Think of cyclops, ogres, and the like, these are giant creatures who are in some way mutated from their proper form. As these mutations develop, the other boundaries start to erode, and finally judgment falls in the form of some cosmic boundary eroding. This is why God uses the flood to wipe out man, this is an eroding of the boundary between the land or the sea. Or sometimes God will allow fire to fall from heaven signifying a destruction of the boundary between heaven and earth.

This symbolizes the danger of mutated growth versus organic growth. For instance when a teenager starts to grow in height, and have their bodies develop in new ways, we don't see this as bad, but as good because while they are changing, they are changing organically according to what is good for them. If however someone experienced a large growth on their neck or on an organ in their body, it wouldn't be a

sign of positive growth, but would instead be a sign of a tumor or some other cancerous growth. We see mutated growth as a bad thing because we understand that everything has a nature and that nature has boundaries. Within a given boundary, there can be great growth, liberty, and great diversity, but when the natural boundary is broken, nature is perverted and the result is deadly.

In our culture we tend to look at boundaries as negative things that remove our freedom, but the Nephilim represent an erosion of good boundaries that create mutated growth, and then powerful tyranny represented in the Nephilim themselves. They are an improper hybrid of heaven and earth who are powerful, yet create societal instability and eventually bring about the flood. To put it another way, in our liberty we might destroy boundaries that bring us under tyranny. All societies are vulnerable to this kind of mutated growth that will eventually lead to its downfall. In order to better understand this concept, it might be easiest to look at this idea in regards to the individual, and then the family, and finally to the society at large.

The Individual

An individual's life is made up of multiple parts making up our identity and these parts are always growing and changing. So when we are young, our identities are virtually dependent on our family. We are a child of our parents, and a sibling to our brothers and sisters. As we grow, we add more dimensions to our being, we make friends, we play sports, we learn instruments, we go to school and so on. We even grow in our character as we learn how to be more honest, hard working, intelligent, fair, loving, etc. All of these things are growing us as individuals, and changing our identity, but they aren't necessarily seen as mutations, but good growth.

However, a person can incorporate things into themselves that erode good boundaries and end up growing them in bad directions and therefore can be seen as mutations. Taking an extreme example, if someone became addicted to drugs, they are growing, but this growth would be seen as a mutation. This is why a loved one might say something like "this isn't you." What do we mean with a statement like that? Obviously the behavior is "them" since they are the ones doing it. It isn't that we are saying that they have been taken over by another and robbed of their free-will. Instead we are seeing them imbibe something into their identity that is in direct conflict with the other elements of their personality and even their life itself. Just like cancer, the more the addiction grows, the more the other, good components of their personality are swallowed up and, if brought to an extreme end, will result in someone's death. By using their freedom to imbibe the forbidden, they are brought under the tyranny of addiction.

The Family

The same is true for a family. Families again have a great amount of growth and change that they can experience that is positive, organic growth. Two individuals marry and create a new family, as a result they can have kids, and their kids can marry and have more kids and so on and so forth. This growth is sometimes hard to stabilize since the bigger a family gets, the more personalities it has to incorporate, and the more personalities, the more conflict that it has to deal with. But a family that functions well will be able to handle this growth and flourish through the tensions.

However, there are things that a family can incorporate that can destroy it. For instance, if a parent has an affair, they have brought something into the family that is now mutated growth. This one incorporation can threaten the stability of the family itself and can destroy it altogether. Or an individual in the family can start to inculcate bad habits and turn them abusive or neglectful. Or they can befriend people that are harming their view of the family and pulling them away from their family. Additions like this can't be properly incorporated into the family and so they can destroy the family.

The Society

With that being understood, we can now turn our attention to the actual text of Genesis 6. Through this improper union of heaven and earth, the society of man is beginning to mutate and destroy itself. This is why it says in Genesis 6:5-6:

“Then the LORD 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. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.”

This first society of man began to mutate from its original purpose. We see this in Cain killing Abel, and then throughout his line in their polygamy and violence. Just like the individual and the family, society at large must have a stable identity in order to function, it has to know what things it can incorporate and what things it can't. To put it another way, the center of the culture, the ultimate goal that a society is oriented towards, must be stable and understood so that it can recognize the growth that is positive and the growth that is a mutation from what it is supposed to be. It must be able to do this quickly and efficiently or it will eventually kill itself.

Throughout the Bible we see “hybrids” as a symbol for unstable and dangerous cultures. Take Daniel 2 when Nebuchadnezzar had a vision of a statue that makes up subsequent empires of the Middle East. The statue has a head of gold, shoulders of silver, a belly of bronze, legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay. You see first, that the

region itself is unstable as represented by the improper melding of these different elements. But when you get to the feet, which should be the most stable part of a statue, the instability is most pronounced in its make-up of iron and clay.

When these empires are represented later on in Daniel 7, they have now taken on the image of different hybrid beasts emerging from the sea, once again signifying the eroding of boundaries between species and even the land and sea. A very similar image is then employed by the apostle John in Revelation 13, once again seeing a giant mutated beast representing the empire of the antiChrist. But later he sees the beast again in Revelation 17 but this time with a whore riding on top of it. This I believe helps us understand this point in a greater way.

In this chapter, John is given a direct interpretation of what these symbols mean, namely, that the beast is the empire of the antichrist, and the whore is its capital city. But the greater question for us to ask is why this empire is represented with these specific symbols? A beast seems to be the same image of the Nephilim. Intense animalistic power that is created through improper melding of natures; but a whore tends to represent licentiousness and pleasure. What this seems to suggest is that it is the licentiousness of this empire that seduces men to follow it. Meaning that power can produce unbelievable amounts of liberty and pleasure that draws men to follow it. But over time the society begins to incorporate more and more disparate ideas and people groups. This causes it to become too chaotic, requiring it to become tyrannical to re-establish order. That is why in the Revelation 17:16 the beast kills the whore, signifying, just like with the family and the individual, how liberty produces tyranny.

We see the same pattern in the story of the tower of Babel. The society begins to grow at an exponential rate, but instead of expanding out, it uses power to create a monolithic society of control represented in the tower that reaches to heaven. This also signifies the fact that because this society isn't appropriately unified to heaven, it is seeking to make this union in its own power. This results in divine judgment of a confusion of languages that disperses the society. This seems to be the universal pattern of societies growth and collapse. A given nation or people begin to ascend through power and right principles. Through their success they begin to conquer other nations, and other people flood into the nation for a chance at prosperity. This leads to improper mixtures of culture, that eventually leads to tyranny in an attempt to produce solidity, and this results in collapse.

But, we need to be careful, since not all mixtures are actually bad. For instance, in heavenly visions we often see hybrids, but they aren't seen as monsters, but as beautiful. So in Ezekiel's vision of the angels in Ezekiel 1, he sees angels that have four

different natures contained in them, namely that of an ox, an eagle, a lion, and a man. But this isn't a perversion, but a representation of God being Lord of all the earth and the diversity therein. Then in Revelation 21 we see God's heavenly empire incorporating people from every nation and tongue. What we miss though is that it is God's holiness and perfection that can hold together and purify these seemingly disparate natures, so that union doesn't cause destruction.

These totalitarian empires usually think they are failing due to ethnic diversity and usually start persecuting the minorities of their nation; but they don't realize that this isn't the problem. The greatest difficulty is not the union of man within himself, but the union of man to God, and it is this union that Christ made possible through His body. This teaches us that it isn't ethnicity that can't be synthesized, but instead disparate views of unifying heaven to earth. This is one of the reasons why the west has remained so dominant, and diverse, over the centuries. They have been unified, not in power, but in their submission to God, which has allowed for more liberty and diversity in the west than any empire previous to us. But when our unity in God has faltered, this pattern has reasserted itself.

The west expanded in power under Christian rule for centuries. As a result they cultivated the best technology and began to meld with the best parts of neighboring cultures. But over time, we have incorporated too much into ourselves. In fact, it is our technology itself that allows for ideas to flow more freely and rapidly than ever before. This melding of ideas has produced much good, but because we are fast losing our center in God, we are now losing our identity. This is now manifested in our fragmenting culture as well as our inability to understand even the most basic of concepts like what is a woman? In response to this, both sides of the political aisle are trying to prevent this fragmentation through increased governmental censorship and control.

We are giving birth to our own "Nephilim" in the form of multinational corporations, social media platforms, investment companies, governmental institutions, medical institutions, universities, bureaucracies, and the like. All are "giants" bred from a good desire to honor God better, but have since lost their theological center and have turned into mutations that tried to fulfill man's insatiable lust, and now are threatening us with tyrannical power. Both sides think that they can save our culture through controlling these "giants" but they are making our fragmentation worse, and they might accidentally give birth to an all encompassing tyranny, the likes of which has never been seen.

Insatiable Lust

And they taught them charms and enchantments, and the cutting of roots, and made them acquainted with plants. And they became pregnant, and they bare great giants, whose height was three thousand ells: Who consumed all the acquisitions of men. And when men could no longer sustain them, the giants turned against them and devoured mankind.

-Enoch 3:8-9

But before these “giants” can be granted the level of power that we see, they first must represent our insatiable lust. Notice what this passage is saying about the Nephilim in the early days. They first begin by teaching the people mysticism and technology, but then they begin to devour all until they turn their power against men. It is easy for us to see how giants represent power, but due to their enormous size, they also represent insatiable lust.

The chief problem for man, having been cut off from the divine, is that we have been removed from our chief end, and the source of our ultimate satisfaction. It isn't that satisfaction is impossible on this earth, but that any satisfaction that we attain was meant to point us to our ultimate joy and purpose in God. So man, cut off from the divine, seeks our ultimate satisfaction on this earth, and through improper unions with heaven, presented to us in demonic philosophies of men. But since none of these can actually satisfy us, our cravings tend to devour our societies.

“Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.”

-James 4:1-2

James here notices and explains this phenomenon. He says that wars and fighting come from our lustful desires. So as societies expand outwards we create these “giants”, these powerful institutions that are designed to satisfy us, but as we empower them to satisfy us, they take more and more resources to keep them sustained and they end up devouring us. So think again of the individual. Why does an individual start to utilize something like drugs? It isn't born out of satisfaction, but out of a craving. This craving is fed and sustained by the addict because it is doing something positive for them. Over time though, the addiction grows in power and mass until it demands more and more of the addict in order to sustain itself. If left unchecked, eventually the addiction will devour the individual.

Historically, societies keep from doing this by expanding outwards. An external enemy focuses their might and allows for internal peace. But when an empire runs out of enemies, they turn inward and these “giants” begin to fight with one another and devour the people. The solution is to recognize that our insatiable craving is a sign that we were created for an infinite source of joy and orient our efforts towards greater enjoyment and honoring of God. As the Christian philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal put it:

“What is it, then, that this desire and this inability proclaim to us, but that there was once in man a true happiness of which there now remain to him only the mark and empty trace, which he in vain tries to fill from all his surroundings, seeking from things absent the help he does not obtain in things present? But these are all inadequate, because the infinite abyss can only be filled by an infinite and immutable object, that is to say, only by God Himself. He only is our true good, and since we have forsaken him, it is a strange thing that there is nothing in nature which has not been serviceable in taking His place; the stars, the heavens, earth, the elements, plants, cabbages, leeks, animals, insects, calves, serpents, fever, pestilence, war, famine, vices, adultery, incest. And since man has lost the true good, everything can appear equally good to him, even his own destruction, though so opposed to God, to reason, and to the whole course of nature.”

-Blaise Pascal. Pensées

Our desire isn't the problem, it is our attempt to find ultimate fulfillment in a place where it doesn't exist. A society won't empower and feed “giants” if they understand what their desires are orienting them towards. This is why the American founders, uniquely, created systems that prevented the construction of “Nephilim”. They made sure that the government was kept in check through a balance of power, and that even companies couldn't become too powerful through their laws against monopolies. But, as our society becomes more secular, these restrictions are seen more and more as unnecessary burdens to us. So we have thrown them off and created more and more titanic institutions that we are trying to turn on one another. Unfortunately, if we don't remember as a culture the answer to our insatiable desires, we are doomed to devour each other.

“Thus men get one hundred pound a year that they may get another; and having two covet eight, and there is no end of all their labour; because the desire of their Soul is insatiable. Like Alexander the Great they must have all: and when they have got it all, be quiet. And may they not do all this before they begin? Nay it would be well, if they could be quiet. But if after all, they shall be like the stars, that are seated on high, but have no rest, what gain they more, but labour for their trouble? It was wittily feigned that that young man sat down and cried for more worlds to conquer. So insatiable is man,

that millions will not please him. They are no more than so many tennis-balls, in comparison of the Greatness and Highness of his Soul... Whereas, as God's love, which is the fountain of all, did cost us nothing: so were all other things prepared by it to satisfy our inclinations in the best of manners, freely, without any cost of ours."

-Thomas Traherne - Centuries of Meditations

Tyrannical Power

Which leads to the final part of this cycle, tyrannical power. As the giants grow in the book of Enoch, they begin to exercise their power towards those weaker than them. It is in response to this that God decides to act, not to destroy men, but instead to prevent men from destroying ourselves.

"Then the LORD 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. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

-Genesis 6:5-8

I will speak more on this concept in the next paper describing the flood and God's judgment. But notice that it isn't malice or even wrath that brings God to flood the earth, but grief. The giants that man had bred were so powerful, so vicious, that they threatened to devour all the earth. To put it another way, if God had not sent the flood, then all of man, including Noah and his family would have perished. Jesus echoes the same sentiment in Matthew 24 when He describes the last days:

"And except those days should be shortened, there would no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened..."

-Matthew 24:22

This is the great mistake of mankind, and the one that most threatens our very existence; and that is our failure to recognize the purpose of power. When you see children, they tend to want their way in all circumstances, and in many instances, the will of the child will coincide with others and this allows for harmony in the house. But, when a child wants something that is against the will of the parents or their siblings, they turn to force in order to get their way. This idea seems to be innate in man, that power gives us the liberty, and even the right to exercise our will against others.

This is why the early history of man is so bloody and brutal. The idea that “might makes right” seems to permeate human societies and this is why we never saw anything wrong with slavery, imperial conquest, and human sacrifice for millennia of human history. It wasn’t until the advent of Christianity that this became forbidden. For we serve a God who did not come down to exercise His will against ours. But instead we serve Christ who prayed to the Father “Not as I will but as You will.” (Matthew 26:39). A Lord who was born with ultimate power, even so much that He could conquer death itself, and yet did not use this power even to supernaturally turn stones to bread when He was hungry. In Christ we get a completely different philosophy of power, and that is that true power is not the ability to do as one wishes, but to control one’s own passions, and exercise our power to benefit others.

It is a completely adverse philosophy to all that came before it. And over centuries of change, the cultures that it has touched have outlawed slavery, human sacrifice, and held themselves to a standard to not fight a war unless it is done for just reasons and governed by moral standards. This is a massive historical break that is only explainable by a culture that has submitted themselves to the Prince of Peace. But as we lose our focus on God, we are going back to our old conceptions of power. Modern secularists think that we can maintain our moral center while distancing ourselves from the God who taught us them, but they are severely deluded. The atheist philosopher smart enough to recognize this was Friedrich Nietzsche.

Psychologists should bethink themselves before putting down the instinct of self-preservation as the cardinal instinct of an organic being. A living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength—life itself is will to power; self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent results thereof.

-Friedrich Nietzsche - Beyond Good and Evil

Nietzsche saw our “will to power” to be the most fundamental instinct of man and believed that Christianity was a “slave morality” that prevented the strong from being what they were meant to be. He thought that the will to power could be transformed into the formation of the “ubermensch” or the “superman” who could, through pure force of will, throw off Christian morality and construct his own, bringing about peace and prosperity for the world. While it is true that Nietzsche would not have approved of the Nazi’s for various reasons, it is also true that Hitler believed himself to be this “superman” and freely broke free from the morality that he thought was holding him and his race back from greatness. A century prior to the rise of Hitler, a German poet named Heinrich Heine saw this coming and wrote:

“Christianity - and that is its greatest merit - has somewhat mitigated that brutal Germanic love of war, but it could not destroy it. Should that subduing talisman, the cross, be shattered, the frenzied madness of the ancient warriors, that insane Berserk rage of which Nordic bards have spoken and sung so often, will once more burst into flame. This talisman is fragile, and the day will come when it will collapse miserably. Then the ancient stony gods will rise from the forgotten debris and rub the dust of a thousand years from their eyes, and finally Thor with his giant hammer will jump up and smash the Gothic cathedrals. ... Do not smile at the visionary who anticipates the same revolution in the realm of the visible as has taken place in the spiritual. Thought precedes action as lightning precedes thunder. German thunder is of true Germanic character; it is not very nimble, but rumbles along ponderously. Yet, it will come and when you hear a crashing such as never before has been heard in the world's history, then you know that the German thunderbolt has fallen at last. At that uproar the eagles of the air will drop dead, and lions in the remotest deserts of Africa will hide in their royal dens. A play will be performed in Germany which will make the French Revolution look like an innocent idyll.”

-Heinrich Heine

In our culture today there are many who naively think that this couldn't happen in our nation. Unfortunately there is only one source that can calm this impulse in man, and that is the cross. Without it, we are thrown back to our primitive impulse and the giants that fill our nation will be set loose, and either they will devour and destroy the society that they inhabit, or, like Napoleon, Stalin, Hitler, Mao, and many others, one will rise to the top and exercise horrible rule over all others. What should most frighten us, is an internal attitude in our culture that yearns for this kind of “superman”, a powerful hero who can single handedly fix everything. This attitude makes us feel helpless and anxious in our current political climate, we have been made to feel so powerless that we might give up the power we do have in order to enable a “savior” to solve all our problems for us. When we start looking to men with power to fix our problems, we are giving birth to the very Nephilim who, once they have vanquished their enemies, will use their power to devour us.

The Christian must not seek this kind of salvation, we must see that the only One who can unite heaven and earth is Christ. And by living our lives in honor of Him, we recognize that we aren't called to judge the earth, but we understand our purpose is to first remove the speck from our own eye. Meaning that since we trust the world to God, we recognize our responsibility to what is in our sphere of control. This removes that free floating anxiety and helps us realize that we do have power within our own lives, families, and local communities, and it is in these places that we are called to slay our own “giants” and to enthrone God in their place. We seek to represent the Kingship of

Christ wherever we go, and through our confidence in His sovereignty we can be used by God, either to restore our culture to stability and depower the “giants” that threaten us, or to be like Noah. To find grace in the eyes of our God that we might save our families from the “end of the world”. Whether this “end” will be the final end prophesied for us in the book of Revelation, in which case we will be preserved for the kingdom of our Lord, or just the end of this current order of things. In which case we can be used to preserve and rebuild what we can in the next “world” to come.

“But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” (Joshua 24:15)