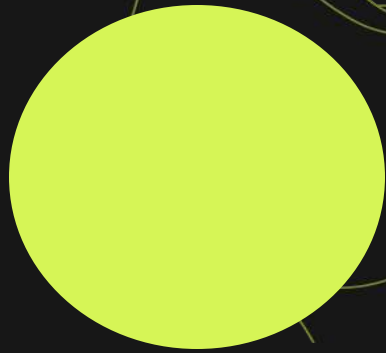


Pastor Mark Carrara

# SUPERNATURAL

SERIES: Part 1



Understanding the Origins of Good, Evil, Sin,  
and Salvation in the Bible

*Michael the Archangel, Guido Reni 1636*



# The Three Rebellions

## Introduction

We live in a SUPERNATURAL WORLD. The Bible we claim as God's inspired Word to us was written for all of us, but it was written to people who have a biblical supernatural worldview, that is significantly different than our 21st century American worldview.

But without the supernatural worldview of the Bible we will never be capable of wholly comprehending the Bible as God intends us to. We will forever misinterpret certain passages and be forced to overlook or ignore other ones because they do not fit our worldview.

The story of creation, the fall of mankind, and God's redemptive plan is a supernatural story that includes human beings and natural events, as well as good and evil supernatural beings and supernatural events. Like it or not you cannot read the Bible honestly, believing it's God's inspired Word, without coming to terms with supernatural things like demons, Satan, angels, spiritual warfare, resurrections, supernatural healing, tongues, the flood of Noah, the plagues of Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea, Jonah in the belly of a great fish, the story of Job and so much more. If you strip the Bible of the supernatural you strip it of its core message - that mankind is hopelessly lost without God as savior and King.

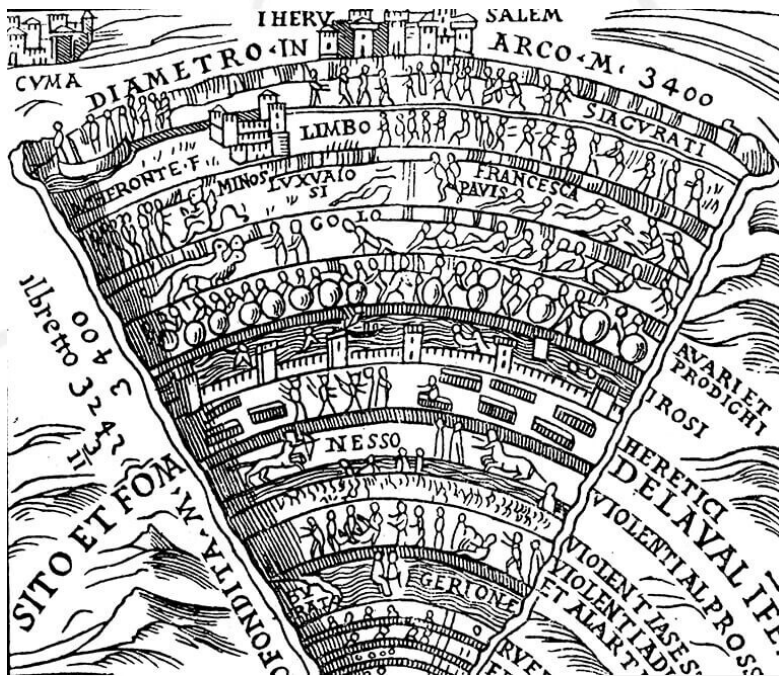
If you don't embrace the reality of the supernatural in the Bible, then you must exclude, water down, twist the meaning of, or rationalize away passages of the Bible that deal with the supernatural things that offend you. You make the Bible a history book, giving it a form of godliness but robbing it of its power.

The good news is that much of our culture is drawn to the supernatural. All you have to do is look at the popularity of entertainment related to the supernatural, Sci-Fi, and horror genres to see that. It's really not surprising that people are drawn to these types of entertainment given the Bible tells us God has placed eternity in the hearts of men (Ecc. 3:11).

We were created to interact with the supernatural world from the beginning as evidenced by the fact that Adam was clothed with a supernatural glory and walked with

God in the Garden of Eden.

Sin, however, has deeply limited our ability to properly interact with the supernatural unseen realm now. Yet the desire to do so is hardwired into every human heart. As long as that is true people will "long" for the supernatural, and may perhaps even find God.



The bad news is that the portrayal of the supernatural by Hollywood and the like is not the REALITY of the

supernatural world presented in the Bible. It's a distorted perspective motivated more by a desire to shock and entertain, rather than present truth. It does not, for the most part, align with what God has revealed in the Bible, and tends to confuse, mislead, and offend people as opposed to pointing them toward God.

## THE BIG IDEA

Our aim in this series is to put a biblical light on the supernatural realm...

- To better understand the Bible,
- To strengthen our faith, and
- To comprehend the significance of the real spiritual battle we are all a part of.

In the series we'll talk about things like...

- The origins of evil, sin, and God's plan of salvation.
- Various created supernatural spiritual beings like Satan, angels, archangels, demons, principalities, and more... as well as what their roles are.
- We'll look at key biblical events to understand the supernatural significance of them in Scripture.
- We'll cover passages from Genesis 1:1 through to the Book of Revelation as we try to piece together a biblical picture of the supernatural world.

Today we begin by taking a brief look at several key rebellions in the Bible, both divine and human, that have had significant implications for human life on earth and even influenced God's plan of salvation.

- The **Rebellion in the Garden** in Genesis 3
- The **Rebellion of the elohim** in Genesis 6
- The **Rebellion in the Land of Shinar** in Genesis 11

Today is only an overview of these three rebellions. In the weeks to come we'll circle back to each one and dig deeper into the details and meaning surrounding them.

## THE REBELLIONS

### 1. THE FIRST REBELLION: The Rebellion in the Garden and the Fall of Man

*Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, "Yea, hath God said, 'Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" Genesis 3:1 (KJV)*

*And the woman said unto the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'" Genesis 3:2,3 (KJV)*

*And the serpent said unto the woman, "Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods [elohim], knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:4,5 (KJV)*

*And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. Genesis 3:6 (NKJV)*

#### Compare these translations...

Genesis 3:5 (KJV)

...your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be **as gods** [elohim]...

Genesis 3:5 (ESV)

...your eyes will be opened, and you will be **like God** [elohim]...

Most modern bible translations phrase **Genesis 3:5** the way the ESV does, "...you will be like GOD." Where God refers to Jehovah God.

But the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible, published in 1611, which closely follows the earlier and first full English translation of this Bible in 1382 known as Wycliff's Bible (WYC), and even the 1599 Geneva Bible (GNV), phrase it "...you will be like gods."

### **WHY is it different? Why was it changed?**

- Apparently modern bible translators don't like the phrase "like gods," because it suggests that there is more than one GOD (capital "G"). As if God could have competition. So, they choose to translate it as "like GOD," not "like gods."
- Some bibles will use the phrase "like GOD," then footnote the phrase to tell you, that it could be read "like gods" or "like divine beings." Who reads footnotes, really?
- But there is good reason to believe that the much older KJV, WYC, and GNV translations of the Hebrew word elohim here as "gods," not "GOD," is the correct one.
- Changing the translation from "gods' to "GOD, changes the meaning of the passage and strips it of the supernatural implications it's trying to communicate.
- In the weeks to come we will unpack this in detail, but for today understand that Satan is promising Adam and Eve something he cannot give them... some kind of spiritual promotion from being "merely" human to become divine in some way.
- He offers them a tempting, but deceitful lie, and when they take the bait their sin opens the doors to death for all mankind and the need for a savior.

This was the first rebellion against God that is recorded in the Bible. **It is both a divine AND human rebellion.** It was a divine rebellion in that the serpent was a divine or spiritual being. It was a human rebellion in that Adam and Eve were human beings.

The result of this rebellion was a series of judgments on men, on women and their offspring, and on the serpent and his offspring too.

**The Serpent's Judgment:** Genesis 3:14-15

- Cursed and condemned to crawl on its belly in the dust.
- Deemed to now have a finite life span, as the phrase "the days of your life" suggest mortality, not typical for a divine being.
- Prophesied that he will have "seed" or "offspring" that will war against the woman's offspring and be defeated someday.

**The Woman's Judgment:** Genesis 3:16

- Increased pain in childbirth.
- Her husband will rule over her.
- She and her offspring will taste death.

**The Man's Judgment:** Genesis 3:17-19

- The ground will be cursed with thorns and thistles.
- It will now take hard labor to reap a return from the earth.
- He will also taste death.



## TAKE-A-WAYS FROM THE FIRST REBELLION

- Mankind needs a savior and God is working a plan.
- The serpent, although one being, will have offspring of some kind that will be “like” him.
- Mankind will be in supernatural conflict with the serpent and his offspring for all their days.

## 2. THE SECOND REBELLION: THE REBELLION OF THE ELOHIM AND THE FOOD OF NOAH

When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God [elohim] saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Genesis 6:1-2 (ESV)

The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God [elohim] came into the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown. Genesis 6:4 (ESV)

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Genesis 6:5 (ESV)

If you ask the average Christian, why there is evil in the world today they would say that it's because of Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden. True, but only part of the reason.

If you were to ask a first century Jew, for example, they would say that it's actually because of three rebellions recorded in the Bible.

- The first is the rebellion in the Garden we just talked about.
- The second is this divine rebellion of the elohim in Genesis 6, which we just read.
- The third is another divine and human rebellion in the land of Shinar known as the Tower of Babel recorded in Genesis 11.

## **Why do we call this Genesis 6 account a divine rebellion?**



Because the language of the Hebrew text can only refer to divine beings acting in rebellion against God and causing mankind to act wickedly toward God.

- The Hebrew phrase used to describe the instigators of this rebellion is bene elohim, translated as ‘the sons of God.’
- This phrase is not used in the Bible to refer to human beings such as believers or God’s children.
- **So, who does it refer to?** The phrase is used in the Bible to refer to a group of divine or spiritual beings, known collectively as the sons of God.
  - It’s used in Job describing the sons of God who presented themselves before God in heaven (Job 1:6 and 2:1). Human beings do not present themselves before God in Heaven, not yet anyway.
  - It’s used in Job 38:7 to describe how the sons of God sang when God created the world. Again, human beings were not present when God created the world.
  - It’s used in Psalm 82:6 to describe something called God’s Divine Council, a heavenly council of spirit beings, not human beings, which we’ll talk about in a few weeks.
  - **So, it is a reference to supernatural divine beings sometimes called “gods” in the Bible, but not human beings.**
- In some extra biblical literature, which we’ll look at in the weeks to come, these divine beings are also called the Watchers.

In Genesis 6, these “divine beings” or Watchers rebel against God’s wishes, leaving their abode in heaven to corrupt human beings. They are so successful that God concludes he must destroy mankind with a flood to cleanse the human race of the evil brought on by these Watchers.

Both the Apostle Peter and the Apostle Jude (*sometimes called Judas the son of James or Thaddeus – not to be confused with Judas Iscariot the betrayer of Jesus*) later write about these “sons of God” or divine beings or Watchers of Genesis 6. Peter writes...

For if **God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell** [more specifically Tartarus] and committed them to chains [or pits] of gloomy darkness **to be kept until the judgment...** 2nd Peter 2:4 (ESV)

...If he did not spare the ancient world, **but preserved Noah...** *and* turning the cities of **Sodom and Gomorrah** to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example...to the ungodly... the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials... 2nd Peter 2:5-6, 9a (ESV)

...and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. 2nd Peter 2:9b, 10 (ESV)

Here Peter is talking about angels who sinned so egregiously they were taken into custody by God and chained in the depths of hell to await final judgment. Their sin is not specifically mentioned, but Noah and the flood are mentioned and so are Sodom and sins of sexual immorality or unnatural sexual sin and despising authority, all sins we expect were happening in days of Noah and Sodom based on the biblical descriptions of evil in these accounts. Peter and Genesis 6 are telling us that both men and these fallen Watcher angels committed these sins.

Peter and Jude are both quoting from a source known as **First Enoch**, an apocalyptic Jewish writing commonly known in Peter's Day. Although this book was not included in the Hebrew or Christian Bibles it was considered a respectable source and these Apostle's obviously believed it or they would not have quoted it.

Peter and Jude use this source to put forth the idea that the depravity of mankind, which led to the flood, was instigated by fallen divine beings or Watchers who God judged along with mankind. **This account is so supernatural many Christian teachers prefer to avoid it.**

In the weeks to come we'll try to understand it the way Jesus and his disciples did.

### TAKE-A-WAYS FROM THE SECOND REBELLION

- The serpent's "offspring" include wicked divine beings and humans.
- God decides he will bring redemption through the line of Noah.
- We'll also see that this rebellion helps explain both the **origin of demons** and **why God commanded Israel to utterly wipe out some people groups** – man, woman, child, and livestock – in the Old Testament.

### 3. THE THIRD REBELLION: THE REBELLION IN THE LAND OF SHINAR AND BABEL

The third rebellion in Genesis 11, is called the Tower of Babel.

Then they [the people who multiplied on earth after Noah] said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves..." Genesis 11:4 (ESV)

And the Lord came down to see... And the Lord said... "Come, let us go down and confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." Genesis 11:5-7 (ESV)

Therefor its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of the earth. Genesis 11:9 (ESV)

Most Christians are familiar with the Tower of Babel account. But we tend to ascribe God's judgment for the Tower on man's pridefulness alone. There is more happening here.

For one thing, the tower and language used suggest that men were building it to worship other gods – false gods, which we'll talk about in the weeks to come.

What we often fail to see, however, is how God's judgment on mankind for the Tower incident is also a judgment on certain divine beings who were complicit in it. We miss this idea because parts of the story are left out of Genesis 11 and found in other passages of the Bible, often overlooked.

For example, there are passages in Deuteronomy, Psalms, and even the Book of Acts that connect the human rebellion of building the Tower of Babel to a, behind the scenes, heavenly rebellion of divine beings who are once again attempting to corrupt mankind, even seeking the worship of men for themselves.

At Babel, God disinherits all the nations giving them over to the false gods they were seeking there and giving these "gods" a significant measure of spiritual authority over those nations. This has significant impact on God's redemption plan that unfold in the centuries to follow.

In Ephesians the Apostle Paul refers to these evil spiritual authorities as principalities, powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. The Book of Daniel refers to one of these spiritual powers as the Prince of Persia.

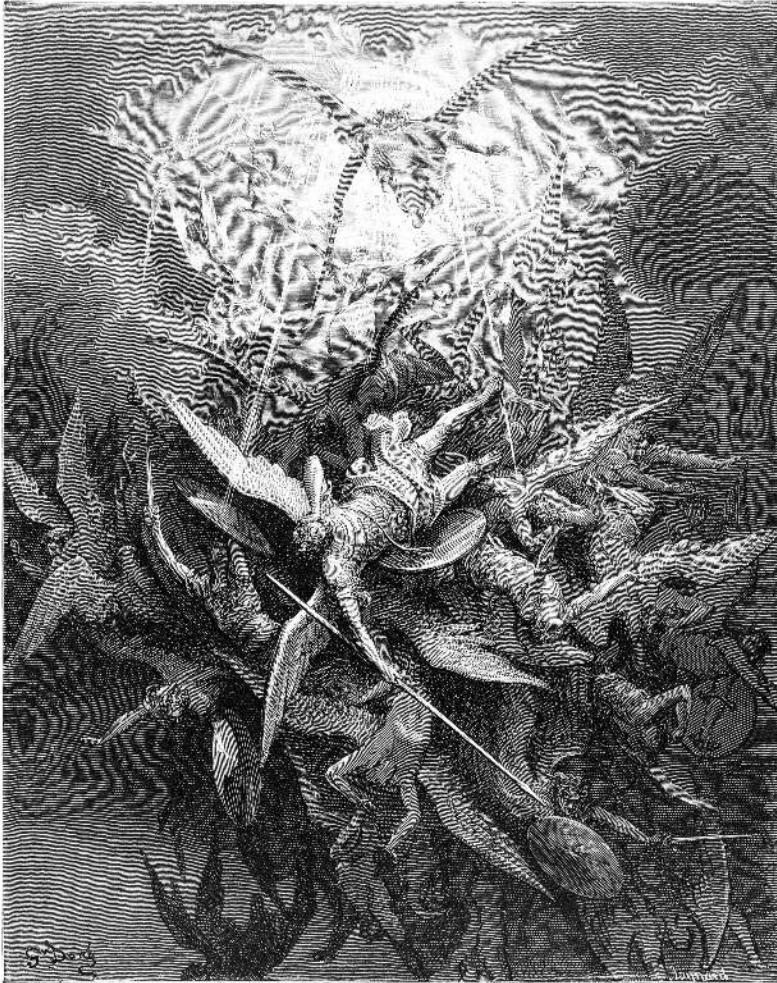
But the good news is that it's immediately after the Babel event that God chooses Abraham out of all the people on the earth, as his own inheritance.

God "cuts" a covenant with Abraham to make him a great nation, bring the savior through the line of Abraham, and to be Abraham's God. All of this has meaning for how we interpret the scripture and live our lives as sons and daughters of God today.

## TAKE-A-WAYS FROM THE THIRD REBELLION

- Don't underestimate the potential for spiritual rebellion and warfare in high places happening behind the scenes of earthly activity or rebellion.
- At the Tower of Babel God gave the nations, other than Israel, over to false gods who still have a measure of supernatural evil influence over these territories today.
- Territory or space can be evil, or it can be made holy when dedicated to God.
- Jehovah God alone is the one true God, the Most High God, the eternal one, the creator of all things that exist including all evil spiritual beings.
- Salvation and the blessing of God come through the Jewish people, to the Jew first and then the Gentile, in Jesus Messiah.

The End of Part 1



## FOR FURTHER STUDY

For more detailed information on the topics presented in this study I recommend four books by **Dr. Michael Heiser** *Angels, Demons, The Unseen Realm, and Supernatural*. A significant number of insights into the study presented here, especially on the three rebellions, the Divine Council, and the Tower of Babel can be found in far more detail in his books and were drawn from various material of his. I highly recommend them to anyone wanting to dig deeper into the realm of supernatural in the bible. I will recommend additional resources as the study progresses.