

THE BOOK OF AMOS
Lesson 5, Chapter 2 continued 2

In our previous lesson, we parked ourselves for a time at verse 9 of Amos chapter 2 that reads:

CJB Amos 2:9 ***⁹ "I destroyed the Emori (the Amorites) before them; though tall as cedars and strong as oaks, I destroyed their fruit above and their root below.***

A casual reading of this verse seems as though it is very straightforward information that has to do with a key event in the early formation of the nation of Israel. Or, as I mentioned last time, it helps to define what, in God's eyes, makes Israel unique among the nations...what makes Israel, Israel. Yet, what this leads to is: just how we are to understand why the Amorites were singled out for destruction, and what is this comment about them being "tall as cedars and strong as oaks"? Obviously their comparison to cedars and oaks is a metaphor, but just as clearly it was the sheer physical size of the Amorites that was an identifying feature of them. So, was merely being very large man a bad or evil thing in itself?

So, we looked back in biblical history to the time of the exodus from Egypt, when, approaching the Promised Land, Moses sent 12 spies into the Land of Canaan and 2 of the spies came back with a story of the land being full of giants, implying that Israel had no chance against them. Was this use of the word "giants" only a wildly exaggerated cultural expression that actually spoke of formidable and skilled warriors that inhabited Canaan? Or... were there literally physically giant men that inhabited this region? Not fee-fi-fo-fum giants that were 40 feet tall, but rather unnaturally large and powerful men that were a head and shoulders taller and bigger than a typical human male? Assuming it was only that these were really big men, why did the spies also call them **Nephilim**? How did the Israelites know before they ever left Egypt that something called **Nephilim** existed, although they seemed genuinely surprised to find some of them in Canaan? That then leads us to: what are **Nephilim**, where did they come from, and are they mostly ancient myth or were they real?

We found the mysterious **Nephilim** first mentioned in the Bible in Genesis chapter 6.

CJB Genesis 6:1-4 *In time, when men began to multiply on earth, and daughters were born to them, ² the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were attractive; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. ³ ADONAI said, "My Spirit will not live in human beings forever, for they too are flesh; therefore their life span is to be 120 years." ⁴ The N'filim were on the earth in those days, and also afterwards, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; these were the ancient heroes, men of renown.*

To make matters even more mysterious, this Genesis 6 passage speaks of "sons of God" looking upon "daughters of men" who were irresistibly attractive to them, so these sons of God made wives of these women and had children with them. The resultant offspring became (in English) "heroes" and "men of renown". What in the world does that mean? "Heroes" is more often translated from the Hebrew into "mighty men", and it comes from the original Hebrew of this passage, which is **gibbor** (or more literally, it is in the plural so it is **gibborim**). The truth is that the term **gibborim** is not well understood, and so there are various meanings attached as more or less best guesses. What can be gathered, however, is that these were unusual men... physically powerful men with special skills and even with special knowledge...that were quite different from other typical males. In fact, at times **gibbor** is translated to mean giants.

But the other tantalizing issue about this passage... one that is simply bypassed in nearly all theological discussions about Genesis 6:1 – 4... is that it is unambiguously connected to the reason that God caused the Great Flood. Notice the flow of action about these mysterious sons of God, the Nephilim and the Flood.

CJB Genesis 6:4-8 *⁴ The N'filim were on the earth in those days, and also afterwards, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; these were the ancient heroes, men of renown. ⁵ ADONAI saw that the people on earth were very wicked, that all the imaginings of their hearts were always of evil only. ⁶ ADONAI regretted that he had made*

humankind on the earth; it grieved his heart. 7 ADONAI said, "I will wipe out humankind, whom I have created, from the whole earth; and not only human beings, but animals, creeping things and birds in the air; for I regret that I ever made them." 8 But Noah found grace in the sight of ADONAI.

That is, the existence of the ***Nephilim***, apparently the off-spring of the sons of God who had mated with human women, directly led to wanton evil overcoming all mankind, even to the point that it somehow infected the animal kingdom. God's solution was to purge the earth with a Great Deluge. Strange story.

Last week we discussed how, beginning with the creation of gentile Christianity in Rome in the 4th century A.D., a church doctrine was created that explained this passage as meaning that the human sons of Adam and Eve's son Seth (called sons of God) married females who were not of Seth's bloodline (they were the daughters of men). While there is utterly not a shred of biblical evidence to back this up, the doctrine was created because the Church leadership couldn't accept the alternative: that the sons of God were some type of divine beings who came down from heaven to earth, and had sexual relations with normal human women, which then produced some type of hybrid offspring. Why the reluctance to accept this? Because it would have destroyed another established Church doctrine that says that angels could not don human flesh, nor did they have the ability to procreate in Heaven (and therefore, neither could they on earth). Does the Bible back that up? No. It came purely from the minds of men. And this, folks, is the result of Judaism and Christianity turning to manmade doctrines and traditions for its foundational beliefs, superseding and ignoring what the Holy Scriptures actually say. One doctrine builds upon the next; and when a new issue arises that needs explanation, the answer MUST be careful not to challenge or interfere with older doctrines. The answer MUST fit with all the earlier doctrines, even if it seems ludicrous.

Thus, in our previous lesson we embarked on a rather deep exploration of the identity of these ***Nephilim*** and also of something called The Watchers. We do not find the term "Watchers" per se in the Bible. But, we do find it in other highly valued Jewish religious literature from both the 1st century A.D. AND the 1st century B.C., and even slightly earlier. So, the ***Nephilim*** and The Watchers became an embedded part of Jewish cultural beliefs by that time; they simply

took it for granted as real and true. What makes this important for we Believers of the 21st century is that this belief actually shows up not only in Old Testament passages (as in Amos 2:9) but also in New Testament passages (such as in 2Peter 2 and in Jude 1). However, because of these old and unchallenged Church doctrines, we mentally filter out these mentions of Nephilim, The Watchers, and fallen angels and read right over them taking little notice.

Because a core belief of Torah Class is that interpreting Bible passages outside of the context of the passages surrounding it, or outside of the historical realities of the various Bible eras and characters, can do little to properly inform us of divine truth, then for accuracy's sake we must also include in the definition of the notion of "context" the unspoken beliefs deeply embedded in the minds and thoughts of those who wrote the Bible. As serious students of God's Word we must never mentally picture the content of Holy Scripture as coming from God in the sense of it being like a downloaded file, sent from heaven, and supernaturally placed into the minds of specially selected human men on earth. And then these human men merely opening that file in their subconscious mind and copying the content of it onto parchment, without necessarily understanding what they were writing. Behaving sort of like parrots that have just enough ability to vocalize and mimic a few human words they hear, but with no understanding of what those words mean. Rather it is that certain divinely-chosen human men...all but a couple being Hebrews... were given divine **inspiration** to write down... mostly in their own words...truths of Heaven. Only sometimes in the Bible will we find direct oracles from God that are in fact God's direct words that may **not** have been fully understood by the writer; however, that tends to occur primarily among God's Prophets. Prophets always made it clear in their writings when it was God's direct words they were quoting and not their own thoughts. But the vast bulk of all the prophetic books consist of the words and thoughts of the human prophet (however inspired). And those thoughts were logically always formed within the understanding and common knowledge of their own Hebrew culture. Remember: none of these Old Testament writers thought they were recording these words for anyone to read and apply other than for people from their own Hebrew culture, and for the most part (but not entirely) it was the same for the New Testament writers. A Hebrew culture with a common beginning and history and traditions that were known and handed down generation to generation. Therefore, that which was considered common knowledge would

simply be stated by the biblical writers as fact, but not further explained or defined as (in their minds) there would have been no need; their Hebrew readers naturally knew what they were referring to. The story of The Watchers and the **Nephilim** fall within the category of common knowledge not only within the ancient Hebrew culture, but also within many other ancient cultures of the pagan world, some existing far earlier than when God first created and separated out a group of people called Hebrews from the rest of the world.

All in all, I understand that it is highly unlikely that many you have ever read or heard much if anything about what it is we are exploring at the moment. Therefore, we'll continue today with this exploration that I hope will enlighten your understanding of the Bible and the immutable truths it gives to us to live by. So, hang in there with me because I think by the time we've completed it, you'll be glad you did.

OK. Last time we talked a great deal about the **Nephilim**; this week we'll begin to incorporate the story of The Watchers. In order to do that a few things need to be said first. To start, we find that within the Jewish cultural world of the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C., it was the Book of 1 Enoch where the term The Watchers first appears. Now, don't start frantically searching in your Bible's Table of Contents for it because you won't find it there (at least you won't in most Bibles). Rather, much like the 15 books of the Apocrypha that were written by ancient Jews (some of which **are** included in the Bibles of some denominations and denominational branches of Christianity), so were a number of Jewish religious works called Pseudepigrapha created and taken very seriously by Jewish scholars, sages, and religious leaders in the 1st centuries B.C. and A.D.

The Apocrypha is a selection of ancient books that found their way into some Christian Bible versions; for instance, we find them in the original 1611 King James Bible. These apocryphal books were positioned between the Old and New Testaments (it also contained maps and genealogies). The Apocrypha was an official part of the KJV for 274 years until being removed in 1885 A.D. A portion of these books were called deuterocanonical books by some entities, such as by the Catholic church. Many church authorities claimed the Apocrypha should never have been included in the Christian Bible in first place, raising doubt about its validity on the grounds that it was not God-inspired. Other Christian religious

authorities believe it is valid and that it should never have been removed on the grounds that it was considered a legitimate part of the Bible for many centuries before it was recently removed a little more than 100 years ago.

On the other hand, Pseudepigrapha...which means falsely attributed...were attributed to authors who did not actually write them (this reality is not doubted). This kind of literature was widespread in Greco-Roman antiquity - in Jewish, Christian, and pagan circles alike. Some Pseudepigraphic books were attributed to pagan authors, while others were named after a range of biblical personalities such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Enoch, or several others. The Pseudepigrapha resemble the Apocrypha in general literary character, yet unlike the Apocrypha they had never been included in the Bible or in rabbinic literature or ever officially deemed inspired of God.

All the Apocrypha and most of the Pseudepigrapha are Jewish works (some contain Christianizing additions). They provide strong and essential evidence of Jewish literature and thought during the period between the end of the Old Testament writings (ca. 400 B.C.) and the beginning of substantial rabbinic literature that began in the latter part of the first century A.D. (late New Testament times). Both sets of literature have aroused much scholarly interest, since they provide in-depth information about the Jewish religion as it was at the turn of the era between the conclusion of the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament) and the creation of the Mishna (Biblical Law and Oral Law), and they are of immense help in explaining how Rabbinic Judaism and the earliest forerunner of modern Christianity came into being. For our purposes, today, it is important to understand how seriously all these works were taken by the ancient Jews of all levels of society, and how thoroughly intertwined in their religious thought processes these writings were. I make no claim as to their inspiration, or lack of. We'll simply take them as reliable historical information of that era, and as largely what the thought trajectories of the Jewish people were, and how they believed. In order for us to gain some usable understanding of this, we're going to begin with the Book of 1 Enoch, a Pseudepigraphic writing. We have no idea who actually wrote it, but it seems to have been penned in the 2nd century B.C.

Since probably few, if anyone, listening to me has read 1 Enoch, we're necessarily going to have to take some substantial excerpts from that book in order to

introduce us to the concept of The Watchers. Perhaps it is best to start with a brief explanation about the overall flow of the story of The Watchers as explained by John C. Collins.

1Enoch chapters 6 – 16 tell the story of The Watchers, in which 2 stories seem to be woven together. In one, the leader of the fallen angels is named Asael (Azazel in the Ethiopic text), and the primary sin is improper revelation; in the other the leader is Shemihazah, and the primary sin is marriage with humans and the procreation of giants. The Watchers beget giants on earth by their union with human women. Out of these giants come evil spirits that lead humanity astray. This motif is elaborated further in the Book of Jubilees. In the short term, the crisis of The Watchers is resolved when God sent the Great Flood to cleanse the earth.

In a moment I'll read to you some pertinent passages from the Book of 1Enoch. First, though, recall what we read together earlier today in Genesis chapter 6. It was that some mysterious beings called "sons of God" came to earth, impregnated human women, and produced ***gibborim***...mighty men... that had much to do with the evil that had infected the entire global population of human kind. And, that God's solution for this crisis was to destroy by means of a flood every last vestige of human life on the planet except for 8 people, and also to destroy every last living, air breathing creature on earth, except for those relative few Noah would load onto a gigantic boat; the Ark. Unfortunately, Genesis leaves us much to wonder about this passage because no further explanation is offered. The Book of 1Enoch essentially purports to answer many of those unanswered questions that Genesis 6 ought to naturally spawn, but which Christianity has pushed aside with an absurd explanation in a refusal to face the challenge with intellectual integrity.

1Enoch 6

¹ And it came to pass when the sons of men had multiplied that in those days were born unto ² them beautiful and comely daughters. And the Watchers, the sons 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 ³ and beget us children.' And Shemihazah, who was their leader, said unto them: 'I fear ye will

not ⁴ indeed agree to do this deed, and I alone shall have to pay the penalty of a great sin.' And they all answered him and said: 'Let us all swear an oath, and all bind ourselves by mutual imprecations ⁵ not to abandon this plan but to do this thing.' Then swore they all together and bound themselves ⁶ by mutual imprecations upon it. And they were in all two hundred; who descended in the days of Jared on the summit of Mount Hermon, and they called it Mount Hermon, because they had sworn ⁷ and bound themselves by mutual imprecations upon it. And these are the names of their leaders: Shemihazah, this one was their leader. Arteqoph, 2nd to him. Remashel, 3rd to him. Kokabel, 4th to him. Arumumahel, 5th to him. Ramel, 6th to him. Daniel, 7th to him. Ziqel, 8th to him. Baraqel, 9th to him. Asael, 10th to him. Hermani, 11th to him. Matarel 12th to him. Ananel, 13th to him. Setawel, 14th to him. Samshel, 15th to him. Sahriel, 16th to him. Tummie, 17th to him. Turiel, 18th to him. Yamiel, 19th to him. Yehadiel, 20th to him. These are their chiefs of tens.

1Enoch 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 ² and enchantments, and the cutting of roots, and made them acquainted with plants. And they ³ became pregnant, and they bare great giants. And the giants begat Nephilim, and to the Nephilim were Elioud. And they were growing in accordance with their greatness. They consumed ⁴ all the acquisitions of men. And when men could no longer sustain them, the giants turned against ⁵ them and devoured mankind. And they began to sin against birds, and beasts, and reptiles, and ⁶ fish, and to devour one another's flesh, and drink the blood. Then the earth laid accusation against the lawless ones.

1Enoch 8

¹ 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 ² coloring tinctures. And the sons of men made for themselves and for their daughters, and

they transgressed and led astray the Holy Ones. And there was much godlessness upon the earth, and they made their ways desolate. Shemihazah taught enchantments, and root-cuttings. Hermani taught sorcery for the loosing of spells and magic and skill. Baraqel taught the sings of the lightning flashes. Kokabel taught the signs of the stars. Ziqel taught the signs of the shooting stars. Arteqoph taught the signs of the earth. Shamsiel taught the signs of the sun. Sahriel taught the signs of the moon. And they all began to reveal mysteries to their wives and to their children. And as men were perishing, the cry went up to Heaven.

First, I want to point out that in chapter 7 we read: ***And the giants begat Nephilim, and to the Nephilim were Elioud.*** Most likely this sequence of the terms giants, then ***Nephilim***, then ***Elioud*** are speaking of 3 successive generations of the offspring of the sons of God and the daughters of men (like children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren). Second, what happens next in chapter 9 is that the 4 Archangels Michael, Sariel, Raphael, and Gabriel notice the horrors that are happening on earth as result of the sin of these heavenly beings, and they go to Yehoveh to ask Him to resolve it. God replies to their request in chapter 10. Listen carefully because I think you'll recognize the gist of it.

Then the Most High said, the Great Holy One spoke. And He sent Sariel to the son of Lamech (Noah), saying, go to Noah and say to him in My name, hide yourself. And reveal to him that the end is coming, that the whole earth will perish. And tell him that a deluge is about to come on the whole earth and destroy everything on the earth. Teach the righteous one what he should do, the son of Lamech how he many preserve himself alive and escape forever. From him a plant will be planted, and his seed will endure for all the generations of eternity.

Later in chapters 10 and 11 we read how God sent the Archangels to deal with these sinful problem creatures who are to blame for the earth's rampant wickedness:

..until the day of their judgment and consummation, until the eternal judgment is consummated. Then they will be led away to the fiery abyss, and to the torture, and to the prison where they will be confined forever...and at the time of the judgment, which I shall judge, they will perish for all generations. Destroy the

spirit of the half-breeds and the sons of The Watchers, because they have wronged men.

I know this is a lot to take in, so I'll quote to you part of what Annette Yoshiko Reed says about it as a sort of summary:

The birth of the Giants is explored (in 1Enoch) in terms of the mingling of spirits and flesh. Angels properly dwell in Heaven; and humans properly dwell on earth. But the nature of the Giants is mixed. This transgression of categories brings terrible results. After their physical death, the Giants' demonic spirits come forth from their dead bodies to plague humankind. According to the 1Enoch the angelic transmission of heavenly knowledge to earthly humans can also be understood as a contamination of distinct categories within God's orderly Creation. As inhabitants of Heaven, The Watchers were privy to all the secrets of Heaven. Their revelation of this knowledge to the inhabitants of the earth was categorically improper as well as morally destructive.

Here's what we need to take from what we've studied thus far: this information and story about The Watchers and the **Nephilim** and the Giants, etc., is what the 2nd Temple era Jews believed (that is, those Jews who returned from Babylon, right up through the New Testament era), and so they understood Genesis 6 within that context. The entire community of the Jews of that era...even including the writers of the New Testament... clung to that understanding as well. We certainly won't learn any of this by means of Christian history or Christian doctrine, because this history and doctrines are more committed to the writings of Christian religious authorities than to the Holy Scriptures themselves.

I haven't the time to go into the matter more deeply, but you can research on your own to confirm that prior to the enormous sea-change that occurred in the 4th century A.D., when a new gentiles-only faith based in Rome was established, with its foundation built on manmade doctrines and traditions rather than on Holy Scripture (I'm describing the birth of modern day Christianity), the earliest Church fathers from the 2nd and early 3rd centuries understood Genesis 6 and the matter of the rebellious divine creatures mating with human women and producing hybrid offspring, in the same way the Jewish community had for a few centuries. Irenaeus and Origen specifically wrote about it. Further, from a Jewish

and Christian perspective, we find not only excerpts from 1 Enoch in the Dead Sea Scrolls, but also ample evidence that the Essenes who wrote those scrolls fully subscribed to what the Book of 1 Enoch taught about the Nephilim and The Watchers. Justin Martyr also accepted The Watchers story as did Tertullian. What this means is that we need to understand that the Great Flood was primarily meant to resolve the intractable issue of a crisis of worldwide wickedness caused by The Watchers. Adam's sin was secondary to the real reason for the Flood because Adam's was a sin that would perpetually reside within human nature off humans...within our DNA so to speak...for all time. The fact that Noah and 7 more humans were saved by God in order to survive the Flood and replant humanity on earth guaranteed that Adam's sin would continue to plague humanity as it always had, with or without the **Nephilim** and their progeny being around.

Is there any physical evidence of huge people having lived on this planet? Yes. Perhaps the most famous is the Giant of Castelnau, a human skeleton that was discovered in 1890 in France, which has been examined by the top men in the field from various prominent Universities, and they agree it is real. The skeleton represents a person that is about 11 ½ feet tall. Further, several human skulls were found in the same area that measured between 28 and 32 inches in circumference. This represents humans that range between 10 and 15 feet in height. So why is this not discussed more? Because other professors that operate in the medical field have declared that it is biologically impossible for humans to grow that high. Therefore, although there is no alternate explanation for the immense size of these human skeletons, they refuse to accept the reality (much the same way not that long ago Dinosaur remains were dismissed as the Devil's deception because scientists had decided that no animals could ever be that large).

Another take from 1 Enoch and from other Jewish Apocrypha and Pseudepigraphic literature on this subject provides an answer to another Christian controversy and dilemma: where did demons come from? The Bible provides no real answers, only frustrating clues, to that question. When we incorporate the story of The Watchers into the body of inspired biblical works to try to ascertain the origin of demons, we find that demons are not "fallen angels" per se; except that if one insists on calling The Watchers and those heavenly beings who came to earth to impregnate human females, "angels" that fell from

grace...or perhaps former angels. Further, Satan did not create demons, nor did God. Nor are demons the spirits of typical dead human beings (that is, people that are 100% human and not a hybrid). Rather, if one accepts 1Enoch and a few other ancient Jewish religious documents on the subject, demons are said to be the disembodied evil souls of the deceased offspring of the heavenly beings that were improperly mixed with human beings. While I cannot say with certainty that this is indeed the case, there is much more evidence for this conclusion than for almost any other explanation put forth by Judaism or Christianity thus far.

I want to cover one final matter in our exploration that will bring us to a conclusion. This is yet another important understanding that will help us throughout our personal studies of the Holy Scriptures. It is that most Christians are unaware that this same story of The Watchers, and its association to the Great Flood, is found in ancient tablets from the Mesopotamian religion; tablets that were penned long before the Hebrew religion ever existed. Much of what I'm about to tell you is no longer particularly controversial to Christian academics, but very little of it has ever filtered down to our Theology schools, nor to our Seminaries, and especially not to Pastors and Bible Teachers. The concern seems to be that lay people and those who run our Churches at a local level will misunderstand and believe that the veracity of the Bible is being put into question simply because it is undeniable that other, larger, and older ancient Middle Eastern cultures had the same ideas as the writers of the Scriptures...only created within the framework of their own peculiar language and culture...and from far earlier times than even that of Abraham. I want to alleviate that concern by saying that to me nothing would be more normal and natural for us to expect than for ancient historical events that would have affected all humanity, worldwide...such as Creation itself, The Great Flood, and so much more...to have been documented and passed down within the traditions and legendary stories coming from a number of different cultures. If this didn't happen, then one has to legitimately wonder about the truth of such a story that affects our entire globe if the only place we find it is in the Bible. Remember: in relation to the age of the earth, the establishment of humans and then human civilizations, the biblical era occurred much, much later in history. The Creation didn't happen only for Hebrews to experience or to know about; and neither did the matter of the Great Flood or the cause for it: divine creatures mating with human women to create giants with special skills and knowledge.

In the Mesopotamian religions of ancient times...prior even to Abraham...there were written accounts about legendary creatures called Apkallu. These creatures were said to have obtained immense wisdom from the gods, and were essentially the great heroes of early Mesopotamian cultures. In one of their ancient works uncovered called "Twenty-One Poultrices" we hear of 7 of these creatures of immense wisdom and knowledge. They are subservient to the god Ea. It is said that these 7 sages (7 Apkallu) were created in the river and they were charged with overseeing the proper functioning of the creatures who inhabited both heaven and earth. They taught humankind kind how to create civilizations, the use of tools, and of what passed for ancient medicine (among other arts and crafts).

The "river" that is spoken of is actually the primeval deep for the Mesopotamian culture; it was a place of water, located under the earth, and it is the equivalent of the biblical Abyss. So, the first thing to grasp is that by means of these Apkallu humankind made technical and social advances that otherwise would have taken longer or would have perhaps otherwise been impossible altogether. So, it was thought that the wisdom and knowledge they passed along to humanity was divine in its source and totally beneficial to mankind.

The Cuneiform scholar Amar Annus says that in Babylonian society of old, there was a tradition that the 7th king to exist since Creation, and therefore who existed before the Flood, ascended to Heaven without dying and there he learned much from the gods. This 7th king was named Enmeduranki, who is said to have obtained his knowledge specifically from the gods Adad and Shamash. We need to notice that Enoch was the 7th biblical patriarch since Adam and he existed before the Flood... exactly the same as the Mesopotamian story. In Genesis chapter 5 is the so-called genealogy of Adam. There, we read this about Enoch (whose Hebrew name is **Hanokh**):

CJB Genesis 5: 18-24 ***¹⁸ Yered lived 162 years and fathered Hanokh. ¹⁹ After Hanokh was born, Yered lived 800 years and had sons and daughters. ²⁰ In all, Yered lived 962 years; then he died. ²¹ Hanokh lived sixty-five years and fathered Metushelach. ²² After Metushelach was born, Hanokh walked with God***

300 years and had sons and daughters. ²³ In all, Hanokh lived 365 years. ²⁴ Hanokh walked with God, and then he wasn't there, because God took him.

That Enoch was taken by God has always meant to the Hebrews that he didn't die but rather was translated, alive, to Heaven. There, according to Jewish legend, he joined God and sat on a Heavenly council where he learned secrets and mysteries meant only for heavenly beings, and not earthbound humans, to know.

As we follow the story of the Apkallu in Mesopotamian records, they were envisioned as fully divine beings that appeared prior to the Flood, and they bred with human women, and thus produced quasi-divine hybrid beings. This is precisely how Enoch speaks of The Watchers and what they did. The difference is that in the Mesopotamian religion, the resultant offspring were not evil, but rather good and they were the critical source of knowledge for the raising of human civilization to a higher level. But for the Hebrews, the offspring was evil; the wicked product of parents that had crossed over a never-to-be-crossed boundary that separated Heavenly beings and their special knowledge and wisdom from earthly beings and our necessarily limited knowledge and wisdom. This is why in the Israelite mind the spirits of these dead offspring, some of which were giants, were all considered evil and were the origin of demons.

Circling back, now, to Amos 2:9, and understanding what the Israelites of Amos's era believed, try (if you can) to imagine what Amos had to have been thinking as he wrote this passage and what His Israelite readers would have been mentally picturing as they read it. It is that the Amorites (or at least some of their population) were the descendants of these evil giants who Amos described as "tall as cedars and strong as oaks". Therefore, the Amorites were (in God's eyes) worthy only of destruction and naturally He wanted His set apart people, Israel, to be the earthly instrument of their destruction.

We'll end our exploration of this fascinating topic here and take up at verse 10 in Amos chapter 2, next time we meet.