

- He had a good conscience (Acts 23:1)
- He thought he was right in killing Christians (Acts 26:9)

All of this proves that **one's thinking he is right** (one's having a good conscience) **does not prove that he is right.**

Keep Your Fork

by Unknown

THERE was a young woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. So as she was getting her things "in order," she contacted the preacher and had him come to her house to discuss certain aspects of her final wishes. She told him which songs she wanted sung at the service, what Scriptures she would like read, and what outfit she wanted to be buried in. Everything was in order and the preacher was preparing to leave when the young woman suddenly remembered something very important to her. "There's one more thing," she said excitedly. "What's that?" came the preacher's reply.

"This is very important," the young woman continued. "I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand." The preacher stood looking at the young woman, not knowing quite what to say. "That's surprises you, doesn't it?" the young woman asked.

"Well, to be honest, I'm puzzled by the request," replied the preacher.

The young woman explained. "My grandmother once told me a story and from that time on, it has been my desire to pass along its message to those I love who are in need of encouragement.

In all my years of attending fellowship gatherings of the church, and the potluck dinners that often go along with them, I always remember when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say; "Keep your fork." It was my favorite part because I knew something better was coming...like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie. Something wonderful and with substance! So, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder "What's with the fork?" Then I want you to tell them: "Keep your fork....the best is yet to come."

The preacher's eyes welled up with tears of joy as he hugged the young woman good-bye. He knew this would be one of the last times he would see her before her death.

But he also knew that the young woman had a better grasp of the after-life than he did. She KNEW that something better was coming for those with hope.

At the funeral people were walking by the young woman's casket and they saw the pretty dress she was wearing, and the fork place in her right hand. Over and over, the preacher heard the question "what's with the fork?" And over and over he smiled. During his message, the preacher told the people of the conversation he had with the young woman shortly before she died. He told them about the fork and about what it symbolized to her. The preacher told the people how he could not stop thinking about the fork and told them that they probably would not be able to stop thinking about it either.

He was right. So the next time you reach down for your fork, let it remind you ever so gently, that the best is yet to come for a faithful child of God.

Heartland Herald

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Michael Demory

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All members of the church

Schedule of Services

Sunday—9:30am
Wednesday—7:00pm

Evangelistic Efforts

Dubuque Advertiser

TV Program

"The Bible Says"

Public Access
Cable Channel 16

Free Bible Studies

Steps to Salvation

- **Hear the Word** (Romans 10:17)
- **Believe** (Hebrews 11:6)
- **Repent** (Luke 13:3)
- **Confess Christ** (Matthew 10:32-33)
- **Baptism** (1 Peter 3:21)
- **Faithful Living** (Revelation 2:10; 1 Corinthians 15:58)
- **Bearing fruit** (Colossians 1:10)

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Giants in the Earth

By Mike Demory

MOST bible students will tell you that the Scriptures hold many difficult texts. Some can be explained with the correct amount of cross-referencing, but there are others that we may never know the answer to and must be chalked up to Deuteronomy 29:29.

One such difficult text is found in Genesis chapter 6. Here Moses records the steady progression of human growth – both in population and wickedness. The text says, "and it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which of old, men of renown" (Gen. 6:1-4 - KJV).

It is believed by many (because of the teachings of "scholarly" denominational writers) that the "sons of God" spoken of in this text refers to angels. Which is easy to understand since Job refers to angels in this same way. "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them" (Job 1:6 - KJV); as does Daniel 3:25. Those who hold to this view often bring in other texts such as Jude 6-7 to make their point; "and the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (KJV). The theory goes that these angels of Jude 6 are the giants of Genesis 6 who went after strange flesh. Meaning that angels co-habitated with human women. However, the only sin that the angels of Jude 6 committed, was that of leaving their proper habitation and not keeping their principality. Nothing in the context is mentioned about co-habitation with women; so this theory begins to crumble.

So looking back at Genesis 6, we must observe the context of what exactly Moses is trying to tell us. In Genesis chapter 4, Adam and Eve have been removed from the garden and must now care for themselves. They have two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain later kills his brother, and then leaves the presence of the Lord. A list of men is given to show the genealogy of humanity. To Adam and Eve are born another son named Seth, through whom the savior of the world would come. Chapter five gives the genealogy from Adam to Noah, and then chapter six begins by telling us how humanity had come to wicked state that it was in the days of Noah. There were two groups of people on the earth at that time – Sethites – followers of God, and Cainites – followers of the god of this world.

Remember in Prayer

Special Prayers

C.C. Harris is found safe
 Bonnie Dempsey and family
 Brett Boor—in intensive care due to complications of open heart surgery
 Lyra Grochmal (8 yrs)—spine cancer— tumors are stable
 Linda Krabacher—leg fungus
 Preston Estes family
 Wade Miller—diabetes
 Mya Kulle - a tumor that turned out to be a cyst
 Our new evangelism effort

Lilly Rucker & family
 Laurie Davis—Multiple Sclerosis
 Yolanda Ritchwood—M.S.
 Natalie Bauman—M.S.
 Susan Noel— that she studies to understand God
 Russell Bender— that he studies to understand God
 Freeman Dudley—liver cancer
 Kaiser family
 Eric Boor—blood disease
 Rockfalls church of Christ
 TV Program
 State of our Nation
 The closing of Planned Parenthood
 The church
 The erring & the Lost

Military

Jonathan Duckstein—Afghanistan
 Michael Chlamon—Ft. Drum, NY
 Daniel Heflin—Afghanistan
 Jason Cunningham—Stateside
 Jon McCain—Tech Training
 Military families who are coping while loved ones in harms way

Evangelizing the World

Garret Derouin—Webster, Wisc.
 Scott Nedland—Rice Lake, Wisc.
 Brian Sherrell—Rockfalls, IL.
 Bernie Guzman—Philippines
 Johnny Robertson— Martinsville, Vir

James Oldfield—Riedsville, NC
 Derrick Brown —Jamaica
 Gary Workman—Ukraine
 Kolakaluri Prasad—Nalgonda, Dist., India
 G. Prabhu Kumar—Chennai, India
 John O’Neal—India & Ghana
 Tom Wacaster—India & Russia
 Holger Neubauer—South Haven, Michigan
 Ernie Lawrence—Hutto, Texas

Calendar of Events

- **July 5-7**— Editing @ Mediacom 1-5pm
- **July 27—Aug. 1**—County Fair Booth
- **August/2nd week**—Power Lectures—Southaven, MS
- **Sept/3rd week**—St. Louis Lectures
- **October 18-21**—Lectureship—Dubuque, IA

The “sons of God” found in chapter six, are those men in the world at that time who served Jehovah. They were descendants of Seth as given in chapter five. It was they (God fearing, faithful men), not angels who saw the daughters of men (those of the world, sinners, those who had given up the one true God) and married them and had children by them. The fruit of the union of these god-fearing men and godless women were men of great size, mighty men and renown. There is no doubt that the Scriptures speak of men of unusual size as was the case of Goliath (1 Sam. 17). But to say that giants had to come from unions between human and angel is like proving that angels are departed spirits with wings and halos.

How can we say for sure that these giants or Nephilim (ASV) are not angels? By taking the entire context of the Bible concerning the nature of angels. In one of the many confrontations Jesus had with the Sadducees and Pharisees, we find our Lord in such event with the Sadducees – Luke 20:27ff. The Sadducees not believing in the resurrection give Jesus what they think is an unanswerable problem concerning marriage. However, as always, the logic of the Savior far outweighs that of those He is speaking to. In verses 34-36 he answers them by showing that in the resurrection we will be as the angels, not marrying, neither will we die anymore. In other words, Jesus is describing for us the fact that like the angels, we will become “sexless” beings. Not to mention, that angels never marry – hence we refer back to Genesis 6 where it says that the “sons of God” took the daughters of men to be their “wives!”

Because the “Nephilim” or giants were men of renown is nothing new. The godless are always the ones given more press and fame than the godly. It is apparent in our own time with swimsuit additions of Sports Illustrated parading immodesty as healthy. Or homosexuals as the perfect role models for adoptive children. The giants of Genesis 6 were renown for their degenerate behavior, which the world of Noah’s day heartily approved and died for. The same sad end is awaiting the renown today.

Genesis 6 is simply being used to bring the reader up to speed as to why the world had become so wicked in the days of Noah. It is not describing the illicit behavior of angelic beings with humanity, but what happens when the god-fearing men and

women allow their lusts to get the best of them. As Paul would say centuries later, “*evil companionships corrupt good morals*” (1 Cor. 15:33).

Being Negative can be a Positive Thing!

By Richard Massey

SOMETIMES preachers are criticized for presenting lessons that are negative. The problem with being critical about negative preaching is—that’s being negative too. Being negative in preaching is not wrong.

Is it wrong for a parent to sternly rebuke his child when there is misbehavior? Was it wrong for President Reagan to express in a negative way, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall?” Is it wrong for teachers to tell students, “Don’t run in the hall?” What about a policeman expressing loudly and negatively, “Don’t drive down that road, the bridge is out?” Are these negative statements intended to help or hurt? They are meant to bring a positive result.

Did God intend for the negatives in the ten commandments to help or hurt the Israelites? “*Thou shalt not make any graven image.*” “*Thou shalt not steal.*” “*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.*” If it is a bad thing to be negative, then what does that say about God?

Notice the negative statements of Jesus. “*Get thee behind me Satan, for thou art and offense to me.*” That was stated to one of His close disciples, Peter (Matthew 16:23). Remember, Jesus offended the Pharisees in saying, “*In vain do they worship*

me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:9). Consider His public exposure of them as hypocrites, a brood of vipers, whited sepulchres, blind guides, gnat strainers, and more (Matthew 23). Was He being mean-spirited or was He truly concerned about the souls of men? The Bible says God loves the world (John 3:16).

No one can avoid being negative, regardless if it is politics, school, police work, public services, general conversation or religion. You could never have safety, order and good behavior without negatives. The reason our Lord used so many negatives is because of the wonderful results they bring.

It is not possible to preach the whole counsel and avoid being negative. Like they used to say, “You have to be connected to both the positive and negative post on a battery before you can get any power out of it.” The same is true with the Bible—the power of preaching can only be realized when you have both the positive and the negative proclaimed.

Dubuque County Fair 2010 July 27—August 1

It is time for the Dubuque county fair and again this year we will be renting space for an inside booth. We need your assistance in manning the booth during the entire time that the fair is open. This is something that they require, so please help us by signing up for a time that best works with your schedule.

Last year we had great results, setting up 35 Bible Studies, and having 10 visitors. We hope that we do much better this year, but we know that we are only the tools God uses to reach people for Christ. It is His gospel that saves, and the majority of people will choose the road that leads to destruction (Romans 1:16; Matthew 7:13-14). Lets work on finding those who want the truth.

Conscience

Was not a Safe Guide for Paul

by Basil Overton

CONSCIENCE was a not a safe guide for Paul. Before he became a Christian he persecuted Christ by persecuting His church (Acts 9:1-4; 8:3). “*For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it*” (Galatians 1:13).

“*I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many saints in prison, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them. And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blaspheme, and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities*” (Acts 26:9-11). “*And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prison both men and women*” (Acts 22:4). “*Though I was before a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did in ignorantly in unbelief*” (1 Timothy 1:13).

Many more passages describe the awful action of Paul (Saul) against the church of Christ before God added him to the church (Acts 2:47). But these are sufficient to show that he was a devastating character. While he was all this:

- He was very religious
- He was a Jew according to the strictest sect, called the Pharisees (Acts 26:3-5)
- He was well educated while he persecuted the church (Acts 22:3-4)