

# DIVINE CONTENDER

## The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

Genesis 6:3

Calvary Church of Pacific Palisades  
August 7, 2011 ♦ Sunday Morning Worship

1930's ... bridge construction on top of swaying catwalks and high towers, "Dance of Danger"... For every one million dollars spent, one life would be lost. Engineers on GGate Bridge, believed the risks could be lowered. When construction began in 1932, several safety measures were put into place / strictly enforced: After four years construction/\$20 million spent, only one worker had died.

The most effective safety device, without question, was as new to bridge building as it was old to the circus: the use of a trapeze net. This large net cost \$130,000 and draped sixty feet below the roadbed under construction, extending ten feet to either side. So effective was the safety net that the newspapers began running box scores: "Score on the Gate Bridge Safety Net to Date: 8 Lives Saved!"

Those men whose lives had been delivered by the net were said to have joined the "Halfway to Hell Club."

Beyond that, the net had another significant benefit: it freed many of the workers from an often paralyzing sense of fear. And that, many said, helped them work more productively.

Can you imagine working at those heights without a safety net? Paralyzed with fear.

What trapeze net was to bridge workers, the Holy Spirit is to us ... those who have received Jesus.

Keeps us from falling INTO SIN, delivers us from evil IN THE WORLD, gives us confidence to do the work.

Please open your Bibles to Genesis 6:1-8. Page 4. Treasure hunt, searching for HS in OT.

Last week Genesis 1, HS hovering, CREATION

**The Holy Spirit is the unseen person who gives us life and enables us to be what God recreated us to be.** The identifying mark of a true believer is transforming work of Spirit. NO SPIRIT, NO LIFE.

This week, ... Genesis 6 FLOOD What God created in perfection, increasingly evil, defiled, lawless. **Not getting better, getting worse.** Descend into utter lawlessness. Human nature ... only evil continually. Ill. Lord of the Flies. ... British boys deserted island. "well educated regress into a primitive state."

**So God decided to wipe the slate clean, start over. FLOOD.**

**Read Genesis 6:1-8**

Lot's of questions, just like I do ... Who are these "sons of God"? What was the reason their days were limited? Who are the Nephilim (the super race)? What on earth was happening here?

Great questions. **Not my intention to answer any of them.** Completely miss the point.

Focus on what we usually skip over. One phrase v. 3 " ... **my Spirit will not contend with man forever**"

For too long, we've missed the Spirit, hidden in the shadows ... ESENTIAL ROLE.

**The Holy Spirit is the divine contender who restrains evil in our world and in our lives.**

Without the Spirit, all hell would break loose, think it's bad now ... could be a whole lot worse.

The word CONTEND literally means striving ... striving with. Kind of like a wrestling match, good/evil.

Paul in Romans 7 ... the things I want to do, I don't do.

THE Spirit holds back evil, opposing the evil one, restraining sin in our lives, empower us to do the work that God has called us to do ... building bridges. Without the Spirits power we would be defenseless.

God says, "My Spirit does not contend with man forever," removes the evil rather than the HS. Rainbow.

Yet, doesn't mean that there won't come a time when God will remove the restrainer, contender when everyone is left to fend for themselves.

2 Thess 2:7,8 ... told that there will come a time of increasing evil when God will remove His Spirit....

**Read 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7** (page 838).

**And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. <sup>7</sup> For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.**

Who is this RESTRAINER? Holding back evil?

Not the government (playing that role) ... not inner sense of morality ... Ill. Mere Christianity ... page 6.

**The Holy Spirit is the divine contender who restrains evil in our world and in our lives.**

The Holy Spirit ... THE DIVINE CONTENDER of Genesis 6 is the one who holds back lawlessness.

**Hovering in Genesis 1, contending in Genesis 6 and restraining in 2 Thessalonians 2:6,7.**

HOW is the Spirit contending and restraining right now?

**The Holy Spirit is working through the church ... 1 Corinthians 3:16 (NIV84) Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? (you plural ... the church body)**

While Paul Knight, visiting Ethiopia,... little girl his family had been sponsoring through Compassion International. GIFTS, SINGLE MOM LIVED AND WORKED IN 1 ROOM HOME FUNCTIONED AS A BAR

Place slowly started filling with rowdy men from the community. Suddenly, Paul's guide took him by the arm and said, "We have to go now." Paul looked back at his sponsor child, a ten-year-old girl, and asked for more time. The crowd was getting louder, and his guide firmly said, "It's not safe for you. You must leave *now*." Paul started to move, but then he pointed to his sponsor child and said, "But what about my little girl?" "Well, this is her home," the guide said. Reluctantly moving to the street, Paul asked, "But will she be safe?" "It's not really safe, but this is her home," the guide said. Paul was indignant. "What does *that* mean," he asked, "that 'it's not really safe'?" "Most likely everything you think it means," the guide said. Paul fought back tears. "What can she do?" Gently grabbing his arm, the guide said, "We teach the girls to do this: scream and run to the church. When you get to the church, you will find love and safety. The church will shelter you.

**For all the criticism the church gets ... it's designed to be the safest place on earth ... functioning like the UN Peacekeeping force. Safety and shelter.**

*Literacy programs, hospitals, water, microloans. AND WE NEVER HEAR ABOUT IT.*

Ill. Alvin Low in the hills of BURMA. FAITH ... food available in the home. Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day, teach a man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime and feed his family as well.

One day (Rapture) the Spirit will be removed, no more church; gone.

When the one who holds evil back is taken out of the way, where will victims go, to read, water & food?

**"It is impossible to estimate what global society in owes to this ever vigilant inhibiting influence of the Holy Spirit working in and through the body of Christ."**

**The Holy Spirit is working through individual believers ... 1 Cor 6:19-20 <sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (body singular ... )**

One day (Rapture) the Spirit will be removed, no more Christians; gone.

**Individual believers ... making a difference around the world.**

Ill. Ron Strahan ... cleft palates in Guatemala, team of doctors. Our own Gary Parker.

*It is impossible to think what society would be like without the presence of individual believers who are alive in the Spirit. GOD HAS US HERE, not to be self-righteous do gooders ... but to be so transformed by the Spirits presence and power that we live differently so we can make a difference in our world.*

Who is this divine contender? The Holy Spirit. How is the Spirit contending and restraining right now?

Through the church as a body of believers and through individual believers.

WHAT is the Spirit doing?

1. SPIRIT Keeps us from falling into sin ... CATCHES US WHEN WE DO. Jude 1:24

2. SPIRIT Delivers us from evil. Lord's prayer ... deliver us from evil; the evil one. Matthew 6:13

**Matthew 6:13 (KJV 1900) <sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;**

**Matthew 6:13 (NIV84) <sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'**

3. SPIRIT Gives us divine confidence. We can have confidence because we are working with a net.

Conclusion:

**The Holy Spirit is the divine contender who restrains evil in our world and in our lives.**

There at cross, sin forgiven ... promise to send Spirit to wash and cleanse, indwell and empower.

Delivered from evil, confess to the Father. Ask Him to remove it. Come clean.