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GENETICS, UFOS AND THE BIRTH OF THE ANTICHRIST

Written by Vladimir Moss

Introduction

If the first half of the twentieth century was distinguished by an amazing increase in our knowledge of the physical world, the second half was distinguished by an even more amazing increase in our knowledge of the biological world, and especially the world of human genetics and human reproduction. The vital break-through here was the discovery of DNA in 1953. Then came the introduction of the contraceptive pill, in vitro fertilisation and surrogate motherhood. As one journalist put it: "First, contraception severed the connection between sex and reproduction. It became possible to have sex without having babies. Then modern technology severed the connection between reproduction and sex. It became possible to have babies without having sex." The most alarming developments have been genetic manipulation and cloning. Animal clones have been produced, and claims have even been made for a human clone.

As early as 1976, the director of the Institute of Genetics of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Academician N.P. Dubinin, was predicting the scale of this revolution: "The achievements of human genetics, and of general and molecular genetics, will push forward the problem of interference in human heredity. The coming revolution in genetics will demand a decisive overturning of the previously dominant view concerning the primacy of nature in its natural form. Genetics will turn out to be capable of overcoming the natural story of life and creating organic forms inconceivable in the light of the laws of natural evolution... For the molecular genetics and the molecular biology of the 21st century there lies in store the prospect of creating cells as the only self-regulating open living system, which will be bound up with the understanding of the essence of life. An exchange of living forms will take place between the earth and other worlds... The aim of genetic engineering is the creation of organisms according to a given model, whose hereditary program is formed by means of introducing the recipient of new genetic information. This information can be artificially synthesised or separated in the form of natural genetic structures from various organisms. In this way a new single genetic system which cannot arise by means of natural evolution will be created experimentally... Various manipulations with DNA molecules can lead to the unforeseen creation of biologically dangerous hybrid forms..."

After quoting this passage, Fr. Vladislav Sveshnikov expressed the truly apocalyptic fear: "We have to admit that contemporary science is preparing the ground for the coming of the Antichrist." How? By the manipulation of genes in order to produce the "superman" or "man-god" of Nietzsche's imagination, who will be at the same time the "devil-man" or "Antichrist" of Christian patristic teaching.

The purpose of this article is to show the light shed by the Holy Fathers on this possible link between genetic science and the birth of the Antichrist, and also on what may be meant by Dubinin's words: "An exchange of living forms will take place between the earth and other worlds..."

1. Man, not demon

The birth of the Antichrist is described by the Fathers as being from an unclean woman of the tribe of Dan. This is the teaching of St. Irenaeus of Lyons, St. Hippolytus of Rome, St. Hilary of Poitiers, St. Ambrose of Milan and Blessed Jerome in the West, and of St. Narses of Armenia, St. John Chrysostom, Blessed Theodoretus of Cyr and St. John of Damascus in the East. In the Synaxarion for Meatfare Sunday, the Sunday of the Last Judgement, we read: "The Antichrist will come and be born, as St. Hippolytus of Rome says, of a polluted woman, a supposed virgin, a Jewess of the tribe of Dan".

The most detailed description of this tradition is to be found in St. Nilus the Myrrh-gusher of Mount Athos (+1596): "The Antichrist will be born of an unclean, wanton maid. All debaucheries will be united within this maid, and she will be the treasure house of fornication. Every evil of the world, every uncleanness, every sin will be embodied in her. Through her conceiving from secret wantonness, all sins will be combined in a womb of uncleanness and will be brought to life together with the spiritual impoverishment of the world. When the world will be deprived of the grace of the Most Holy Spirit, then the

Antichrist will come to life in the womb of the unclean, from the most filthy and impure woman to have lived, though she will appear as a virgin. Conceived from such secret and unnatural wantonness, the offspring will be the container of every evil, as opposed to the way in which Christ was the ideal of every good quality, and His Most Pure Mother was the ideal of womanhood."

The question is: who will be the father? Since the Antichrist will attempt to imitate Christ in all things, it has been suggested by some of the Fathers that he will try to imitate Him also in His birth. Thus just as Christ was born of the Virgin, so the Antichrist will be born of a supposed virgin; and just as Christ had no human father, but was conceived of the Holy Spirit, so the Antichrist will have no human father, but will be conceived of - the devil?

Such an idea appears to have been suggested by the further words of St. Nilus: "Yea, he will be born of seed, but without man's sowing. He will be born with seed, but not with the seed of a man." And some expressions from some early Western Fathers might seem to encourage this hypothesis. Thus both St. Constantine's tutor, Lactantius and St. Martin of Tours say that the Antichrist will be "conceived by an evil spirit", while Ambrosiaster (probably a fourth-century Roman) writes: "As the Son of God in His human birth manifested His Divine nature, so also shall Satan appear in human form." In fact, Bousset claims that "the tradition wavers between the concept of the Antichrist as of a man controlled by the devil and that of his identification with Satan."

This is an exaggeration. The consensus of the Fathers rules out a real incarnation of the devil in a man. Nevertheless, the Fathers do not deny that the devil will try to incarnate himself in a man in imitation of Christ's Incarnation. Thus Blessed Theodoretus of Cyrus writes: "The persecutor of men imitates the incarnation of our God and Saviour. And as He by assuming our human nature accomplished our salvation, so he [the devil], by choosing a man capable of receiving the fulness of his power, shall tempt man."

And in the middle of the tenth century, the French Abbot Adso of Montier-en-Der developed this idea as follows: "He is born by intercourse from a father and a mother, like other men - not, as some fantasize, from a virgin alone... But in the very beginning of his conception the devil will at the same time enter into the womb of his mother and will totally fill her, and totally circumscribe her, and totally hold her, and totally possess her from without and within, so that she will conceive through a man with the devil's cooperation, and that which will be born will be totally iniquitous, totally evil and totally lost..."

2. Can demons unite with men?

Some further light has been shed on this mystery by St. Seraphim of Sarov, who prophesied: "Jesus Christ, the true God-Man, the Son of God the Father, was born in Israel by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and the true Antichrist, the devil-man, will be born amidst the Russians. He will be the son of a fornicating woman of the tribe of Dan and the son of the devil through the artificial transfer to her of the seed of the man, with which the spirit of darkness will settle in her womb. But one of the Russians who will live to the time of the birth of the Antichrist (like Simeon the God-receiver, who announced the birth of the Child Jesus to the world) will curse the newborn babe and will announce to the world that it is the true Antichrist."

So here we find a new twist, as it were, to what we might have been tempted to dismiss as the myth of the devil-man. The Antichrist will be truly man - on both his father's and his mother's side. But the fallen angelic nature will also be innate in him, being mixed with his father's seed even before his conception. At the same time, we may suppose, genetic engineering will take place on the seed, so as to make the child born of it the most brilliant and talented, but at the same time most corrupted person ever born! How costly for mankind is the transgressing of God's laws concerning marriage and the begetting of children - nothing less than the birth of the Antichrist!

Perhaps we can now better understand an apparent ambiguity in St. Andrew of Caesarea's Commentary on the Apocalypse, in which he at one moment asserts that the "angelic substance" is assumed in the Antichrist (50.13), and at another that "the devil operates in the Antichrist" (51.45). There is a sense in which the "angelic substance" is assumed in the Antichrist, since it is joined to him from his very conception, and therefore influences him from within and from the beginning, rather than possessing him from without and ex post facto. On the other hand, it is not a real incarnation of the devil, nor a real imitation of the Virgin Birth, since neither is his mother a virgin, nor is he without a human father. It is not, as Ambrosiaster puts it, that "as the Son of God in His human birth manifested His Divine nature, so also shall Satan appear in human form". It is rather, as St. Cyril of Jerusalem puts it, "Satan uses him as an organ, working in his own person through him".

But is it in principle possible for the human and angelic natures to unite, not merely through possession, that is, the union of two persons, one human and the other angelic (demonic) under one skin, but hypostatically, through the union of two natures, one human and the other angelic, in one person?

This question was actively discussed by the Fathers in relation to one of the most puzzling passages in Holy Scripture: And it came to pass when men began to be

numerous upon the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the angels of God [or: sons of God], having seen the daughters of men that they were beautiful, took for themselves wives from all whom they chose. And the Lord God said, My Spirit shall certainly not remain among these men for ever, for they are flesh, but their days shall be one hundred and twenty years. Now the giants were upon the earth in those days, and after that the angels of God [sons of God] were wont to enter in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the giants of old, the men of renown. (Genesis 6.1-5).

The understanding of this passage hinges on the meaning of the word translated "angels of God" or "sons of God" in verses 2 and 4. In the Hebrew Massoretic text the word is bene-ha-elohim, literally "sons of God". In the Greek translation of the Septuagint, which is the oldest and most authoritative text that we have, the Cambridge text edited by Brooke-Mclean has "angels of God" (αγγελoi του θεου) in verse 2, and "sons of God" (υιοι του θεου) in verse 4.

P. S. Alexander writes: "The translator has not been inconsistent, for closer inspection shows that, though there are no significant variants at verse 4, a number of important witnesses at verse 2 read, not οι αγγελoi του θεου but οι υιοι του θεου. Moreover, the main support in verse 2 for οι αγγελoi του θεου (viz. Cod. A) has the reading over an erasure. It seems most likely, then, that LXX [the Septuagint] originally read οι υιοι του θεου, "the sons of God", in both places. It was later altered, but inconsistently. The literal rendering [i.e. "sons of God"] is found in other Greek texts, as well as in the Vulgate, the Peshitta and the Biblical text of the Ps-Philonic Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (=LAB)."

Be that as it may, and even if there is not absolute unanimity concerning which reading is correct, there is complete unanimity, from the earliest Jewish commentators until the early third century, about its meaning. All commentators and writers agree that the reference here is to angels. Such an interpretation is supported by the fact that in three passages from Job (1.6, 2.1, 38.7) the phrase "sons of God" certainly refers to angels. Also, the fact that the women gave birth to giants suggests something abnormal, something more than just a normal human coupling....

We find this interpretation both in pre-Christian Jewish literature - for example, The Book of Enoch, Jubilees, The Testament of the 12 Patriarchs, Philo and Josephus - and in the early Christian Fathers and writers such as Justin the Philosopher, Irenaeus, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Methodius of Olympus and Ambrose.

Thus Josephus writes: "Now this posterity of Seth continued to esteem God as the Lord of the universe, and to have an entire regard to virtue, for seven generations; but in process of time they were perverted, and forsook the practices of their forefathers, and did neither pay those honours to God which were appointed them, nor had they any concern to do justice towards men; but for what degree of zeal they had formerly shown for virtue, they now showed by their actions a double degree of wickedness, whereby they made God to be their enemy. For many angels of God accompanied with women, and begat sons that proved unjust, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength; for the tradition is, that these men did what resembled the acts of those whom the Grecians call giants. But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and being displeased at their conduct, persuaded them to change their disposition, and their actions for the better: but seeing they did not yield to him, but were slaves to wicked pleasures, he was afraid they would kill him, together with his wife and children, and those they had married; so he departed out of the land."

Again, St. Justin writes: "In ancient times wicked demons appeared and defiled women."

Again, St. Methodius writes: "The others remained in the positions for which God made and appointed them; but the devil was insolent, and having conceived envy of us, behaved wickedly in the charge committed to him; as also did those who subsequently were enamoured of fleshly charms, and had illicit intercourse with the daughters of men. For to them also, as was the case with men, God granted the possession of their own choice."

Again, St. Irenaeus writes: "And for a very long while wickedness extended and spread, and reached and laid hold upon the whole race of mankind, until a very small seed of righteousness remained among them: and illicit unions took place upon the earth, since angels were united with the daughters of the race of mankind; and they bore to them sons who for their exceeding greatness were called giants. And the angels brought as presents to their wives teachings of wickedness, in that they brought them the virtues of roots and herbs, and dyeing in colours and cosmetics, the discovery of rare substances, love-potions, aversions, amours, concupiscence, constraints of love, spells of bewitchment, and all sorcery and idolatry hateful to God; by the entry of which things into the world evil extended and spread, while righteousness was diminished and enfeebled..."

Another very important, albeit not quite so clear witness in favour of this interpretation is the passage from II Peter: If God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into tartarus, and committed them to pits of nether gloom to be kept until the judgement; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah... (2.4-5). Jude says something similar: And the angels that did not keep their own position but left their proper dwelling have been kept by Him in eternal chains in the nether gloom until the judgement

of the great day (Jude 6). From the context of these passages, it appears that they are referring to the angels' cohabitation with the daughters of men.

However, in spite of all these early witnesses, the later Fathers from about the second half of the fourth century - including John Chrysostom, Ephraim the Syrian, Blessed Theodoretus, Cyril of Jerusalem, Blessed Jerome and Blessed Augustine - turned sharply against this interpretation, choosing rather to understand the term "sons of God" as denoting the men of the line of Seth, and the "daughters of men" - the women of the line of Cain; so that the event described in Genesis 6 involved an unlawful mixing between the pious and the impious human generations.

Thus St. John Chrysostom writes that it would be "folly to accept such insane blasphemy, saying that an incorporeal and spiritual nature could have united itself to human bodies".

Again, St. Augustine, after noting that "the Septuagint calls them the angels and sons of God", goes on to say: "According to the Hebrew canonical Scriptures [i.e. as opposed to apocrypha such as The Book of Enoch], there is no doubt that there were giants upon the earth before the deluge, and that they were the sons of the men of earth, and citizens of the carnal city, unto which the sons of God, being Seth's in the flesh, forsaking righteousness, adjoined themselves."

Again, St. Ephraim the Syrian writes: "The daughters of Cain adorned themselves and became a snare to the eyes of the sons of Seth... The entire tribe of Seth... was stirred to a frenzy over them... Because the sons of Seth were going in to the daughters of Cain, they turned away from their first wives whom they had previously taken. Then these wives, too, disdained their own continence and now, because of their husbands, quickly began to abandon their modesty, which up until that time they had preserved for their husbands' sake. It is because of this wantonness that assailed both the men and the women, that Scripture says, All flesh had corrupted its way (6.13)."

To this same line of interpretation belong the words of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow: "According to the text of the Alexandrian Bible, [the words are] 'Angels of God'. Lactantius is of this opinion, as are many ancient authors. Justin affirms that from the marriages of Angels with the daughters of men there came demons. Athenagoras ascribes the fall of the Angels to these same marriages, and it was from them that the giants came. Tertullian ascribes to these Angels the acquisition of Astrology, precious stones, metals and some female adornments. But all these traditions contradict the witness of Jesus Christ, that the Angels do not marry (Matthew 22.30)..."

"According to the opinion of the most recent interpreters, [they are] the descendants of the race of Shem, who not only were sons of God by grace (cf. Deuteronomy 14.1; I John 3.1), but they also probably formed a society under this name (cf. Genesis 4.26) which was opposed to the society of the sons of men, that is, the descendants of Cain, who were led only by their fallen human nature. Moses ascribes the beginning of the mixing of such contrary societies to the fascination with the beauty of the daughters of men; and as a consequence even those who belonged to the society of those who walk in the Spirit became flesh, and light itself began to be turned into darkness."

3. Demons, Women and UFOs

However, even if we exclude the possibility of a real, hypostatic union between angels (demons) and men, it is another question whether demons may not desire such a union and strive for it.

But why should they wish to unite with women?

First, because demons, in spite of their bodiless nature, are possessed by bodily lust, according to St. Ignaty Brianchaninov. In this connection the words of the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 11.10 are relevant: For this cause ought the woman to have authority on her head on account of the angels. Commenting on this passage, St. Paulinus of Nola writes: "Let them realize why Paul ordered their heads to be clothed with a more abundant covering: it is because of the angels, that is, the angels who are ready to seduce them and whom the saints will condemn."

A second reason is that Satan almost certainly wishes to imitate the union of the two natures in one Person which Christ achieved at His incarnation, only substituting the demonic nature for the Divine, a whore for the Virgin Mother of God, and the Antichrist for Christ. Such a motive is suggested by the fact, emphasised by many of the Fathers, that the Antichrist will seek to imitate Christ in all things. And if in all things, why not in his very birth?

Let us recall the prophecies of Saints Nilus and Seraphim that the conception of the Antichrist will be through a technique of artificial insemination, whereby the devil will seize and possess the sperm before it has reached the mother's egg. Since the technique will be artificial insemination, rather than the normal process of sexual intercourse, the mother will be able to claim - falsely, of course - that she is a "virgin". And since artificial insemination takes place in a test-tube, outside both human bodies, the possibilities for possession and genetic manipulation of the sperm by the devil will be maximised. Moreover, having taken possession of the sperm before it fertilises the egg, the devil will

be able to claim that he is the father of the Antichrist "from eternity" – or, at any rate, before the human father could beget him. Then the Antichrist will be, according to the demonic anti-theology, one person in two natures – from a bodiless father before he became man, and from a virgin mother at the moment of conception...

Could the demons already be experimenting on the union of the human and demonic natures? After all, the technique of artificial insemination already exists. Moreover, "genetic engineering", and the union of human and animal species, is already well advanced in human laboratories - undoubtedly under the direct influence of demons.

But the participation of demons may be more direct than that; for it is not just deluded human beings who are attempting to change and manipulate and hybridise the nature of man...

According to reputable Orthodox writers, such as Hieromonk Seraphim Rose, the inhabitants of the so-called "Unidentified Flying Objects" (UFOs), which have so struck the popular imagination in recent decades, are in fact demons. Other writers have seen a parallel between the phenomenon of the UFOs coming to earth and the story of the visitation of the daughters of men by the son of God in Genesis 6, which produced the hybrid offspring of the "giants", "watchers" or "fallen ones". Moreover, according to the Harvard Professor of Psychiatry, John Mack, there is now well established evidence that men and women have been abducted onto UFOs, where their alien "hosts", i.e. demons, have performed sexual experiments upon them. There have been reported cases of matings between demons and human beings on board these craft. But still more sinister, sperm has been taken from men, and ova from women. "Fertilized eggs, which may have been genetically altered, are implanted, and later there is the eventual removal of the pregnancy. In subsequent abductions, experiencers are shown hybrid offspring and may even be asked to hold or nurture them."

These ideas indicate how Genesis 6.1-5, modern experiments on human sexuality and reproduction (by both humans and demons) and the doctrine of the Antichrist, may come together in a fantastic, nightmarish scenario that nevertheless has the stamp of reality. Moved by envy, lust and jealousy, the devil, the enemy of mankind, has from primordial times tried to interfere with, corrupt, abuse and radically subvert human nature. And just as Christ recreated human nature in the image and likeness of God by becoming incarnate of the Virgin Mother of God, so the devil wishes to recreate it in his image and likeness by becoming incarnate of a pseudo-virgin, the mother of the Antichrist.

However, real demonic incarnation, the creation of a true demon-man, is impossible because of the bounds between species and kinds of rational beings created by God. So Satan resorts to as close an imitation as possible: through the demonic possession of human seed even before conception, and its genetic manipulation to accentuate the worst qualities in fallen human nature, he plans to create, if not a true demon-man, at any rate the demonic man par excellence. But since, unlike God, he cannot create out of nothing or at once, he requires time and experimentation, in order gradually, by trial and error, to "work out" his perverted masterpiece.

Conclusion

Let us go back to Genesis. It will be recalled that almost immediately after the attempt of the "sons of God" to seduce the daughters of men, and the birth from these unions of giants, there came the universal flood which swept away all mankind except Noah and his family. Whether or not there is a direct causal connection between the two events is not indicated: but their close proximity is very suggestive.

Now in the New Testament the Lord said: As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all (Luke 17.26-27). The period we are living through now appears very similar to the period the Lord was speaking about, and so also to the period just before the Flood. Now, as then, men have begun to multiply on the earth, and now, as then, the condition of mankind is one of spiritual and moral degeneration.

But could the correspondence between the Old and the New Testaments be even closer here? Could it be that just as the universal flood and the destruction of the old world was brought about by an unnatural union of demons and men and the consequent birth of giants, so the Second Coming of Christ and the burning up of the material universe at His Coming will be brought about by an unnatural union of Satan and a woman and the consequent birth of the Antichrist? Could it be that just as in Genesis a terrible corruption of human nature led to the end of the "old world", with only one family being saved in Noah's ark, so a still more terrible corruption of human nature and blasphemy against God in our time will lead to the end also of our "brave new world", with only a tiny remnant of righteous men being saved in the Ark of the Church?

We cannot prevent the birth of the Antichrist, for the Scriptures must be fulfilled (Mark 14.49). But we can delay his appearing by living a godly life and by being keenly aware, through a knowledge of the Scriptures, of the snares of the devil. And we must be aware above all that the human spirit, being free and under the protection of God for as long as it seeks it, is not subject to the flesh, however corrupted, manipulated and even demon-possessed it may be. The Lord said of the last times: except those days should be

shortened, there should no flesh be saved (Matthew 24.22). But He also said of His sheep: They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand (John 10.28)...

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