

Genesis Chapter 6

Verses 6:1-4: The account that follows records an act of degrading that reveals the end-point of God's patience.

Genesis 6:1 "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,"

Such long lifespans as indicated in the record of chapter 5 caused a massive increase in earth's population.

Genesis 6:2 "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they [were] fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."

Some have argued that the sons of God were the sons of Seth who cohabited with the daughters of Cain; others suggest they were perhaps human kings wanting to build harems.

The New Testament places this account in sequence with other Genesis events and identifies it as involving fallen angels who in-dwelt men (see notes on 2 Pet. 2:4-5; Jude 6). To procreate physically, they had to possess human, male bodies.

"Sons of God": (Hebrew bene Elohim) refers to the godly line of Seth, which intermarried with the daughters of men, the ungodly line of Cain. The result of these spiritually mixed marriages brought the judgment of God upon the primeval world.

While the term "sons of god" refers to angels in some passages (e.g. Job 1:6), this is certainly not the case here. Jesus clearly taught that angels do not "marry or give in marriage" (Matt. 22:30).

It is unimportant where they came from. I will give my opinion, and then go on. The most logical explanation to me is that Seth's descendants (sons of God) married Cain's descendants (daughters of men) and bare children. We had already mentioned that Seth's line was Godly and Cain's worldly.

These people probably had 20 or 30 children each. It wouldn't take long at that rate to multiply into a vast number. We will see 70 go into Egypt and become approximately three million. All we need to know here was that they didn't marry their sisters.

Anytime you see worldly people marry into a family of believers, it is difficult for the believing spouses to stay faithful to God. Evil destroys good.

Genesis 6:3 "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."

“My spirit shall not always strive with man” is a reference to the Holy Spirit striving with, in the sense of judging or convicting, mankind for its sinfulness. Man was given 120 years after this warning, before the judgment of the Flood actually came.

God set a specific time limit before any penalty would occur in order to give humans a chance to repent. This principle is used repeatedly, such as when Nineveh was given a period to repent before any judgment was rendered (Jonah 3:9-10). This time span allowed the ways of righteousness to be preached (2 Peter 2:5), to the people while work was ongoing.

The Holy Spirit played a most active role in the Old Testament. The Spirit had been striving to call men to repentance and righteousness, especially as Scripture notes, through the preaching of Enoch and Noah (1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; Jude 14).

“Hundred and twenty years”: The span of time until the Flood (1 Peter 3:20), in which man was given opportunity to respond to the warning that God’s Spirit would not always be patient.

Genesis 6:4 "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 [were] of old, men of renown."

“Giants” or Nephilim”: This word is from a root meaning “to fall,” indicating that they were strong men who “fell” on others in the sense of over-powering them (the only other use of this term is in Numbers 13:33). They were already in the earth when the “mighty men” and “men of renown” were born. The fallen ones are not the offspring from the union in 6:1-2.

“Giants” (Hebrew Nephilim, perhaps “fallen ones” or “princes”). When the Israelites saw the Anakim they concluded they had seen “the Nephilim” (Num. 13:33).

“Mighty men (giborim, “warriors”): Note (in verse 11), that the earth was filled with violence.

“Men of renown” were literally “men of a name.” In 11:4 the “reputation” or “name” is used in a derogatory sense, contrasted with God’s giving Abram a good “name” (in 12:2). “Mighty one” is used of Nimrod in a negative sense (in 10:8-10). These giants already existed on earth and were not the offspring of the marriages mentioned.

I am not certain whether these "giants" meant physical stature, or whether it meant men like Enoch and Noah who were giants of faith. Perhaps these people were larger of stature than we are. We do know that years later Saul, who became the first king of Israel, was tall. An even taller man was Goliath.

Looking at the standpoint of giants in character, we do see in the descendants of Seth a group of people whose morals were above others of their day. I really tend to believe, because of the statement "mighty men, which were of old, men of renown", that it was speaking more of character than size.

Genesis 6:5 "And God saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually."

“Every imagination”: The “formations” (2:7 where God “formed” man), is the same word as imagination (yetser).

“His heart was only evil continually”: This is one of the strongest and clearest statements about man’s sinful nature. Sin begins in the thought-life (see notes on James 1:13-15). The people of Noah’s day were exceedingly wicked, from the inside out (Jer. 17:9-10; Matt. 12:34-35; 15:18-19; Mark 7:21; Luke 6:45).

Man’s design or purpose was “nothing but evil all the day.”

Beautiful women can easily turn the head of a good man and corrupt him, as Solomon was corrupted by his many wives. One sin leads to another. Soon, sin will grow so that it will become a habit, and cause a depraved mind. God judges the heart, and in the Scripture above, more than the deeds, God saw that their heart was stayed upon sin.

Genesis 6:6 "And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."

“Repented ... grieved”: Sin sorrowed God who is holy and without blemish (Eph. 4:30; Exodus 32:14; 1 Sam. 15:11; Jer. 26:3).

This does not imply that God made a mistake in His dealings with man, but rather indicates a change in divine direction resulting from the actions of man. It is “an anthropathism” (a human emotion applied to God), describing the pain that is caused God by the destructiveness of His creatures.

It is used 30 times with God as its subject, each time speaking of a change of mind or intention that accords with His righteous purposes, and results in action commensurate with those purposes.

So many parents today are so saddened by the lives of their children that they wish they had never had children. They can bring so much joy when things are right, but so much sorrow when they go bad.

God made man so He might fellowship with them. What a heartbreaking thing for them to turn away from their Creator and desire things of this world over God. I hurt with God in this.

Genesis 6:7 "And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."

God promised total destruction when His patience ran out (Eccl. 8:11).

Here God's hurt and disappointment in mankind overflowed. He said He would destroy them. You see the animals, fowls, etc., were made for the use of man. There would be no need for them if Man was destroyed.

Not only had mankind gotten into every type of sin, but also which was worse, man stopped fellowshiping with God. Seth's descendants were now fellowshiping with Cain's descendants. God was about to reverse this whole situation and do away with His creation.

Genesis 6:8 "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

“But Noah found grace”: Lest one believe that Noah was spared because of his good works alone (Heb. 11:7), God makes it clear that Noah was a man who believed in God as Creator, Sovereign, and the only Savior from sin.

He found grace for himself, because he humbled himself and sought it (4:26; see notes on Isaiah 55:6-7). He was obedient, as well (6:22; 7:5; James 4:6-10).

This is the first occurrence of the word grace in Scripture. Its root meaning is “to bend or stoop,” implying the condescending or unmerited favor of a superior person to an inferior one. It is often used redemptively (Jer. 31; Zech. 12:10). Mankind, the beasts of the field, and the fowl of the air would be destroyed; but God would call out a remnant for Himself.

“Noah” was the last of the pre-Flood patriarchs and the builder of the ark that survived the great Flood. He was 600 years old when the Flood began and lived to be 950 years of age. He is described in the Bible as a righteous man (verse 9), and a man of obedience (verse 22), and faith (Heb. 11:7).

The New Testament writers refer to him as an actual person (Matt. 24:37-38; Luke 17:26-27), and one who preached righteousness to his generation (2 Peter 2:5). God sealed His covenant with him by the sign of a rainbow (9:9-17). From his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the present world was populated (Gen. 6:8 – 10:1).

God loved Noah and God would take care of Noah. "Where sin doth abound, the grace of God doth much more abound". In the next few verses, we will see that Noah loved and respected God. Noah tried to live as nearly right as he could and still be in the flesh.

So many people do not understand grace, they believe "saved by grace" gives them the license to do anything they want to, and still be saved. Grace has even more requirements than the law.

God not only wants us to have the form of religion, as they did with the law, keeping the ordinances, but God wants us to have pure thoughts coming from a pure heart. He wants us to desire fellowship with Him so much that it is the most important thing in our lives.

Verses 6:9 – 9:29: The generations of Noah.

Genesis 6:9 "These [are] the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man [and] perfect in his generations, [and] Noah walked with God."

"Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations ... walked" (Ezek. 14:14, 20; 2 Pet. 2:5). The order is one of increasing spiritual quality before God: "righteous" is to live by God's righteous standards; "blameless" sets him apart by a comparison with those of his day; and that he "walked with God" puts him in a class with Enoch (5:24).

The root for "just", basically means conformity to an ethical or moral standard (it is used of Noah, Daniel, and Job in Ezekiel 14:14, 20).

"Perfect" has the idea of "completeness"; or "that which is entirely in accord with truth and fact." Noah, like his godly ancestor Enoch (5:22, 24) "walked with God." He separated himself from the wickedness of his contemporaries and followed the Lord.

Genesis 6:10 "And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth."

Noah was a just man seeking to please God and was blessed by Him with three sons.

Genesis 6:11 "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence."

"Corrupt ... filled with violence" (6:3, 5). The seed of Satan, the fallen rejecters of God, deceitful and destructive, had dominated the world.

It seems that masses of people were involved in every type of sin. Brother was killing brother. It seemed this Cain group had polluted the Seth descendants and violence and crime was rampant. Except for Noah, it seemed everyone was involved. Verse 12 tells how universal it was.

Genesis 6:12 "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

We might say that about the earth now. There is crime on every hand. So many abominable things to God, prevail today such as rape, incest, homosexuality, murder, stealing, lying, cheating, adultery, disobeying parents, drugs, alcohol, filthy movies and television are common.

About the only way you can raise children to be Christians in this society today would be to totally isolate them from this evil and corrupt generation. The rock music alone can pervert a child's mind so badly, that he or she may never be able to function as a Christian.

Most who listen to the subliminal messages of this music cannot face reality of any kind, much less make firm decisions as a Christian. Our society has gone mad and God will not tolerate it.

We must realize that God is angry, and unless we repent as a nation, we will see something much worse than the flood, because our sins are more perverted than theirs. It seems there are no modern day Noahs', who have walked uprightly before God.

Genesis 6:13 "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

“I will destroy them with the earth”: Destroy did not mean annihilation, but rather referred to the flood judgment, both of the earth and its inhabitants.

The forces of nature are subject to God. If you will notice here, God was going to destroy them with the very thing that meant more to them than He did. You see, they had their eyes and their hearts caught up in the things of this earth; so, God would destroy them with the earth.

He was telling Noah, I am going to wipe them off the face of the earth. We will see (in verse 14), God provided a way out for all who earnestly seek to please Him.

Genesis 6:14 "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch."

“Ark”: A hollow chest, a box designed to float on water (Exodus 2:3).

“Gopher wood”: This may be a reference to cedar or cypress trees, abundant in the mountains of Armenia.

The dimensions of the “ark” given in verse 15 indicate it was more like a barge than a ship. It was about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. It had about 95,700 square feet on three decks, 1,400,000 cubic feet, and a gross tonnage of 13,960.

It was fully large enough to carry its prescribed cargo. Its carrying capacity equaled that of 522 standard railroad stockcars, which can carry 125,000 sheep. Thus, the ark was about the size of an oil tanker and was of proper seagoing dimensions for an ocean voyage.

“Pitch” refers to tar, which like oil is plentiful in the Near East. This was a resin substance to seal the seams and cracks in the wood.

We have heard so many preachers talk about this ark of safety. I think we should look at the physical and the spiritual implications this ark holds for all of us today.

If we are right with God, there is a way out of every problem that we face. Our ark of safety is belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. As this ark saved Noah and his family, Jesus Christ will save us and our families. One thing that really concerns me today is that we are not building our ark as God commanded Noah to do.

Some are being saved, but very few are shoring up the sides and thoroughly preparing for the disaster. Noah was not saved from the flood, he was saved in it. We have a Brill Cream religion, a little dab will do you!

Noah worked continuously preparing. He never questioned whether God had told him the truth or not. He went diligently to work. God had a perfect plan for the ark. He has a perfect plan for

us, too. Noah had an attribute that many could take a lesson from today. He took instruction well. When God spoke, he listened.

So many of us will not slow down enough for God to speak, and even if He does, we seldom listen; we are a generation that does not like to be instructed. Our hearing apparatus in the heart is coated over with cares of this world. How many people even bother to read God's word: to fellowship with God, we must get into His Word.

I hear people say "I don't understand the Bible". Get some help, get in a good Bible study and start digging. The best treasures are not on the surface. All is not lost, if we will just heed the Scripture in 2 Chronicles:

7:14 "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

We, Christians, are God's people who are called by Christ's name. As such an arrogant generation, how can we humble ourselves? Not many people will even admit to praying at home, and even fewer pray in public. We won't find God's face out playing golf, at football and baseball games, hunting, and all the other places that we put ahead of God.

If our people would read the Bible and pray even half the time that they watch television, it would really get God's attention. It is very plain what God would have us do. Become new creatures in the Lord Jesus Christ, put God ahead of everything else and then, He will hear us, forgive us, and save us and our land.

Genesis Chapter 6 Questions

1. In verse 2, when men began to multiply upon the earth, what happened?
2. The most logical explanation of the sons of God and daughters of men, in my opinion, is what?
3. If Seth's line was Godly, what was Cain's?
4. Seventy people went into Egypt and approximately how many came out?
5. What are two opinions of the giants mentioned?
6. Who was the first king of Israel?
7. What causes a depraved mind?
8. In verse 7, name four things God said He would destroy.

9. What was even worse than man sinning?
10. In verse 8, what did Noah find in the eyes of the Lord?
11. Which has more requirements in God's sight, the law or grace?
12. What two descriptions of Noah were in verse 9?
13. What did Noah and Enoch have in common?
14. Name Noah's three sons.
15. What two things were rampant when God decided to destroy the earth?
16. Name ten or more things that are an abomination to God.
17. How could you raise children free of all this?
18. What are the forces of nature subject to?
19. What would God use to destroy them?
20. What kind of wood was used to make the ark?
21. What is our ark of safety?
22. What is a Brill Cream religion?
23. To fellowship with God, we must do what?
24. 2 Chronicles 7:14 tells us what?