

Genesis 6:1-7

*Responsible To God*

To talk to most people today about a worldwide flood that destroyed every living creature with the exception of one family and a boat load of animals, certainly isn't the way to establish yourself as a rational, logical, scientifically minded individual.

But often times the world around us contains witnesses to the truth of the Bible that are so obvious we wonder how they can be so easily overlooked.

In every nation of the world the ground we walk upon is a vast cemetery. In it are bones, shells, teeth, and footprints of millions of animals. And along with those animal remains, are the compressed and fossilized remains of immense forests and luscious vegetation which once covered the earth.

John Whitcomb writes:

“Modern speculation has managed to distort the testimony of this sedimentary graveyard into a fictional record of slow evolutionary development over a billion years of imaginary earth history. This strange notion has indeed today become accepted and taught as scientific fact in most of our educational institutions all around the world.”

But as Whitcomb goes on to point out fossils speak of death, not development! They bear witness to extinction, not evolution.

Fossils speak of death, and death speaks of sin and judgment.

The witness to the truth of a world wide flood is found everywhere we look. In the fossils of millions of animals, in vast coal deposits, in layers of sedimentary rock which cover our world and are found on every continent, and most important of all in the Bible.

Six times in the New Testament the historicity of the people and the events of the flood is confirmed.

Jesus, the Apostle Peter, and the writer of Hebrews all spoke of Noah and the ark. Moses describes in great detail all the events surrounding the flood. In fact, he devotes 4 whole chapters to the man Noah, and three of those give the details of the ark and the flood.

Obviously, God wants us to understand and believe the accounts of the flood. Actually, it is one of the most important events in the book of Genesis. It's not a myth, it's not a fable. It's truth and it's just packed full of principles and truth for us today.

I'd like us to begin this morning not by looking at the flood itself, but rather what led up to the flood in the first place.

What was that world that perished really like, and what are we to make of God's judgment?

### **Open your Bible to Genesis chapter 6**

When we come to Genesis chapter 6 we really come to the culmination of 1600 years of human history.

Moses has been very careful to chronicle for us the two branches of mankind - the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

We saw it in Cain and Abel. We saw it in chapter 4 and the contrast with chapter 5.

Man has sinned against God and God has promised a Savior, one who would come through the human race to defeat Satan. That one was to be Jesus Christ who would come in the fullness of time.

But Satan had a different idea. His goal was to corrupt the human race so that human beings rebelled against God until there were no godly people left.

Satan wanted to pollute humanity until God's plan for a coming Redeemer was derailed. And it's obvious from the opening chapters of Genesis that he tried really hard to do just that.

As we saw last week chapter 5 gives us the genealogy of the godly descendants of Seth.

In spite of all the ungodliness of the day there were those who did hold to the faith of Adam, but they were outnumbered by those who didn't.

If you trace the genealogy of chapter 5 you'll find out some interesting facts.

Out of the nine men, mentioned along with Noah in chapter 5, 6 were alive during Noah's lifetime. Adam died 126 years before Noah's birth.

Seth died only 14 years before Noah's birth and Enoch was taken 69 years before Noah's birth. The other 6 lives well into Noah's lifetime.

Noah's grandfather Methuselah died the year of the flood, and his father Lamech died 5 years before the flood.

So there were other godly men on the earth at the time of Noah, but there was only a few and by the actual time of the flood itself, there was no one else but one family; Noah, his wife, his sons and their wives.

Satan almost succeeded in corrupting the human race so that the line of the coming Messiah would be blotted out.

That tells us that the time of the flood was an immensely wicked time. It was so bad that God's heart was grieved that he had ever made man in the first place.

What was Satan's strategy? How did he bring about this terrible corruption?

### *I. The Compromise Of The Godly*

#### **Read verses 1 & 2**

These verses have been the subject of endless debate among Christians. And I believe that one side of that debate has done a lot to weaken the impact that Genesis 6 should have on us and to place the blame for what happened on the wrong shoulders.

The obvious question that comes to mind as we read these verses is, who are these sons of God?

The two most popular interpretations are that they were fallen angels, or the godly men from the line of Seth.

There's some interpreting problems with both of these verse, but I think the obvious evidence points to the sons of God as being human beings.

First of all let me give you the common reasons why some interpreters see these as

fallen angels, who somehow cohabitated with women.

1. The title “the sons of God” is only used 3 other times in the Old Testament and each time it is speaking of angels.

That’s true. The other 3 references to “the sons of God” are all in the book of Job and there the meaning is clearly angels. But in Job it means good angels, not fallen angels. Not Satan or any of his host would ever be called sons of God!

Besides that God does call people his sons in other passages of Scripture.

*For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior...Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth. Isaiah 43:3&6*

*And it shall come to pass In the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ There it shall be said to them, ‘You are sons of the living God.’ Hosea 1:10*

2. Because of a rather cryptic New Testament reference in I Peter.

**Turn to I Peter 3 page 1078 Read verses 18-22**

Here it is assumed that the spirits in prison must be fallen angels. And Jesus is making a proclamation to them during the time between his burial and resurrection that they weren't successful in stopping Him from coming. I believe the spirits were actually unbelieving humans, not fallen angels.

Peter mentions these from Noah's time for 2 reasons.

First they typify all unbelievers in their rejection of God.

All of God's patience couldn't do anything with these people in the days of Noah, just as it couldn't do anything with any of the spirits in hell. Second he wants to talk about the flood and baptism.

Another New Testament reference that is tied in with all of this is **II Peter 2:4-6. Read**

It's argued that these are angels who sinned and are chained waiting for judgment, therefore they must be the spirits in prison in I Peter 3.

Actually what Peter is getting across here is the fact of God's judgment and he uses 3

example to show God's judgment has happened in the past and will happen again.

His three examples are

1. The angels who followed Satan in their original rebellion
2. The people destroyed in the Noahic flood
3. Sodom and Gomorrah.

Three different judgments at three different times for three different reasons.

The chains of darkness aren't physical chains that keep fallen angels in one place. Fallen angels are demons that move about in this world at the command of their leader Satan.

Chains of darkness means they are shut out of the light of God's grace. There is no forgiveness for the angels that sinned. They are like condemned prisoners awaiting their doom with no hope of a reprieve.

There is one more passage used to try to justify this interpretation of angels in Genesis 6 and that's in Jude. **Turn to Jude page 1086 Read verses 5-7.**

It's argued that "the angels who did not keep their proper domain" were those who took on human form and committed fornication with the women of the time. And that they did this just like Sodom and Gomorrah who went after "strange flesh," or sexual sin, immorality.

Well again that's reading a lot into this passage that isn't there. Their proper domain was the place of service to God. They left that to serve Satan.

Then verse 7 isn't saying that Sodom and Gomorrah committed the same type of sin that the angels did. The "as" refers to the concept of God's judgment, not the type of sin they committed.

God judged the people who came out of Egypt because they didn't believe Him. God judged the angels who rebelled because of their rebellion. And God judged Sodom and Gomorrah because of their wickedness.

The common denominator to all of this is judgment, not a specific type of sin. God will judge. That is the point.

**Now go back with me to Genesis 6.**

The argument moves along like this. Putting all these other verses together these fallen angels cohabitated with human women and this then brought about God's warning of verse 3.

**Read verse 3** 120 years and that's it. The flood's coming.

Now I want you to read over verse 4 very carefully with me so that we don't make the same interpretative error that so many others have when they assumed that the giants were the offspring of these fallen angels and human women.

**Read verse 4**

Interpreting the Bible isn't too hard when you just read carefully. Does this verse say that the giants were a result of this union between the sons of God and the daughters of men?

It's saying there were giants in the earth in those days. And there were also giants in the earth after that when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men.

And if you look up Numbers 13:33 you will find that 860 years later the sons Anak were called by this very same name - Giants.

Just because an angel might be able to take on the appearance of a human being certainly didn't give them the capacity to father a child.

The translation "giants" is a very unfortunate one. It comes from the Septuagint, which was a translation of the Old Testament into Greek done around 100 years before the time of Christ. The Septuagint used the Greek word *gigantes*.

Actually the Hebrew word is *nephilim*. If you have an NIV, you'll notice that the translators didn't actually translate the word they took it as a proper name the Nephilim.

Nephilim is a noun from the verb *naphal* which means "to fall." Specifically to fall on someone in the sense of attacking them or robbing them. Nephilim are not the "fallen ones" but rather "those who fall on others." These are "the attackers, the robbers, the bandits."

**Now read verse 5.**

The wickedness of whom? The Hebrew is *adam* - "man," it was man's heart that was evil.

Now, go back to verse one and two and instead of looking at this as angels see it this way. The descendants of the godly patriarchs abandoned their spiritual heritage.

The sons of God were those who came from the godly line. The daughters of men, were those of the ungodly line. in other words they were people of flesh not people of God.

This always was and always will be Satan's chief plan of attack. The quickest way to corrupt a godly people is to cause them to mix in an improper way with an ungodly one.

The ungodliness of the one group always ultimately pollutes the godliness of the other. *Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits.* I Corinthians 15:33

See there were a few godly individuals at this time but as they began to intermarry, and remember all these men in chapter 5 had other sons and daughters, there were a lot of people on the earth at this time. But as they began to intermarry society turned farther and farther away from God until the seed of the woman was in danger of extinction.

Satan would have the victory if he could stamp out the line of the coming Messiah.

So (verse 3) God says, my Spirit will not continue to do the work of restraining and reproaching man because he is degenerate.

*I. The Compromise Of The Godly*

*II. The Absolute Wickedness Of The Human Race*

People were no longer simply sinful, as they had been right along since the fall; the whole race had sunk to the level of flesh - just plain old flesh - like cattle - no spirit left in man - totally abandoned to a life of sin. Man at this point has forfeited all hope of the further efforts of God's grace. He deserves nothing.

And yet, God says, he still will have 120 years. A 120 years more of my grace.

God's grace always goes far beyond anything that we could ever deserve . What humanity deserved was to be wiped out right then. But God used Noah, a preacher of righteousness to give out His message to people right up until the time the flood came.

See, this interpretation puts the responsibility where it belongs. Squarely on the shoulders of human beings. Angels hadn't even been mentioned yet in the book of Genesis, this would be a weird way to introduce them.

God is angry with man because it is man who rebels against God.

Now in verse 4 those Nephalim, those robbers and bandits who fall on others to rob them, became more and more prevalent.

They became men of renown, literally men of “name.”

These guys were the heroes of antiquity. They achieved notoriety for their violence.

Jump ahead to verses 11 & 12 for a moment. **Read 11 & 12**

These were violent days and those who were the most violent, gained the most renown. But as is so often the case, those who are esteemed by men aren't esteemed by God, but just the opposite is true.

God saw their true condition. The only thing they could think of was evil.

God's Spirit was striving. God's Spirit was convicting. But man refused the Spirit of God. His heart, his inner most being, his mind hated righteousness and loved evil.

What a contrast with the original creation. There we read that God saw that it was good. Now just 5 chapters later God sees the total and complete wickedness of mankind.

*I. The Compromise Of The Godly*

*II. The Absolute Wickedness Of The Human Race*

*III. The Promise Of God's Judgment*



What was God's reaction to this unbridled sin and violence that sounds so contemporary?

**Read verses 6 & 7**

Verse 6 is obviously an anthropomorphic expression. In other words, it's a way of explaining the actions of God in human terms.

It doesn't mean that God decided that he had made a miscalculation or a mistake, or that he couldn't make up his mind what he wanted.

What is shown is a change of God's actions resulting from a change in the objects of God's actions.

Martin Luther said "Such expressions are found in the scriptures so that we mortals with our feeble understanding might be helped to catch hold on divine truth according to the measure of our poor human ability."

God's reaction to the violence and wickedness that characterized society was one of grief and anger. God is holy and therefore He can't help but be grieved and angry with sin.

And so He said, "That's it. I'm going to wipe out this earth and start again." And that's exactly what he did through a universal, cataclysmic flood, that destroyed the whole earth.

The world that perished was a wicked world, a violent world, one in which the people of God had compromised until godliness had been almost entirely polluted. That world sounds a whole lot like our world today, doesn't it?

Jesus said, *And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man.* Luke 17:26

When Jesus Christ returns again the 2nd time as King of kings and Lord of lords to defeat the armies of the antichrist and establish His rule over this earth it is going to be just like it was in the days of Noah.

Jesus even asked the question, *when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?* Luke 18:8 There wasn't much in Noah's day.

And you know if you look around the world you will find that out of the 6.8 billion people there's not a whole lot in our day either.

Jesus said, *For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.* Matthew 24:38-39

They were wicked days, violent days, evil days, and days that were characterized by apathy. Everybody was just doing life thinking that God would never judge.

We saw last week that Enoch was a preacher who spoke against the ungodliness of his day.

Noah was a just man, a preacher of righteousness, a prophet who warned of judgment to come. But nobody listened. They were too busy with life. Getting out of it what they could. Doing their thing.

Jesus said, *They did not know...*

How could they not know? They had the message preached over and over. Noah worked on that ark for 120 years. How could they not know?

It was because they were willingly ignorant. God's Spirit was speaking to them but they didn't want to believe because they loved their sin and didn't want to have to face up to God's righteousness.

Isn't that the way it is today? Hollywood cranks out one sleazy flick after another and Americans flock to see them.

The California legislature sacrifices the God ordained concept of marriage for political correctness. No big deal.

Every year our distilleries turn out enough liquor and beer to get every man, woman and child drunk a hundred time over and our kids grow up thinking alcohol is just a natural part of life. Going to be great sports figure? Got to drink that beer.

You know what? Down in their hearts most people know this stuff is wrong. But we don't want to admit it because we want life our way instead of God's way.

We have a conscience, the law of God written in our hearts, God's holy Spirit convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment, but too many times we're willingly ignorant.

Jesus Christ is coming back again. The Bible says that first he'll come in the clouds to take believers off the earth. Then will come 7 years of tribulation in which literally all hell will break loose on earth. And then finally Jesus will return in judgment to establish His rule as King of kings.

And just as surely as God judged Sodom and Gomorrah and the angels and the world of Noah's day God will judge our world too.

What is the message of Genesis 6 to us today? Actually, it comes in two parts.

First, God holds us responsible for our rebellion against Him. It's us who's rebelled. We may not all be the very worst that we can be, but we have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory.

If we accept God's judgment on our sinful and rebellious nature then there's hope.

God sent a Savior. Satan couldn't stop the Messiah from coming. It was Jesus Christ and He went to the cross to bear God's holy judgment for our sins.

Don't willingly reject God's pronouncement that you're a sinner, we all are. Instead accept the provision for sinners that He made for you.

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16*

And then I think there's a second part to the message of Genesis 6 and that is the frightening results of mixing with unrighteousness, with compromising with evil.

The sons of God mixed with the daughters of men and evil took over. That godly line of Seth should have been the salt of the earth and the light of the world, instead they became so conformed to the world that God's message was all but lost.

What a challenge to us as Christians to be in the world but not of it. To be holy, to be pure, to be grieved and angry over sin and unrighteousness, to never compromise our walk with God.

It's never easy to live a godly life in an ungodly age. But God says, *My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.* II Corinthians 12:19 I'll give you the power to do it and I'll plant joy in your heart when you do!.

Let's take holiness seriously!