

Genesis Chapters 1-11

Summer 2010 Adult Bible Elective

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Outline of Genesis

- I. Primeval History (1:1-11:26)
 - A. God's creation and ordering of heaven and earth (1:1-2:3)
 - B. Earth's first people (2:4-4:26)
 - C. Adam's descendants (5:1-6:8)
 - 1. The family line from Adam to Noah (5:1-32)
 - 2. The wickedness of humanity (6:1-8)
 - D. Noah's descendants (6:9-9:29)
 - E. The descendants of Noah's sons (10:1-11:9)
 - F. Shem's descendants (11:10-26)
- II. Patriarchal History (11:27-50:26)

Genesis 6:1-8

- How does this passage relate to what is before & after it
 - Before this are the genealogies of Adam's sons Cain & Seth
 - After this is the flood account
- What is the relationship between verses 1-4 & 5-8
- Genesis 6:1-4
 - Relatively short passage
 - Many difficult questions about this passage
 - Hard to answer these questions with certainty

Genesis 6:1-4

- Genesis 6:1 shows the growth of humanity
 - This is the result of Adam's descendants having sons & daughters
- 'the sons of God'
 - There are 3 traditional interpretations
 - Angels
 - Rulers or judges
 - Descendants of Seth

Genesis 6:1-4

- Sons of God are angels
 - The oldest view
 - Held by Jews before the time of Christ
 - The phrase is used for angels in the Old Testament
 - Job 1:6 – Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.
 - 1 Enoch teaches that the sons of God were angels
 - A book from the Pseudepigrapha

Genesis 6:1-4

- Sons of God are angels
 - Held by the early Christian church
 - The New Testament may teach this
 - 2 Peter 2:4
 - For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment
 - Jude 6
 - And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day

Genesis 6:1-4

- Arguments against the sons of God are angels
 - In the Old Testament the phrase refers to a heavenly court rather than individual angels
 - The New Testament passages may mean something else
 - The punishment focuses on humans not angels
 - The New Testament implies that angels are not sexual beings
 - Matthew 22:30 – For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.
- This view is not common today

Genesis 6:1-4

- Sons of God are aristocrats or judges
 - Jewish interpretation that began around 200 AD
 - Elohim can mean judge in the Old Testament
 - Exodus 22:8 – If the thief is not found, the owner of the house shall come near to God to show whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor's property.
 - The daughters of man would be people of low social standing
 - The problem was mixing social classes
 - This view is not held by Christians today

Genesis 6:1-4

- Sons of God are despotic rulers
 - A modern variation of the older Jewish interpretation
 - Rulers were seen as having descended from gods in the ancient near east
 - Authorities are to be God's representatives
 - These are cruel rulers who had large harems
 - They are like Lamech the descendant of Cain
 - He gloried in violence & had multiple wives
 - Genesis 6:1-4 returns to Cain's descendants
 - A modification of this is that the rulers were demon possessed

Genesis 6:1-4

- Sons of God are godly descendants of Seth
 - A Christian interpretation that began around 200 AD
 - Israel is described as the sons of God in the Old Testament
 - Deuteronomy 14:1 – You are the sons of the LORD your God.
 - Israel is warned against intermarrying with other nations in the Pentateuch
 - The daughters of man would be the descendants of Cain
 - Possibly they were daughters from all peoples
 - No concern for relationship with God
 - This connects with the genealogies in chapters 4 & 5

Genesis 6:1-4

	<u>Sons of God</u>	<u>Daughters of Man</u>
1	Angels	Humans
2a	Aristocrats	Commoners
2b	Despotic Rulers	Forced Polygamy
3a	Line of Seth	Line of Cain
3b	Line of Seth	Spiritual Apathy

Genesis 6:1-4

- The daughters of man
 - Determined by the interpretation of sons of God
- The marriages were overstepping some boundary
 - Polygamy
 - Faithfulness to God
- Parallel to the fall in Genesis 3
 - Eve saw it was good
 - Eve took the fruit

Genesis 6:1-4

- ‘his days shall be 120 years’
 - A reduction in the lifespan of people
 - The individuals in chapter 5 had very long lives
 - Following the flood there is a reduction of lifespan
 - The Pentateuch ends with the death of Moses at 120 years old
 - The time until the flood
 - A period of grace to allow repentance

Genesis 6:1-4

- The Nephilim
 - Are they the children of the sons of God and daughters of man
 - Numbers 13:33 mentions the Nephilim in Canaan
 - These are the words of the spies that wanted to frighten the Israelites
 - The spies may have meant people as powerful as the Nephilim
 - The spies may have been lying
 - They were not descendants of the Nephilim in Genesis 6:3

Genesis 6:1-4

- The Nephilim
 - ‘the mighty men of old’
 - The sons of corrupt rulers who were mighty warriors
 - People like Cain’s descendant Lamech who boasted of his evil deeds
- The Nephilim & the mighty men of old were not divine beings but human beings
 - They were part of God’s creation
 - They were under God’s authority

Genesis 6:5-8

- ‘The LORD saw’ & ‘the LORD was sorry’
 - This is in contrast with Genesis 1:31
 - And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good
- The 3 verbs describing God in 6:6 are related to Lamech’s naming of Noah in 5:29
 - Comfort / Grieved
 - Labor / Made
 - Painful Toil / Pain

Genesis 6:5-8

- God's judgment on humankind will affect the animals under their dominion
- 'Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD'
 - The consonants in the Hebrew words 'Noah' and 'favor' are the same but in reverse order
- Within human wickedness & God's judgment there is a glimmer of hope

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 - C. Adam's descendants (5:1-6:8)
 - D. Noah's descendants (6:9-9:29)
 - 1. Noah and the flood (6:9-9:19)
 - 2. The cursing of Canaan (9:20-29)
 - E. The descendants of Noah's sons (10:1-11:9)
 - F. Shem's descendants (11:10-26)
- II. Patriarchal History (11:27-50:26)

Genesis 6:9-9:29

- There are many parallels between Genesis 1-3 and 6-9
 - Creation / Creation undone & restores
 - Fall / Noah's drunkenness
- Chiasm
 - A reversal of word order for literary effect
 - a, b, b', a'
 - Genesis 1:27a – (So God created man) (in his own image), (in the image of God) (he created him);
 - The central element is emphasized in an extended chiasm

Genesis 6:9-8:22

- Introduction (6:9-10)
 - A God resolves to destroy the corrupt race (6:11-13)
 - B Noah builds an ark according to God's instructions (6:14-22)
 - C The Lord commands the remnant to enter the ark (7:1-9)
 - D The flood begins (7:10-16)
 - E The flood prevails 150 days and the water covers the mountains (7:17-24)
 - F God remembers Noah (8:1a)
 - E' The flood recedes 150 days, and the mountains are visible (8:1b-5)
 - D' The earth dries (8:6-14)
 - C' God commands the remnant to leave the ark (8:15-19)
 - B' Noah builds an altar (8:20)
 - A' The Lord resolves not to destroy humankind (8:21-22)

Genesis 6:9-22

- Noah was righteous, blameless & walked with God
 - Genesis 5:24 – Enoch walked with God
- The reason for the flood was moral corruption
- Genesis 6:13-22
 - 6:13 God's announcement of judgment
 - 6:14-16 God's instructions for building the ark
 - 6:17 God's announcement of judgment
 - 6:18-21 God's instructions for entering the ark
 - 6:22 Noah's execution

Genesis 6:9-22

- The ark
 - The Hebrew word is also used for the basket that Moses was placed in as a baby
 - Exodus 2:3 & 5
 - Both the Noah's ark & Moses' basket are covered with pitch
 - 450 feet long x 75 feet wide x 45 feet high
 - Assuming 1 cubit equals 18 inches
 - Most likely a barge with flat bottom & square corners
 - Longer than any other wooden ship ever made
 - Did not need to be navigated

Genesis 6:9-22

- The extent of the flood
 - Global Flood
 - Covering the entire planet
 - Killing all humanity & animals
 - Universal Flood
 - Covering a large region
 - Killing all humanity
 - Killing only those animals in the region
 - Local Flood
 - Covering a large region
 - Killing only those people & animals in the region

Genesis 6:9-22

- 6:17 – Everything that is on the earth shall die
 - Global scope for the flood
 - Phenomenological language
 - Presented from Noah's limited viewpoint
 - Hyperbolic language
 - A deliberate exaggeration to make a point
- Exodus 41:57
 - Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.

Genesis 6:9-22

- 6:18 – Covenant
 - This is the 1st time that the word appears
 - Royal Grant Covenant
 - A greater party bestows a benefit upon a lesser party
 - Only the greater party is under an obligation
 - The covenant is only given because Noah walked with God
- 6:18-21 – ‘you’ is singular
 - Salvation for Noah’s family & the animals comes through Noah

Genesis 6:9-22

- God's description of what Noah is to bring onto the ark parallels the language in Genesis 1
 - God is preserving what he declared good in Genesis 1:31
- Noah obeys
 - It is a matter of obeying God or not
 - Like the choice before Adam & Eve in the garden

Week 6

- Genesis 7
 - The Floodwaters Come