

Depravity and the Deluge

¹ Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, ² that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they *were* beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. ³ And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he *is* indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." ⁴ There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore *children* to them. Those *were* the mighty men who *were* of old, men of renown. ⁵ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. ⁶ And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷ So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." ⁸ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. ⁹ This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. (Genesis 6:1–9)

In the last 20 or 30 years, there has been the rise of what some call crypto-archaeology. Crypto means hidden, so crypto-archaeologists believe that the real story of human civilisation has been misunderstood and hidden from mainstream archaeology. Mainstream archaeology tends to accept Darwinian evolution, which puts homo sapiens developing around 100 000 years ago, stone-age hunter-gatherers settling around 15 000 B.C., and the first real societies developing around 4000 B.C. in Mesopotamia. But these crypto-archaeologists keep finding evidence of advanced civilisation before it was supposed to exist. Many of them now believe that a global cataclysm, a global flood, wiped out advanced civilisation thousands of years ago.

Now not many of these would agree with the narrative and timeline of the book of Genesis, but it is interesting to see more and more archaeologists departing from the Darwinian narrative, and finding themselves closer and closer to what the Bible has said all along.

Genesis 6 gets us to the Great Flood of chapters 7, 8, and 9. In these few verses, we encounter a very foreign world, the pre-Flood world, or antediluvian world, as it is called. Peter even writes that "the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water." (2 Peter 3:6) A different world. So much so, that after the Flood, there are several parallels in the language of Genesis 9 to the creation account, enough to alert us that the Flood was mostly the end of one world, and the beginning of another, the one we are in now.

Much of this first world, the world from Adam to Noah, is now hidden from us. Likely the vast majority of human artefacts from that period were buried by cataclysmic amounts of water and silt, or even collapsed into tectonic shifts of continental plates. Some of the animals from this period are found in our fossil record, but I believe most of our most ancient human artefacts date from after the Flood.

Given the small amount of space given to it, clearly it was not God's intention to have us dwell on this evil age, or be drawn in to too much speculation. Just a few verses summarise essentially 2-3 thousand years, from Adam to Noah. There are 1189 chapters in the Bible, 1178 of them focus on the 2000 years from Abraham to Christ. Eleven chapters deal with the first 2-3000 years. And that should give us pause, because today there is an absolute explosion of interest in the events of these few verses, books and websites aplenty on the Nephilim, the Giants, the Watchers, the book of Enoch.

Here in the first nine verses of Genesis 6 we really have the reason for the Flood. Clearly it is intended to explain, in the briefest possible way, why that world perished under water. The story unfolds as one of demonic depravity, divine decision, and a distinctive deliverer.

I. Demonic Depravity

¹ Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, ² that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they *were* beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.

As the human population expanded, the sons of God, bene elohim, saw their beauty, desired it, and took women as their consorts. It's implied that this was evil, because the very next verse has God saying And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he *is* indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.

In other words, I will not perpetually try to restrain man's evil, and bear with it, there comes a time when God must simply uproot the evil plant altogether.

So what was wrong with these marriages?

Now there are two major theories as to who the sons of God and the daughters of men are. The one theory is that the sons of God represent the godly line of Seth, seen in the previous chapter's genealogy. The daughters of men would be the line of Cain, seen in chapter 4's genealogy. This theory suggests that the godly family began intermarrying with the ungodly, causing everyone to be corrupted. The problem with that theory is that there is nothing in the previous chapters that suggests the two families kept absolutely distinct from the other, or that intermarriage was forbidden. Even though Adam is called the son of God, his descendants through Seth are never called the sons of God. This theory also fails to explain why the offspring of the line of Seth and the line of Cain would have produced the giants of verse 4. This theory was held by some rabbis and became the view of Judaism. It was also the view of Augustine.

The second theory says that the sons of God are angels, fallen angelic beings and the daughters of men are regular human women. In fact, this is the only way that the term sons of God is used in the OT – to refer to angels. In an act of great rebellion, certain angels assumed a physical form, and actually married and mated with human women. Their offspring were not normal humans, but hybrids with unusual size and strength. Now, as odd and mysterious as that sounds this was the view of the Jewish people in the time between the Old Testament and the coming of Christ. This is the view found in several Jewish books written during this time, such as the book of Enoch, Jubilees, The Testament of Reuben, 2 Baruch, and in the Dead Sea Scrolls. It's found in Josephus as well. Not only so, but it is found in one form or another in nearly every ancient mythology: ancient Greek and Roman mythology, Egyptian, Sumerian, and many others have some form of the idea that gods, demigods or godlike beings chose to marry mortals, and their offspring was superhuman. Think of the Titans in Greek mythology, or Hercules. Now none of this would be authoritative for us, but two verses in the New Testament seem to assume this interpretation of Genesis 6:

⁴ For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; ⁵ and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of eight people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; (2 Peter 2:4–5)

⁶ And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; (Jude 6)

Notice two things. Jude and Peter say that these particular angels sinned and left their proper habitation, and that for this sin they have been imprisoned. And the word for Hell that Peter employs here is not the usual Greek word Hades or Gehenna, but the word *Tartarus*, which was a place name in Greek mythology for a section of Hades that was a prison for gods. Peter and Jude tell us these particular fallen angels are chained up and lost whatever freedoms fallen angels still

have. It's quite possible that these are some of the angels released during the Tribulation period, to wreak their havoc on the world.

Now the usual objection against this theory is that Jesus once answered the Sadducees' question about who would be married to whom in the resurrection by saying the following: “³For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. (Matthew 22:30)

From that, people have assumed that angels couldn't be the ones involved here because Jesus said the angels do not marry. But notice a few things. First, Jesus is speaking of the angels in Heaven, which clearly refers to the unfallen, holy angels. Angels that stick to their natural domain do not marry each other or seek to do so with humans. But this is the natural order of Heaven. Genesis 6 is describing a fall, depravity, the warping of God's order.

Second, notice that Jesus doesn't say that the angels cannot marry; He says they do not. They do not because that is simply not the order of angelic society. But to say they cannot would be to assume that angels have no ability to assume a human form, and thereby participate in human life. But the Bible has plenty of occasions when angels assumed physical form. The angels that visited Abraham in his tent were able to eat and drink. The angel that wrestled with Jacob was obviously physical enough to have wrestled with Jacob for several hours. In the book of Daniel, some angels appeared to Daniel in the form of a man. The same happened to Joshua, to Manoah and his wife, to Joseph, to Zechariah, to Mary. They often appear not as childlike beings with wings, but as men, often clothed in white, often with swords in their hands. So it does not seem impossible, by the Bible's own descriptions, for fallen angels to have assumed a form where they could marry and mate. The Bible condemns it, but it appears this is what they did. In a kind of reverse rapture, they left their glorified spirit bodies to adopt earthly ones.

Why would they have done this? One reason is given. They simply began to lust. They were already fallen, and their desires now were corrupted. They saw beautiful women, and no longer loved in purity, but desired to have and consume.

I think there is possibly another reason. Not simply lust, but also lordship. Satan and his angels have desired the throne of the earth and its kingdoms. One way to do that would be to actually change and pollute the bloodline of the human race. That would firstly stop the promised Messiah from coming- you can't have demonic DNA and be the Messiah, and it would secondly make the human race their own children. Children of the fallen ones, no longer descendant of Adam, made directly by God. The genealogy of Cain stops at Lamech – perhaps he was the last genuinely human descendant before all descended into demonic hybrids.

It is possible that they offered mankind knowledge in exchange for these marriages. This is another fixture in ancient mythology, that the gods provided mankind with secrets, technologies that made this civilisation very advanced.

Look further at what this depravity produced.

⁴ There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore *children* to them. Those *were* the mighty men who *were* of old, men of renown. ⁵ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.

The offspring of these unnatural cohabitations were what verse 4 calls giants. The end of verse 4 seems to tell us that these giants were the result of these marriages. The Hebrew word translated giants is nephillim, which means “those who have fallen”. Now when the Old Testament was translated into Greek, the Jewish translators chose to use the Greek word *gigantes* in their

translation of Genesis 6. The word calls to mind the monstrous Titans—demigods that were destroyed by other gods in Greek myth, and chained in Tartarus.

So why does the Bible call them mighty men, men of renown? These demonic hybrids were the supermen of society, men of such strength, lords, rulers, and elites of the pre-Flood world, though God does not care to name them. It seems these offspring of fallen angels and women became the masters of society. Undoubtedly, if they'd had time to have more offspring, you would have had a super-race alongside normal human beings. And very soon the super-race would have enslaved, hunted and destroyed normal humans, until the only kind of human left, would have been demonic hybrids.

How interesting to see, in our day, the push for another super-race. Through DNA engineering, through bionics, through implants, some are striving not to improve our state, but to re-imagine it all together. Not repair, restore, rejuvenate human life, but recreate it, redesign it, remake it so that we will transcend any current limits on age, memory, or human strength. The fascination with the occult, and with UFOs demonstrates a renewed desire to repeat some of this genetic distortion.

What is meant by “and also afterward”? It seems that Moses is referring to the fact that these Nephilim appear again after the Flood. We meet them again when Joshua enters the promised land, and they appear to be there as late as the time of David. So did the Nephilim survive the Flood? Scripture is clear that everything that was not on the Ark, and was not a water creature died in the Flood. Indeed, if one of the purposes of the Flood was to wipe out the hybrids, and their domination of mankind, it would be something of a massive failure to Flood the whole earth and then fail to eliminate some of the central targets. No, they perished in the Flood. So either there was a small-scale repeat of this sin by some angels after the Flood, focussing specifically on the land of Canaan, or perhaps something of the Nephilim bloodline passed down, possibly through Ham or one of his wives, as it is his son Canaan who is the ancestor of Nimrod and other Nephilim.

Verse 5 gives us a summary of society: ⁵ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

We're beginning to see why the whole world needed to be cleansed. Here is a world descending into satanic rebellion. Man's wickedness is great, his thoughts are perpetually evil. With supermen ruling, there was undoubtedly war, probably world war.

¹¹ The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. ¹³ And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. (Genesis 6:11–13)

His very DNA is being corrupted. The fallen angels are attempting to make sure the Messiah born of woman cannot come.

II. The Divine Decision

And the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he *is* indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.

⁶ And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷ So the LORD said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.”

God's response to this wickedness is to say that His Holy Spirit does not and will not always resist

and restrain the sin of society. Man is mortal, and God can put an end to this. God says “yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”

Is 120 years the time until the flood, or is it the future lifespan of man? It appears to be the time period that God gave from when He announced this to Noah, until the day the Flood came.

And then we read of God's affections, His very heart regarding man. ⁶ And the LORD was **sorry** that He had made man on the earth, and He was **grieved** in His heart.for I am **sorry** that I have made them.”

How can the Lord be sorry? Believers have struggled to understand statements like this in light of the fact that the rest of Scripture reveals God as all-knowing, sovereign, and powerful. God is not frustrated the way we are, because He never faces obstacles too great for Him. Nor does God change, because to change for the better or the worse implies you are not perfect. He doesn't make mistakes. But this appears, on the surface, to be a statement of God experiencing unforeseen regret, frustration, as if this is a project that went wrong for God.

But that is not what is being said here at all. Instead, the verse is simply stating God's deep grief at mankind's sin. It was not unexpected or surprising to God. It was simply grievous, saddening, painful.

In Himself, God's emotions are not like ours, shaped by things that surprise us, or alarm us, or amaze us. But however perfect God's affections may be within Himself, Scripture nevertheless communicates God's being to us in terms we recognise: genuine sorrow, genuine grief. Man, the image-bearer of God, has now become a parody of God. Man, the royal heir, is acting like a beast, and soiling his royal garments more every day. God is genuinely grieved.

So God announces the divine decision. “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air”

God will destroy, almost completely, man with his corrupted bloodline.

Is this a do-over? Yes, and no. In one way, it is definitely a clean start, wiping the earth of a demonic infection, destroying anything in creation that was demonically inspired, and resetting human culture back to one family.

But in another way, it is not a do-over, it is the next phase in the grand story of God's creation. When we read the Bible from beginning to end, we see God creating different arrangements, or economies, in which God relates to man, in which man has a particular stewardship. Right now, we are in the economy, or dispensation of the church age. Before this economy was the dispensation of the Law. Those ages had different covenants, and different requirements and stewardships. At the very beginning, we call it the dispensation of innocence. Adam and Eve lived in innocence of sin, and had only one test: to not eat of the tree. They failed, and that introduces the economy of conscience. God promises the Seed of the woman will crush the serpent, but in the meantime, man must approach God by faith, by sacrifice, and walk with God. Here we see the failure, and God will send the Flood, and move man into the next stage of redemptive history, which we call the dispensation of human government. So while it is a fresh start, it is not a mistake. It is the next phase.

It is also a profound warning to the angelic realm not to attempt this sin without dire consequences.

But the story ends with good news.

III. The Distinctive Deliverer

⁸ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. ⁹ This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.

Notice the order of these statements. First comes grace in verse 8, then comes just and perfect in verse 9. Grace is God initiating the relationship, showing love and mercy to the undeserved. Noah was not just and perfect by himself and in himself. Indeed, just a few chapters later we read of him getting drunk and disgracing himself. No, the text means that God kindly offered Noah salvation. God revealed to Noah truth about Himself, and invited Him to respond in faith.

The book of Hebrews tells us that Noah exercised faith:

⁷ By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. (Hebrews 11:7)

God showed Noah grace, Noah responded in faith, and that's how he became just. Just like Abraham in 15:6. ⁶ And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. (Genesis 15:6)

Faith is what God values, because faith is trust in God's person. Faith comes without pride, without our own merit, and looks to the worthiness and the trustworthiness of God Himself. Long before the identity of Messiah was made known to the world, people were responsible to respond in faith to the One True God. Believe that He is, and believe that if you diligently seek Him, you will find Him.

Noah accepted grace, God justified him, and that's how he was blameless, perfect in his era. Noah did what his great-grandfather Enoch had done. He walked with God. He lived in union with God.

In stark contrast to a world given to violence, evil thoughts, sexual immorality, Noah walked with God. He was distinctive, and so he would become the deliverer. His name means “rest”, and he would give the world rest after the turmoil of this terrifying age.

Once again, the happiest word in this passage, is the word grace. Though there were likely billions of people in the world, all provoking God to anger with their corruption, God did strive with man. God does not give us what we do deserve, and He is willing to give us the good we don't deserve.

That's still true today. Jesus said the last days would be like the days of Noah. We are again seeing a massive rise in the occult, in open worship and celebration of evil. We are seeing a return to corrupt sexualities. We are seeing the desire to distort and warp the very DNA of humans, and remake ourselves and the world in our own image. We're seeing violence everywhere, domination of others.

But like Noah, you are offered grace. ¹¹ For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, (Titus 2:11). If you, like Noah, accept God grace in His Son, Jesus, you have His gift of righteousness, and justice. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8–9)

You too, may then enter into His rest, be a Noah in your own generation.