

## Genesis 6A (2011)

- We return to Chapter 5 only briefly to see an introduction to Noah and the flood story

[Gen. 5:28](#) Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son.

[Gen. 5:29](#) Now he called his name Noah, saying, "This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the LORD has cursed."

[Gen. 5:30](#) Then Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years after he became the father of Noah, and he had other sons and daughters.

[Gen. 5:31](#) So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died.

[Gen. 5:32](#) Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

- Methuselah was the father of Lamech, and he lives longer than his own father, Enoch and longer than his son, Lamech
  - Lamech is introduced here just long enough to connect the dots between Methuselah and Lamech's famous son
    - We can see that Moses believes that Lamech's son is worth our focused attention
      - Because Moses goes out of his way to tell us about the naming of this particular boy
  - When Lamech named his son, he called him Noah, saying he will give us rest from our work and from the toil of the curse on the Earth
    - The boy's name literally means comfort, in the sense of rest
  - But look at Lamech's statement
    - Is Noah going to accomplish these things?
    - Will Noah put an end to our work and to the curse on the Earth?
      - No
    - But we can make sense of Lamech's statement in two ways
      - First, he is likely making the same mistake that Eve made a few generations earlier

- He must have received a indication from God that Noah would play a special role in God's plan for redemption
- But then Lamech went too far and assumed Noah was to be the promised seed, the Messiah
- So Lamech names Noah and claims he will put an end to the curse and bring our work to an end
  - Clearly, he was wrong
- But by his statement, Lamech does create through his son a picture of the coming Messiah
  - For the coming Messiah does give us rest from our work, the work of trying to earn our own salvation
  - And eventually, the Messiah's reign on Earth will bring the curse to an end
- So now having inadvertently established his son as a picture of the Messiah's saving work, we begin the story of the flood

**Gen. 6:1** Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them,

**Gen. 6:2** that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.

**Gen. 6:3** Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

**Gen. 6:4** The Nephilim were 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.

- Moses now begins the story of Noah and the Flood
  - More specifically, Moses moves from talking about Adam's sons to the daughters of men
    - And the daughters of men become the backstory for why the Flood was necessary
  - Moses sets the scene with an intriguing passage describing intermarriage between daughters of men and the sons of God
    - There is some debate concerning what Moses is describing here, but I believe the answer is fairly straightforward

- First, notice that whatever Moses is describing in vv.1-2, the obvious point is that this event is notable and unusual
  - Otherwise, why would Moses take effort to describe marriage in the normal sense?
- Furthermore, the terms Moses uses tell us that this isn't a typical marriage
  - He says daughters of men, which is easy enough to understand
  - Then Moses says these daughters were attracting the attention of the sons of God (*ben elohim*)
    - The Bible never refers to natural men as the sons of God
    - The only other references to "*ben elohim*" are found in Job and all refer to angels
  - Even the Septuagint translated "sons of God" as angels of God
- If these were angels, then we must also conclude that these angels were of the demonic kind – disobedient, fallen angels
  - Jude gives us a confirmation of this event

**[Jude 6](#) And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, [Jude 7](#) just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.**

- Jude says that angels did not keep their own domain but went after strange flesh
  - These demons are now undergoing punishment of eternal fire as examples
- As we look at the text in Genesis 6, we can find an interesting parallel to Genesis 3
  - In Genesis 3 we're told that the woman saw the fruit was good and took it

- In Genesis 6:2, the demon realm does exactly the same thing to woman
- They look, see that woman is beautiful and take her
  - It was an act of rebellion and sin
- The question then becomes why would the demonic realm want to mate with women?
  - The answer brings us back to the theme of the book of Genesis: the seed that will fulfill God's promise to redeem men from sin
    - The demons and their master Satan understand that God has promised to crush them with a Messiah, a Seed who comes in keeping with God's promise in the Garden
    - But that Seed will come through woman specifically
      - The promise of the coming Messiah was given to Eve and was a privilege that women would share
      - In fact, the desire of every Jewish girl's heart was that she might have the blessing of birthing the Messiah
  - Therefore, the demons began to mate with women to corrupt the human race and the seed line to the Messiah
    - If the lines of men were sufficiently corrupted, then there would be no seed line available for God to carry through on His promise
  - How could such an unholy union be possible?
    - We remember from other passages of Scripture that angels (demons) have the ability to appear to men in human form
      - And they can convey a convincing illusion
        - In a later account of Abraham, we will see him eat with angels and not know who they are (at least at first)
        - In the story of Lot, he is visited by two angels that appear to be men and take Lot by the hand to lead him out of the city
      - So we can accept that demons have the ability to imitate and counterfeit human flesh including the seed of men

- So the prospect of demons mating with women isn't impossible to accept under these circumstances, but what of the offspring
  - The passage gives us a description of the offspring in v.4
    - The Bible calls them Nephilim, which means fallen ones in Hebrew
      - But the Septuagint chose to translate the Hebrew word into *gigantes* in Greek, rather than leaving it as a proper noun
      - *Gigantes* means giant in English, but the original Hebrew was not trying to suggest that the offspring of angels and women were giants
    - In fact, it would have been an even greater danger if the offspring were indistinguishable from normal men
      - They would have mixed in more easily and without being easily detectable
  - In the text of v.4 there is a potentially confusing statement I want to clarify
    - Moses says that the Nephilim were on earth in those days and also afterward
      - Some think Moses is implying that this intermarriage continued after the flood
      - They even cite Numbers and the story of the ten spies who reported seeing Nephilim in the promised land
      - The report of the ten spies was not accurate, as the story in Numbers bears out
        - They were lying to persuade the people of Israel not to enter, since they were afraid of the Canaanites
    - Furthermore, it is the syntax of the Hebrew in Genesis 6 that is the cause for our confusion
      - If we read it in the Hebrew, we find that the phrase "and afterward" is connected to the second half of the sentence, not the first half

- Listen to the Septuagint:

**Gen. 6:4** Now the giants were upon the earth in those days; and after that when the sons of God were wont to go in to the daughters of men, they bore children to them, those were the giants of old, the men of renown.

- So, the “afterward” is simply a connecting word in Hebrew to introduce what happened after the demons mated with women
- The offspring are called Nephilim, fallen ones, but they pose a new and significant threat to God’s plan for mankind
  - The introduction of fallen angels into the genealogy of mankind would interfere with God’s plan to bring Messiah into the world as a man
    - Messiah must share in the nature of man in order to redeem man
    - If man’s nature has been corrupted into one that shares the demon nature, God’s plan to bring Messiah would be thwarted
- So in v.3, God says His Spirit shall not strive with men forever
  - The Hebrew word for strive is unique, making it difficult to define since it only occurs here in the entire Bible
    - It probably means to remain with man, as in to keep his physical body alive
      - Remember that God breathed His spirit into man to bring Adam to life
      - But that joining of spirit and flesh was no longer permanent
        - Flesh was now destined to perish because of the curse
    - So God is saying that all flesh is destined to die sooner or later
      - And now the flesh of men was being systematically corrupted by angels
        - So God declares that if an end to flesh is inevitable anyway, He now sets a limit to how long flesh will remain on the earth

- So after 120 years, God will put an end to all corrupted flesh on Earth
  - This becomes the countdown timer until the flood strikes the Earth
  - And it explains the need for such a drastic response on God's part
    - If man's sin alone was reason enough to destroy the world, we should have expected to see it happen many times over

[Gen. 6:5](#) Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

[Gen. 6:6](#) The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

[Gen. 6:7](#) The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them."

[Gen. 6:8](#) But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

- To ensure we have a proper understanding for why the flood occurs, Moses describes a second reason for God's actions
  - While the demonic realm was working to undermine God's plan, the sin of men was also growing to unsustainable levels on the earth
    - The wickedness of men was great, we're told
    - Men have always been sinful
      - But in the world that existed after the Garden, there was little to restrain the power of sin in society
    - The only means God provided for the restraint of sin after the Fall was the conscience of man
      - God has not instituted government nor the death penalty
      - God has not yet delivered His Law
      - So man's sin is only governed by his own conscience
  - Moses explains that man's internal thoughts and imagination were evil continually

- The word imagination is *yatzar*
  - It's the same word used in Gen. 2:7 to describe how God created (*yatsar*) man out of the dust of the ground
  - God used His creative powers to produce something good
  - But corrupted man now uses his creative powers to construct evil continually
- The point of Moses' description is that man's conscience has been shown unable to restrain man's sin
  - Apart from the chosen seed line through Seth, men became entirely evil, because the sin nature cannot be restrained by our conscience
    - And now the sheer number of people, combined with their unrestrained sinfulness, has reached a level God no longer can accept
- Then Moses said that God was sad and He regretted making man
  - Some English versions may even say God repented of making man
    - Whenever we see this description of God, we must understand it in light of all Scripture
      - For example, Scripture teaches clearly that God does not change His mind in the sense of a man
    - We change our mind when we learn new information that alters our understanding and leads us to different conclusions
      - This never happens with God
  - So we must understand v.6 in light of this Biblical truth
    - In this case Moses says God was sorry He made man, but the sense of it – in light of all Scripture – is that God was regretful for how His creation had deteriorated
      - This statement does not imply surprise over circumstances, much less a changed attitude toward creation



- The fact that God planned for this moment doesn't mean that it doesn't pain Him when it finally arrives
  - Rather, God always displays regret or sorrow in the face of sin
    - And so He displays sorrow when He witnesses how man's sin progresses to extreme levels
- In fact, notice in v.7 that God's "sorrow" extends beyond man to include land animals and birds
  - Clearly, sorrow doesn't mean that God feels He made a mistake or changed His mind
  - His sorrow is dissatisfaction in the way sin is overtaking creation
    - And that disappointment was so great that God was grieved and forced to act in response
- God's response is a worldwide judgment that will blot out all these creatures
  - God's response will result in the elimination of all creatures that have *chay nephesh*, or the life blood
    - Notice that fish are excluded, further confirming they are not considered to be creatures with *chay nephesh*
    - So this will be a worldwide judgment from which there is no escape
  - As we progress through the story of Noah, we're also going to take time along the way to examine prophetic clues God has left behind in his story
    - By clues, I'm referring to symbols, pictures, shadows, and other markers taken from the account of Noah that point prophetically to a future moment
    - So as we begin the story of Noah, I want to set the stage for this comparison by highlighting the first clue or marker today
- Moses has opened the story of Noah by describing the times and circumstances of that day
  - And these times share an interesting parallel with something Jesus describes in the Gospels

[Matt. 24:37](#) "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.

[Matt. 24:38](#) "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, [Matt. 24:39](#) and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

- Jesus tells us that His second coming will occur at a time and under circumstances similar to the days of Noah
  - In what way are they similar?
  - There are three ways in which they are comparable, one of which Jesus gives us in vv. 38-39
- First, the days of Noah are marked by hyperactivity among the demonic realm
  - In Noah's day, demons were mating with women
  - In the days immediately before Jesus' return, the Bible in Revelation describes a world in which the Antichrist has been revealed
    - And this man will die in the middle of the seven year tribulation, and after three days his body will come back to life
    - The source of his new life is actually the indwelling of Satan
    - The Antichrist's soul remains in hell, but the body is used by Satan to construct a counterfeit resurrection
  - This is the kind of extreme demonic mixing with humans that mirrors the activity of Noah's day
- Secondly, the depravity of men will reach extreme levels
  - Paul describes the seriousness of this future in 2 Timothy

[2Tim. 3:1](#) But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

[2Tim. 3:2](#) For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

[2Tim. 3:3](#) unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

[2Tim. 3:4](#) treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

[2Tim. 3:5](#) holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

- Remember, Paul isn't saying that these kinds of sin are unique to the end times
  - He's saying that the last days are marked because all men become this way
  - The world as a whole acts this way, rather than just the worst of society
- It seems clear to me that we're moving steadily in this direction
- Finally, Jesus gives us a third way in which the circumstances of Noah's day mirror the times of His return
  - The world is oblivious, and even hostile, to the notion of His return
  - In v.39, Jesus says they didn't understand until the Flood came
    - They didn't understand that Noah's warnings were true
    - They didn't understand that God would bring judgment for sin
    - They didn't understand that they would be included in the judgment
- Today it's easy to see the same kind of attitude in the world
  - The recent predictions of a Rapture by false teachers, and their misguided and deceived followers, gives us memorable proof

A [Facebook](#) page titled "Post-rapture looting" offers this invitation: "When everyone is gone and God's not looking, we need to pick up some sweet stereo equipment and maybe some new furniture for the mansion we're going to squat in." By Wednesday afternoon, more than 175,000 people indicated they would be "attending" the "public event."

In the Army town of Fayetteville, N.C., the local chapter of the American Humanist Association has turned the event into a two-day extravaganza, with a Saturday night party followed by a day-after concert.

The Rapture -- the belief that Christ will bring the faithful into paradise prior to a period of tribulation on earth that precedes the end of time -- is a relatively new notion compared

to [Christianity](#) itself, and most Christians don't believe in it. And even believers rarely attempt to set a date for the event.

- So as we dive into the story of Noah next week, we will continue to look for these parallels