

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-  
Presbyterian Church, 10 Downing St.  
Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS**

**LESSON 5**

**THE BOOK OF GENESIS**

**Chapter 6**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter strikes a sad note in the history of the human race. Since the fall, two lines of the descendants of Adam were traced: the godly line through Seth and the ungodly line through Cain. Sons and daughters were born and the population of the earth increased tremendously partly because of the longevity of man. But man's spiritual condition instead of becoming better and turning to God by calling upon Him, became more violent, wicked and evil. God decided to destroy all the inhabitants of the earth including the animals. This could be seen as an act of mercy because if man was allowed to carry on, what kind of world would it be with increasing deterioration of the spiritual condition of man. Nevertheless in the midst of the decadent spiritual condition of the people, one man namely, Noah, and his family found grace in the eyes of God. God kept Noah and his family secure and specifically instructed him on what to do before the impending global catastrophe

that God had decided to bring upon the earth.

There is much we can learn in this chapter about our sinful nature, God's holiness and grace, and Noah's example. Noah was a man who found grace in the sight of God.

***Marrying and Giving in Marriage***

The repeated phrase "he begat sons and daughters" in chapter 5 explains the opening statement of chapter 6: "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth." The population of the earth had greatly increased.

The LORD was displeased with the way man was living. The "...sons of God saw that the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (v.2).

Who were these "sons of God"? Three views are held: (1) the sons of God were angels, (2) the sons of God were dynastic kings and rulers, (3) the sons of God were the godly Sethites.

The sons of God were angels. The identification that the sons of God were angels rests on the Scriptural support that the expression is used as a reference to angels.<sup>1</sup> This reasoning assumes that the angels took on human form, which has Scriptural support. These were angels, one of whom was the LORD, a theophany (God appeared in human form in the Old Testament).<sup>2</sup> A variation of this view is that the sons

---

<sup>1</sup> Examples: KJV Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. For more details of the argument see Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, pages 262-263.

<sup>2</sup> KJV Genesis 18:2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

of God were fallen angels who possessed and control human beings.<sup>3</sup>

The major argument against this view is that angels do not procreate. The New Testament teaches that angels do not engage in marital relationships.<sup>4</sup> Assuming that they were angels, then the offspring of such a union would be half angels and half human kind. Genesis 1, each after its kind would not permit such a breed, for angels and humankind are two different kinds of bodies. Even if angels were to possess men, their children would be half-angels and half humans. And if angels were the guilty ones, why punish all mankind? Such a view has a mythological element.

The sons of God were dynastic kings and rulers. This second view explains that the “sons of God” refers to dynastic rulers in the line of Cain. The main support for this view is that “judges” were sometimes referred to as “gods (Heb. *Elohim*).”<sup>5</sup> Another reason is that kings in ancient Near Eastern literature were referred to as sons of deities, so this term might have been used in Genesis 6.<sup>6</sup>

The major objection against this view is that while ancient Near East literature does sometimes address a king as a “son of god,” there is no

---

<sup>3</sup> Henry Morris, The Genesis Record, 169. For his full argument, refer pages 165-169.

<sup>4</sup> KJV Matthew 22:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

<sup>5</sup> KJV Exodus 21:6 Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.

<sup>6</sup> John Davis, Paradise to Prison, 113.

evidence that kings are collectively called “sons of God.” Moreover, Scriptures has no reference that kings are deities or sons of deities.

The sons of God were Sethites. The third view interprets the sons of God to refer to the godly line of Sethites and the daughters were the ungodly Cainites. The major support for this understanding is in its context. Chapters 4 and 5 relate the ungodly line of Cain (4:17-24) and the godly line of Seth (4:25-5:32). It is not far fetched that the expression, “the sons of God,” which is the first time it is used here to refer to the godly line of the Seth. This is a basic rule of interpretation: the presupposition that the development of the flow of thoughts in Scriptures is sensible, logical and natural, and simple grammatical rules are used.<sup>7</sup>

The sin of the Sethites was that their choosing of wives was based more on their “fair” appearance. Nothing else mattered. They “took wives of all which they chose” indicates that they did not even consider the spiritual status of the women. And in all probability they indulged in polygamy for Lamech had already practised this (4:19)

### ***Grieving the LORD***

Two names of God are used by the writer here. In verse 3 “LORD,” the covenant name “Jehovah,” is used. It is used in Scriptures to describe God’s relation to His people. In verse 5, “God” (Hebrew, *Elohim*) is used. Often this term is used in reference to God’s dealings with mankind in general. The name projects God’s sovereignty and holiness, and that He is the ultimate Arbiter and Judge of all His creation.

---

<sup>7</sup> H. C. Leupold, Exposition of Genesis, 257.

It grieved the heart of the LORD to see the sons of God falling away and living in sin. Man had sunk so low to the level of “flesh” (Hebrew, *basar*), to be devoid of any spiritual and godly characteristics. And so the LORD decided that His Spirit would not continue to instruct and reprove in order to correct and check their strong inclination towards evil (v.3).<sup>8</sup> And so the LORD gave men a grace period of another 120 years.<sup>9</sup>

The giants (Hebrew, *nephilim*) were men of great physical stature. They do not refer to the offsprings of the marriage between the sons of God and daughters of men. The text does not in any way indicate this. On the contrary, the text shows that these giants were already there before the sons of God. Scriptures does mention such giants. The twelve Israelite spies who scouted the land of Canaan found the sons of Anak who were giants in the land (Numbers 13:33).<sup>10</sup> The children of the unequally yoked marriages became men of reputation. Whether their name was famous or infamy, the text does not tell.

The spiritual degradation of the inhabitants of the earth is detailed. Their wickedness was great, every imagination of their thoughts was only evil continually (v.5). Observe the four words which describe the depths of their spiritual depravity: *great, every, only,*

*and continually.* His mind, heart and will were perverted. The total spiritual depravity of man is clearly evident. And Scriptures records that “it repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart” (v.6).

What does it mean that “it repented the LORD”? Did God make a mistake in creating man? The answer is definitely no. God never makes a mistake for he never acts unreasonably or purposelessly. The passage tells us what God saw (v.5), how He felt (v.6), and what He intended to do (v.7). God was angry with man’s deliberate and continual violations of the way in which He would like man to live on earth.

Is God like man that he regrets or repents of what he has done? Scriptures reveals that God is not like us.<sup>11</sup> It should be agreed that in this respect of God repenting or regretting, there is not, and there will never be an experience in man to truly describe God’s feelings here. The expression can be understood as an “anthromorphic figure of speech,” because there is no word that can fully describe God’s feelings here.<sup>12</sup> The expression would be the best and proper description of God’s reaction to man’s sin. In fact the expression “it grieved him at his heart” is even stronger in Hebrew, “it grieved him into his heart” (v.6).

---

<sup>8</sup> Leupold, Exposition of Genesis, 255..

<sup>9</sup> Some understand this as God putting a limit to man’s lifespan as 120 years. It is improbable because many of the postdiluvian patriarchs live longer. Compare Jonah 4:5 in which God’s judgment on Nineveh was delayed for forty days.

<sup>10</sup> KJV Numbers 13:33 And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, *which come* of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. The same Hebrew word for “giants” was used “*nephilim*.”

---

<sup>11</sup> KJV Numbers 23:19. God *is* not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? KJV 1 Samuel 15:29 And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he *is* not a man, that he should repent.

<sup>12</sup> Aadlers, Genesis, 158.

### **Judgement of the LORD**

God decided that He would destroy man whom He had created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air (7). The verb “destroy” in Hebrew is *machah*, which means, “to wipe out by water.” It tells how God would destroy all mankind and the animals.<sup>13</sup> The destruction was universal. The text does not intimate a localised area.

### **The Grace of the LORD**

Yet in God’s decision to destroy all the inhabitants and the animals on earth, one man and his family “found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (v.8). Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. Noah is described as “just” and “perfect” and “walked with God” (v.9). The words describe his relationship with God and man. He lived a life that was above reproach. His perfection does not lie in a life without sin, but rather one, which is blameless. His relationship with God is reflected in the words that he walked with God. This expression was also used of Enoch, his ancestor. The divine commentary on Noah is that “by faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house” (Hebrew 11:7). It was Noah’s faith, trust and belief in the LORD that saved him and his family. In his time when surrounded by people who did not care about God, and who lived in accordance to what was right in their own eyes, Noah recognised God

---

<sup>13</sup> Whether the animals were also affected and become evil and contributed to the condition is impossible to tell. “Beasts and other creatures, which were originally created for man’s sake, may well perish if a purpose salutary to man is served” (Leupold, 262).

and trusted and obeyed God rather than man. It is grace that saves him who puts his faith and trust in the LORD!

In contrast to destroying “all flesh”, the LORD expressed His intention of making a covenant with Noah (v.18). The actual “cutting” or establishing the covenant would take place after the Flood. The Hebraic text is very specific in that it expresses that Noah was the one chosen to receive this covenant.<sup>14</sup> He was privileged. God’s grace and mercy is evident once more. Before God drove Adam and Eve out of the garden, He clothed them. Before Cain was exiled, He set a protective mark on him. Before He destroyed “all flesh”, he announced His covenant with Noah. This is the first time the word “covenant” is used in Genesis.

### **The Ark and the Flood**

Before telling Noah the manner in which the earth would be destroyed, God told him to build an ark. God gave the dimensions of the ark, which he had to build. One cubit is 18 inches. So the length of the ark was 300 cubits, that is, 450 feet; its width was 50 cubits, that is, 75 feet; and its height was 30 cubits, that is 45 feet. Does the proportion of the dimensions measure up to requirements in ship building so that the vessel will float and is functional? It is not astonishing to discover that the relative measurements of the dimensions of the ark are compatible with modern shipbuilding. For example, the battleship of *New Mexico*, which was in service in World War II, was built 624 feet long, 106 ¼ feet wide, and 29 ½ feet high. Comparing the proportion of these measurements, the battleship has

---

<sup>14</sup> This is expressed through the use of “with thee” (*ittak*) which is repeated (v.18).

practically the same ratio as the ark!<sup>15</sup> It means that the seaworthiness of the ark is without question.<sup>16</sup> The ark did not look ridiculous or awkward. It was functional and served its purpose, one that could withstand the strong upheaval and turbulence of the deluge. There would be a window, a cubit high (18 inches) was made right round the ark. Then only one door was made into the ark. In the ark, there were three storeys.

God also instructed him to bring with him two of “every living thing of flesh”. The purpose was to keep them alive with him. They would be male and female. How could Noah get all of them to go into the ark? The words in verse 20 show that these animals would come to him. Noah did not have to chase and round them up! He should bring all food for himself, his family and all the animals.

It was a mammoth task for one family. Whether he had other people to help him to build it is not told. Nevertheless Noah was specially chosen and the commandment was given to him. And he did it!

### **PRACTICAL VALUE**

As His children, we ought to recognise the LORD our God and His holiness. We should continually trust and obey Him and serve Him and not ourselves. Moreover, we must also know that He is ever gracious and merciful and if we repent of our sins, He will respond by blessing us. Sinners who are already condemned, if they will

confess their sins and repent, and obey God by believing in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, God will deliver them from their condemnation and give them the gift of eternal life! END.

---

<sup>15</sup> Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible*, vol. I, 39.

<sup>16</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis*, vol 1, 173.  
It is reported that a 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutchman, Peter Janssen built an ark, which was two-fifths of the size of the Genesis ark to demonstrate its seaworthiness.

**DHW BIBLE CLASS**

**LESSON 5**

**THE BOOK OF GENESIS**

**Chapter 6**

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION**

**QUESTIONS**

**Daily Readings**

**MONDAY:** Read Genesis 6:1-4; Deuteronomy 7:1-4; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20.

**TUESDAY:** Read Genesis 6:5-8; Matthew 24:37-39; Proverbs 3:1-8.

**WEDNESDAY:** Read Genesis 6:9-13; Jeremiah 17:9-10; Romans 8:1-9.

**THURSDAY:** Read Genesis 6:14-17; Hebrews 11:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-15.

**FRIDAY:** Read Genesis 6:18-22; Deuteronomy 28:1-14.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What is wrong with the marital union of the Cainites and the Sethites?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What criteria did the “sons of God” use to choose the “daughters of men”? What should be a better reason(s)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What was the spiritual condition of the people in the time of Noah before the Flood?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What did the LORD decide to do because of the spiritual condition of the people?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Has God made a mistake in creating man? How has God’s attitude toward man changed from the beginning (1:31)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

6. Having seen the spiritual condition of the human race, was God patient enough towards the people?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

7. Why was the LORD's response to Noah different?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

8. What do you think was in the mind of Noah when God asked him to build the ark?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

9. In view of what God told Noah to do, in what ways does obedience often require a step of faith?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

10. Which animal was not mentioned in the destruction? Does it mean that all of them escape destruction?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

11. Why is it sometimes difficult to obey God's command?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

12. What attitudes are typical of people who obey God?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---