

The Lord Saw How Evil Had Corrupted the Earth

In our last topic, we saw that the people lived long lives as they populated the earth. We also saw that God started a new Godly line since Abel had been killed by his brother. In this topic, we will see that more and more of the people followed the ungodly line of Cain and the number of those in the Godly line became very small.

In Genesis 6:1-2, we read, “Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, 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.” Here, we see that the population of the earth began to multiply. God had said, in Genesis 1:28, “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” In this verse, we see that God instructed mankind to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. This was why God had given the early people long life, so they could have large families and begin to fill the earth. We saw in chapter 5 that the first son was given and then other sons and daughters were born to the men mentioned in that chapter.

As the population multiplied, we see that the sons of God began to marry based on the beauty of women, rather than because the women were Godly. The phrase “the sons of God” is used eleven times in the Bible. Two of those times are here in Genesis 6:2 and 6:4. Three times, the phrase is used in Job, where it is probably speaking of angels. However, in all six uses in the New Testament: in John 1:12; Romans 8:14 and 8:19; Philippians 2:15; and 1 John 3:1-2, it refers to humans who are followers of God. Due to the quotes in Job, some people have said that the use of this word, in Genesis, refers to angels. However, based on the Bible as a whole, it is much more likely that it is referring to some from the Godly line of Seth beginning to marry those who were ungodly.

The word translated “of all whom they chose” means *to decide for or to choose*. In many places, it means to make a choice that has eternal consequences. In Genesis 13:11, we read, “Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.” That choice had eternal consequences for most of his family. In Joshua 24:15, Joshua said, “And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Israel made a choice but did not keep their word, as Joshua 24:22 says, “So Joshua said to the people, ‘You *are* witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord for yourselves, to serve Him.’ And they said, ‘*We are* witnesses!’” Again, the failure to keep their promise resulted in eternal consequences for many of the people. The same was true in their choice here in Genesis and this choice led nearly all of the Godly line to turn away from God.

Genesis 6:3-4 says, “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.’ 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.” The word translated “strive” means *to plead, to contend, or to judge*. As a result, God said that He would give the people a hundred and twenty more years to repent and turn from their sin. If there was no repentance, then there would be judgment. 1 Peter 3:18-20 says, “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the ark* was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.” Here, we see that God waited a hundred and twenty years to bring judgment on the people. We also see that there were giants in the land.

We read that when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, they had children. These children are described by two characteristics. First, we see that they were mighty men. The word translated “mighty” means *strong or mighty*. Second, we see that they were men of renown. The word translated “renown” means *men who gained fame or developed a reputation*. This means that many people heard about these men and talked about them. However, they were not known for being Godly men, because Genesis 6:5 says, “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.” Here, we see why the people were talking about these mighty men. When the thoughts of people are evil, often the people who become “famous” among them are the ones who do the most evil.

This verse teaches some important lessons about the condition of the heart of mankind. Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart is deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” In both of these verses, the heart is used to speak of the inner man. These verses show that the heart is deceitful. It is desperately wicked in a person lacking spiritual life. However, Genesis 6:5 also adds the fact that in that time, the inner thoughts of men were evil continually. The word translated “continually” can mean *the twenty-four hour period, the time when it is light in contrast to the night, or to a general period of time*. In this context, we see that it uses the first of these two thoughts of being evil throughout the day and night.

This wickedness coming from a heart that was evil continually resulted in much sin and evil. In fact, Genesis 6:11-12 says, “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.” The fact that the thoughts of the heart of mankind were continually evil resulted in the earth being filled with violence. The word translated “corrupt” or “corrupted” means *to be marred, spoiled, or needing to be destroyed*. Here, we see that mankind was so corrupt in their hearts that the entire population of the earth, except the family of Noah, needed to be destroyed.

Genesis 6:6-8 says, “And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 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.’ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” The word translated “was sorry” means *to be sorry, to regret, to be filled with grief, or to comfort*. God experienced great sorrow as He saw how sinful the hearts of the people He had created had become. When used of God, it is conditional and will result in judgment if there is no repentance. Jonah 3:10 says, “Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.” In this verse, the word is translated “relent”. God saw the

repentance of the city of Nineveh and He did not destroy the city at that time. However, we will see that the people did not repent in the time of Noah.

The word translated “grieved” means *to hurt, to cause pain, or to feel grieved*. Here, we see that the heart of God was filled with grief as He saw that the thoughts in the heart of mankind had become evil continually. God is a holy God and cannot look on sin with favor. This was especially painful to God because of the fact that He knows the hearts of every person and He knew that there would be no repentance by any of the people outside of the family of Noah. God realized that the only thing He could do was destroy the people of the earth. The word translated “to destroy” means to wipe out, to blot out or to destroy. Genesis 7:23 says, “So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who *were* with him in the ark remained *alive*.” This verse shows that to completely destroy was exactly what God had to do.

However, Genesis 6:8 and Genesis 7:23 show that there was an exception to this complete destruction. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and everyone - along with every animal, bird, or creeping thing that was on the ark with Noah - was spared because Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. The word translated “grace” in Genesis 6:8 is a key word. The word means *favor, grace, or acceptance*. This particular word does not focus on the giver. Instead, the focus of this word is on the person who receives grace or favor. In this case, Noah, his family, and the creatures that were on the ark with them were those who received that grace. This was not based on any works of Noah, because Hebrews 11:7 says, “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.” This verse makes it clear that Noah acted based on the faith God had given him.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” In these verses, we see that even the faith a person has is totally a gift from God. No person can earn either grace or faith. They are both a gift which a person receives from God. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the fact that we receive both grace and the faith to receive that grace as a gift from God because there is nothing anyone can do to earn grace or faith. God chose to show that grace to Noah and his family when God destroyed the rest of the people on the earth so He could repopulate the earth through the family of Noah. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.