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by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

Mankind's Headlong Race towards Destruction **Genesis 6:1-6**

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PowerPoint Presentation included: NONE

SermonAudio Blurb: The earth is filled with humanity, but humanity under the power of sin. This chapter opens up with two descriptions of the vileness of sin and how utterly life-captivating it really is. The result is the regret of God over humanity and the preparation to judge humanity.

I. Introduction.

- A. Read 6:1-6
- B. Chapter 5 started a new section of Genesis by marking it with the phrase, “the book of the generations. . . .”
- C. We saw Moses trace the lineage of Noah back to Adam. And the way chapter 5 ended sets us up for the story of the Flood in the bible.
 1. In the way of controversy and outright rejection the story of the Flood is second only to the Creation account of Genesis 1-2.
 2. And within this section of chapters 6-9 is another story that can elicit much emotion and shock. A story we will deal with today.
- D. It is common today within the evangelical church to argue that the story of the flood is something other than fact as it is described in the bible.
 1. Remember that I am trying to take us to a point where we all make certain decisions regarding what the bible teaches and if it is truly a trustworthy, inerrant book.
 2. Some will say that the flood account is just myth. But myth is not meant in the sense of something not true. Rather it is used to describe a traditional understanding of certain things that explains why things are the way they are. It is not interested in trying to be historical.
 3. Others say that the flood account is theological history. In other words, it is not actual history but theology that is described as history.

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- a. So this is a description of history but from a theological perspective.
 - b. Here is how Dr. Tremper Longman describes it since he is the one who invented it: “ The Flood is not some exaggerated account of some dimly remembered historical event but an act of the imagination, an account of the uncreating of the cosmos. Astonishing, meaningful literature. Literature, not history.”
- E. Starting today I am treating this section the same way I have in the first 5 chapters. They happened and the bible is a faithful rendering of what happened and why.
- F. The earth is filled with humanity, but humanity under the power of sin.
- 1. This chapter opens up with two descriptions of the vileness of sin and how utterly life-captivating it really is.
 - 2. The result is the regret of God over humanity and the preparation to judge humanity.

II. The Demonic Aspect (6:1-4).

- A. The greater context is the responsibility to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.
- 1. Note chapter 5 and the phrase “. . . had other sons and daughters" is used over and over.
 - 2. In 6:1 there is a shift that occurs to just "daughters were born to them." And from there the story seamlessly moves into this unique event.
- B. Three main views on this section:
- 1. Despots/Warlords, possibly of the line of Cain.
 - a. The idea is that it was common for powerful rulers of that time to use the term “el” which is translated as “god” and therefore it is just referencing powerful warlords who took wives. The presumption is that they took these women by force.
 - b. The reality is that there is no real reason to see it this way. Nothing in the context that gives you any impression that these were powerful warlords nor that they took the women by force.
 - 2. They were of the godly line of Seth.

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- a. This is a popular one where it is thought that the sons of God were men of the lineage of Seth who took women who were not of their tribe.
 - b. The result was an intermarrying of people and with it the corruption of the godly line of Seth.
 - c. However, the concept of a godly line is **not** obvious in chapters 4-5. What is obvious from chapters 4-6 is that the sinful nature of man was abundantly manifest.
 - d. Nor is there any indication that there was a prohibition to marry outside your tribe or lineage.
3. They were fallen angels.
- a. This is the oldest view and sees the sons of God as fallen angels (demons) who take on human form and take women in an attempt to corrupt the human race.
 - b. Though this is shocking sounding to some it ought not be. The term "sons of God" is use only of angelic beings in every other occurrence in the Old Testament (Job 1:6; 2:1, note that Satan is **among** the sons of God presenting themselves to God; 38:7).
 - c. This fits with the passages in the NT that speak of spirits in prison (1 Peter 3:19, note that "spirits" in the plural always refers to angelic beings in the NT), angels that sinned (2 Peter 2:4-5, note the close connection with Noah), and angels who did not keep their own domain (Jude 1:6, note the close connection between this and verse 7 with regard to "strange flesh."
 - d. Angelic beings, when they appear on earth always are as males, never females (e.g., Gen. 18:1-2; Acts 1:10), and as young men (Mark 28:3). They are known for their strength (e.g., Psalm 103:30). They do not merely *appear* to be physical, but truly are physical: they can be seen and touched. They also eat and sleep (Gen. 19; note also that the Sodomites tried to rape them, this is probably the strange flesh mentioned in Jude).
 - e. Note, when studying this in the commentaries, over and over again it is dismissed out of hand because it is too monstrous, to mythical sounding (as opposed to a serpent talking to Eve?).

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- f. The most common argument from Scripture is not from this text, but from Matthew 22:20.
 - (1) Angels can't marry is the argument and therefore they are also unable to have any sexual encounter.
 - (2) However, the only realm in which marriage does not occur is "in heaven." It does not say they can't marry.
 - (3) It says we will not be given in marriage (women) nor marrying (men) when we are "in heaven." Certainly we do so here.
 - g. The offspring of these unions may be the Nephilim mentioned in vs 4. It is not perfectly clear if this is the case but it is worth noting the close connection between this event and the presence of the Nephilim.
 - (1) There is simply not enough information to be absolute.
 - (2) But these offspring were huge and the men are giants compared to the Israelites in Numbers 13:33.
- C. What is happening?
- 1. It is the battle that we forget is raging.
 - 2. If you will remember the cursing of Satan in Genesis 3 you will remember the promise of the "seed."
 - a. This one who would come from the woman would destroy Satan.
 - b. We know now that this was in reference to Jesus Christ but as you read the Old Testament you will see efforts of every type to degrade, corrupt and destroy the humanity.
 - 3. Remember that the offspring would come from the woman.
 - a. Eve? No, but it is likely that Satan assumed that.
 - b. By now Eve may be dead or very old and no longer child bearing. Corrupt the human race and you foil God's plan.
 - 4. Later, when the messianic line becomes more clear Satan attacks that line, starting with Abraham.
 - a. Reflect on what you know about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

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- b. Think about Israel in Egypt.
 - c. Think about the line of David and how corrupt that line became with idolatry and vile sins.
 - d. Think about the nation in captivity and all of their idolatry and rejection of God. Yet still in the prophets came the promise of that one who would crush Satan's head.
 - e. Think the silence of 400 years where no prophet spoke, perhaps God is done. Perhaps the prophecy won't happen.
 - f. And then John the baptist comes and the next thing you read is the slaughter of the young males by King Herod.
 - g. That, beloved, is what we see here in Genesis 6. That unholy hatred of God and the promised Seed.
- D. So we see the love of sin and the love of self move humanity into a situation where the most unnatural and ungodly relationships occur and the human race is being consumed.

III. The Internal Aspect (6:5).

- A. From the external pressure of demonic activity we now move to the internal reality of our personal corruption through sin.
- B. Here is the most comprehensive statement of the core, foundational problem of every human being. And to the degree you grasp this will inform you on how you live and how you view this world and everyone in it.
- C. This is how God views humanity. Compare that with whatever you are comfortable with in your own heart. Compare that with what is taught on the radio and in the magazines and books. What do you hear from the pulpits around this country? Does the description agree with God's?
- D. We have replaced sin with victimization. Sin is now merely a disease, or a weakness. Or, just an alternative lifestyle or value system that is valid in its own right.
- E. In this passage we see God looking upon the world and making two declarations. One is external and the other is internal.
 - 1. External.
 - a. The wickedness was great upon the earth.

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- b. God looks upon the world and sees nothing but acts of sinfulness. Evil was being paraded down the street with pride.
 - c. And notice that the blame is placed squarely upon whom? “of man”
 - d. The offspring of Adam were not producing people growing in godliness. Rather, their evil was deepening and expanding throughout the earth.
 - e. Grasp this. He looks out over all of humanity. Even at the most conservative of calculations it would be over a million and much more likely it was several million. And no beacons of light. No islands of integrity.
 - f. Can you hear me? And can your heart begin to weep?
2. Internal.
- a. “Was evil” This is God’s judgement upon the thoughts and hearts of man. Strip away everything we like to drape over our thoughts and hearts and evil lies at the center. God is speaking of the moral state of humanity.
 - b. “intent” This word speaks of the very formation of our thoughts. The soil, the soup, that produces a thought.
 - c. “Every.” This shows that there is no thought that a man could produce that was not formed without the deadly stain of evil. The very soup that our plans, ideas, words, dreams, and goals are formed from is evil.
 - d. “Heart.” This shows the location where God was looking. This is so important, because we know that the heart is the very essence, the very nerve center of a person. It is our mission control center. Nothing occurs separate from the heart.
 - e. “His” This shows that God is looking at each individual heart. Not just a blanket statement, but over all humanity, each heart is examined and the same conclusion is drawn.
 - f. “Only” This shows the totality of the evil. There was never an exception in time that the thoughts or intents were not evil! Think of that!

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- g. “Continually.” This shows the constancy of the evil. This says that not only was every thought evil, that every embryo of a thought evil, but that the only thing the heart did was evil. Meaning there was not a time, such as when we weren’t thinking, that we sort of went into neutral. Every day, every second what was exploding into God’s eyes? Each person’s constant, total evil.
- 3. And all the rest of the bible simply takes this absolute statement and enlarges upon it. Never once does it make it go away or lessen it.
- 4. So why do we try so hard to diminish it in our own lives?
- 5. Beloved you cannot and must not diminish the reality of sin. For the greater you understand your sin and sinfulness the greater you will hold and love and delight in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

IV. The Reaction of God (6:3, 6).

- A. In vs 3 we see God’s patience coming to an end.
 - 1. This is actually an incredibly difficult text to deal with because of that word “strive” or “contend” or “remain.”
 - 2. It is used only once in the bible and this makes it hard to see the exact meaning. Having said that, regardless of the exact way to render it in English, the overall context gives us the idea that God is going to withdraw His gracious restraining work from the earth.
 - 3. The bible describes God as holding back our sinful hearts from pursuing the fulness of our depravity as sinners. And in this passage it is likely meaning that God is simply pulling back. The time frame given is 120 years.
 - a. Why?
 - b. This is the time that it will take for Noah to build the ark. And during this time that Noah would build the ark he would also be proclaiming to the people to repent. This is why he is called a “Preacher of righteousness” in 2 Peter.
 - c. So, the clock was set. The Spirit of God would hold back their sin and the judgment of God for 120 more years. Will they believe?
 - d. Here we have the chance to consider the will of man. How free is it? What does it desire when everything is finished? Does it yearn

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for God and forgiveness? Does it love God over sin? 120 years from this verse we will know the answer.

- B. And in vs 6 we see the regret, the sorrow of God over this sad state of affairs.
1. He looks at a mass of humans, image-bearers of their Maker and Provider and He grieves.
 2. What we see in passages like this one in Genesis 6 is how God shows His awareness of what is happening with man. He is not so transcendent that He is uncaring of this world.
 - a. In no way can we say biblically that this means that either God is not in full control, or that He is learning something that He did not know before.
 - b. Rather, it is the eternal God interacting with events in time.
 - c. In addition, we should have no problem when we see the Lord show emotion, such as grief and anger when He sees sin. That does not mean that He did not know or is somehow powerless. It is part of the image in which we all are made partakers.
 3. Some use passage like this to try to prove that God somehow is not sovereign and in control.
 - a. This passage is seen to mean that God did not plan for man to grow in such evil. That it was either part of His sovereign plan, or even foreseen by Him. That is why He experienced such sorrow and grief.
 - b. This passage is said to mean that because God has made us free we can make decisions, like humanity did at that time, that make God react to us.
 - c. Therefore, God is not in control of events. He is very powerful, but not enough to control the hearts and actions of man.
 4. I won't try to answer these issues here as they simply will detract from the point of this passage. If this is something you wonder about then go to our app and listen to episode 6 of our podcast. There we deal with how the bible describes God's will.
- C. There is something much more sobering to consider. It is the decision or judgment of God.

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1. He doesn't gather humanity together to have a conversation and share His hurt and concerns.
2. He doesn't send a prophet into their midst. He simply decides that He is done. And no one knows it.
 - a. Marriages are taking place.
 - b. Babies are being born.
 - c. Products are made and sold.
 - d. Properties are being developed.
 - e. Music is written.
 - f. And a timer has been set by the One who alone controls times.
And it is marching downward.
 - g. And no one knows it.

V. Conclusion.

- A. There still is a timer set by God but this one will not have a glimmer of grace in it when it goes off.
 1. Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." (James 4:13-15)
 2. ". . . Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me." (Hebrews 3:15)
 3. "And do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment upon those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Romans 2:3-6)
- B. Here the Word of the Lord:

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1. “For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matthew 24:37-39).
2. Have you turned from your sin and to the living God?
3. Do you hold fast to Jesus alone for your salvation from His wrath?
4. Or are you still thinking that it will be tomorrow?