

20240114 Genesis 5, 6:1-12 God's Boundaries Broken

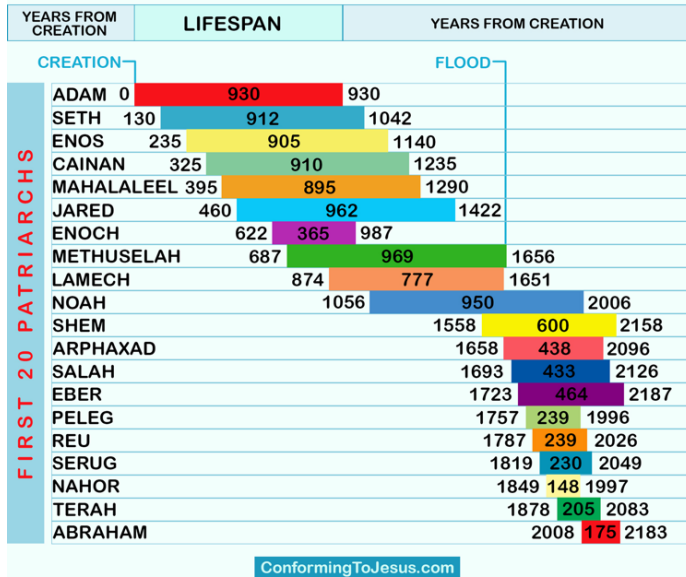
| Name | Name Meaning | Son | Age When Son in Previous Column Born | Age at Death |
|------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Adam | earthling | Seth | 130 | 930 |
| Seth | appointed / place | Enosh | 105 | 912 |
| Enosh | man / person | Kenan | 90 | 905 |
| Kenan | acquire | Mahalalel | 70 | 910 |
| Mahalalel | shining one of God | Jared | 65 | 895 |
| Jared | he descends | Enoch | 162 | 962 |
| Enoch | dedicated / trained | Methuselah | 65 | He was not, God took him after 365 years |
| Methuselah | one who was sent | Lamech | 187 | 969 |
| Lamech | poor / made low | Noah | 182 | 777 |
| Noah | rest | Shem, Ham, Japeth | 500 | 950 |

Writer Chuck Missler and others interpret this genealogy in a Messianic way. They dig deep into the etymological roots of the names that are listed, and present this. This view presents Adam who was mortal and who brought sorrow to mankind followed by Jesus who overcame death brings comfort to the despairing human race:

| Hebrew | English |
|------------|-----------------------|
| Adam | Man |
| Seth | Appointed |
| Enosh | Mortal |
| Kenan | Sorrow; |
| Mahalalel | The Blessed God |
| Jared | Shall come down |
| Enoch | Teaching |
| Methuselah | His death shall bring |
| Lamech | The Despairing |
| Noah | Rest, or comfort. |

CHRONOLOGY CHART FROM ADAM TO ABRAHAM

Lifespan of the Biblical Patriarchs



The descendants of Cain were rebellious, but we find in the descendants of Seth men began calling on the name of the Lord. It may mean that they began praying. Seth was mentioned because the narrative is leading us to Noah who will finally bring rest to the world. There are three steps from Adam to Abraham: Adam to Lamech, Lamech to his grandson Shem, and Shem to his descendent Abraham. Noah lived 950 years. So, looking at the chart to the left we can see that Adam knew Lamech. Lamech knew his grandson Shem who knew Abraham. Shem is

the link. Some Jews think Shem later had the title of Melchizedek.

Chapter six continues with the moral degradation of the human race. God raised up Noah (meaning "rest") to give mankind a reboot. Things got so bad on the earth that God took a path that perhaps we can't and don't understand fully. We don't see things from God's perspective. We see them from our perspective. When I read things that I don't quite understand, I choose to believe that God is good and what He does is good. Remember that the disciple John tells us, "In Him there is no darkness at all" (see 1 John 1:5).

So, let's start with the beginning of this chapter which might be the four most discussed verses in the Bible. At first, I intended just to give them a few words (a wink and a nod), but I've decided that we can't begin to understand the devastation of the flood without gaining a better understanding of what is going on in these verses.

6¹ 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. (Genesis 6:1-4, NKJV).

There are two main positions that people take on these verses. One group argues that this is somehow discussing the descendants of Seth being corrupted by the wicked sons of Cain whom we studied and read about last week. This would be human-to-human relations. Those holding this view, believe that the "sons of God" are the godly line of

Seth. They hold the idea that godly descendants of Seth mingled with the ungodly line of Cain producing wicked offspring that needed to be destroyed. This is invalidated for several reasons, and I won't go into all that here. Our intuition alone tells us something else more nefarious is going on. The second line of thinking is that this refers to fallen angels who procreated with human women, producing a line of "superhumans" with super intellect and abilities. The text more readily leads us to this conclusion, explaining that this intermarriage was unnatural and was contrary to the plan of God. Some scholars say this plan was hatched by Satan who was intent on corrupting the seed of man to hinder any ability of the coming of the Messiah to be born from a human woman.

The "line of Seth" argument is fairly easy to dismiss summarily. "Sons of God" is a term which, in the Hebrew mind and in the vast amount of available Hebrew literature, refers not to humans at all but specifically to angels. The argument I will present here is in great part supported by Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Th.M., Ph.D. He is one of the foremost authorities on the nation of Israel. He is a Messianic Jew. He received his Th.M from Dallas Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. from New York University. Dr. Fruchtenbaum was raised in an Orthodox Jewish family, and he has a unique knowledge set that synthesizes a vast amount of rabbinic teaching and in-depth knowledge of both the Old and New Testaments, along with a vast amount of extra-biblical Jewish literature.

Chapter six begins with the statement that after some time humans had multiplied on the face of the earth. The Hebrew term *ha-adam* refers to both men and women, so it dispenses with the idea that these could be men descended from Cain coupling with women who were descendants of Seth. The text tells us that **humans** were multiplying on the earth. The Hebrew then states that the "*sons of God*" saw the "*females of mankind*," and intermarriage happened between these two different classes of beings. This presents the crisis at hand. The natural order established by God is being disrupted by unnatural unions. The result will be God's judgment in the form of the Flood to wipe out this defective genetic aberration.

The *sons of God* in Hebrew is *bnei ha-Elohim*. This term in the Hebrew Bible **always** is a reference to angels (both good and bad).¹ This doesn't hold true of New Testament references that even say that believers are called the "sons of God." Examples from the Old Testament are found in passages such as Job 1:6, Job 2:1, and Job 38:7 where the "*sons of God*" were present at creation. In other scriptures, angels are sometimes referred to as *bnei elim* meaning sons of the mighty. **This reference to "sons of God" in this passage must refer to angels without exception.** This same interpretation of this passage was supported by Josephus, the Book of Enoch, and other Dead Sea Scrolls found in Qumran. Using all other Old Testament Hebrew references, this unnatural

¹ Ariel's Bible Commentary, 2009, Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Th.M., Ph.D., ISBN 978-1-935174-00-4, San Antonio, Texas p.143-152

union can only refer to angels and humans creating a crisis in the cosmos by engaging in a prohibited violation of Divine boundaries.

One of the major arguments against the "angels theory" is the idea that angels are neither male nor female, that they cannot have sex, and that they somehow are neuter beings. In the Hebrew language there are only masculine and feminine words and "angels" are masculine. The fact that a noun is masculine or feminine doesn't necessarily mean that the person, place, or thing being described is a particular sex. However, angels are masculine grammatically, AND they never appear as females anywhere in the Bible or in other rabbinic literature. They are always in the form of a man or a young man. There is no neuter gender in Hebrew. Based on Matthew 22:30, it is argued that angels are sexless. However, when Jesus was talking about marrying and being given in marriage in heaven, he was not talking about angels in general as beings, but rather angels in heaven. These good or holy angels in heaven neither marry nor are given in marriage, just as humans who have passed into heaven will neither marry nor be given in marriage.

Genesis six does not speak about "good angels in heaven" but rather "fallen angels on earth." There is an interesting parallel in Genesis. Genesis 3:6 states that Eve *sees* the tree was *good* for food, and she *took* it. In Genesis six the angels *saw* the daughters of men that they were *fair*, and they *took* them. As Eve violated boundaries set by God, so too the angels violated boundaries set by God. The same three words are used in the two distinct passages: *saw*, *good*, and *took*. The angels violated a barrier between angels and mankind. This was egregious to God and was the height of rebellion.

Genesis 6:3 then speaks of the judgment by God on what had happened.

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." (NKJV).* Here God uses a word that is only used once in the Bible. He says *"My spirit shall not **strive** with man forever."* The word in Hebrew for strive is **yadon** which is derived from the Hebrew root **din** meaning to "restrain." God is saying, "I'm not going to put up with this nonsense anymore. There is a limit to what I will do to restrain these violations of divine boundaries." And He adds, *"and his days shall be 120 years."* Some scholars interpret this as a 120 year grace period before the flood will destroy the earth, giving time for repentance. This interpretation is based in 1 Peter 3:20 which states, " 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." (NKJV). However, as we will see, the length of human life after the flood dropped drastically and soon hit an eventual average of around 120 years. It seems more likely that this statement refers to a new benchmark (or cap) that was put on human lives of approximately 120 years.

Genesis 6:4 explains that *Nephilim* came into being as a result of this disobedient intermarriage. So, what exactly were the *Nephilim*? The term Nephilim means "fallen ones." Unfortunately, the King James Version reads "giants." *"There were giants in the earth in those days."* This Hebrew word does not mean "giants" as we think of giants, meaning huge people. Rather they were men with unusual mental and physical abilities. The Bibles that interpret this word as "giants" are not based on the original Hebrew but rather on the Greek translation called the Septuagint which was written around 250 BC. The Hebrew scholars used the Greek word "*gigantes*" which is the Greek word from which we derive the word giants. This Greek word is an interpretation of the Latin word "Titans." You might remember that "Titans" were half man and half god. Rabbis of old always reiterated that *Nephilim* means "the fallen ones" because they fell and caused the world to fall. The phrase "*in the earth in those days*" means those days when this illegitimate intermarriage was going on. The idea that these *Nephilim* continued to exist after the flood is promoted by the scriptures giving the account of when the spies went into the land and claimed that there were *Nephilim* in the land. There may have been some huge "giants" in the land, or the spies that went into the land might have been lying or exaggerating to put a damper on the whole idea of going into the land. Remember it was because of fear that the Children of Israel did not go into the land. They reported the following verse. *"We also saw the Nephilim there (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."* (Numbers 13:33, NASB). This is a warning to us that our enemies will see us as we see ourselves.

My wife, Sandy McMullen, who has a degree in Bible from Houston Baptist University and who has taught the Bible through verse by verse several times in her adult life, has an interesting theory concerning giants that we know remained on the earth given such accounts as David and Goliath. She contends that perhaps the wife of Ham carried that corrupted DNA within her since it was her son who violated Noah after the flood. Her offspring eventually included the Canaanites who had their fair share of true "giants" in various biblical accounts. They were known for their degradation and cruelty.

The angelic interpretation of an illegitimate marriage between a human woman and fallen angels provides the only adequate explanation for the statements found in II Peter and Jude. First this phenomenon of intermarriage was a peculiar, unique sin; second, the sin was timed in conjunction with the Flood, and third, it is different from the original fall of angels."²

⁵ *Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts [yatzar-imagination] of his heart was only evil continually.* ⁶ *And the LORD was sorry [repented-a change in God's action based on a change in the object of His actions] 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*

² Ibid page 151

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.

Noah Pleases God

⁹ This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just [tzaddik=inward quality] man, perfect [tamim=without blemish=outward quality] in his generations. Noah walked with God. ¹⁰ And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

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. (Genesis 6:5-12, NKJV).

This entire passage that we’ve just reviewed is meant to relate to us that the wickedness of mankind grieves God exceedingly. God is affected by the sin of man. We can hurt God’s heart with our own sin. I certainly know that I have grieved God’s heart with my sin. Most had become so corrupted that the thoughts of his heart were continually on doing evil.

Orthodox Jewish commentator Dennis Prager explains the response of God by saying that God could no longer stand the violence he saw upon the earth. In the same way that the innocent Abel was slain by the wicked Cain, innocents were being subjected to total evil. God was going to put a stop to it all by wiping it out as a merciful act.

Verse 6 presents a bit of a puzzle. How can God be sorry for what He had created. He already saw it and said that it was “good.” God changes His actions based on a change in the conduct of the objects He has created. This is the Hebrew word for “repentance,” meaning a change in action comes about. This concept is illustrated with examples such as 1 Samuel 15:11 when “God repented that He had made Saul King.” Yet in 1 Samuel 15:29 it says that God does not repent. So what do we do with the difference? Is there a textual conflict? The key is that one is from God’s perspective and the other is from man’s perspective. God responds to man in one way when man obeys and in another way when man disobeys. When the text says God grieved, it means that it hurt God’s heart to see what had happened.

The text then moves from grief and judgment to a positive. God shows grace on Noah and his family. The reader must note that Noah was not “perfect,” but as noted in the text he was *tzaddik*, having a clean heart (he was a “straight-shooter” in his day). This means he was righteous compared to all of the filth in the society around him. And then in contrast we see that the “earth was corrupt and filled with violence.” As we learned in Genesis chapter four, God WILL AVENGE his people, and He will bring judgment on those who do harm. That is why this is the preface for the narrative account of the Flood itself. There is little theology to take from the narrative itself which I will read for us next week, but there is much theology in what we have studied this morning.

So, the big ideas of this morning include the following:

1) Details are important to God. We see that the story of creation was easily passed down from Adam to his 6th great-grandson, Lamech the father of Noah. Hence, Lamech told Noah all about the creation story. In turn Noah lived long enough to relate what he knew to Terah, the father of Abraham.

2) A great evil occurred when fallen angels crossed the natural boundaries that God had established when they engaged in "unnatural" sexual relations. This reminds us that God has an order of things, and we are not to trade the "natural" for the unnatural. Trading the natural for the unnatural includes such conduct as: bestiality, homosexuality, transgenderism, and as we've studied today, the conduct of fallen angels crossing natural boundaries created by God.

3) God will eventually judge such perversion and will not allow unbridled violence to continue among His creation.

4) God doesn't change His mind, but He changes His course of action given the free will of mankind.

5) God always provides a way for salvation and a path to show His grace and mercy. He provided for mankind through the provisions made for Noah and his family. And, while the ark was being built, He provided a period of grace in which mankind could choose right from wrong and preserve not only self, but the world that God had created.

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.