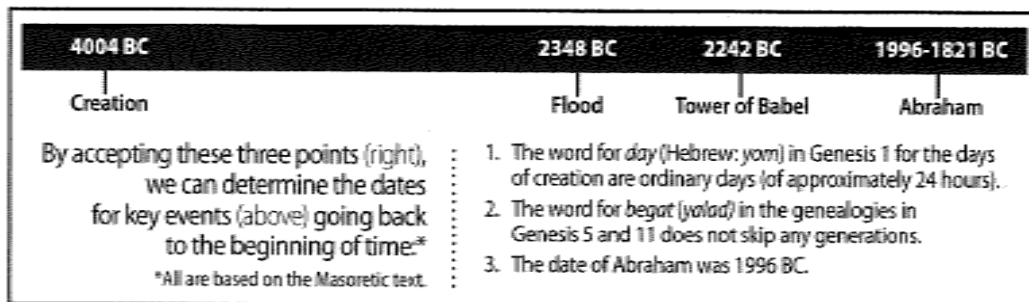


THE CORRUPTION OF MANKIND

INTRODUCTION

- As a result of the long lifespans of people prior to the flood, the population of the earth likely exploded between creation and the flood
- “The pre-Flood world... would have seen fast growth. Families were large and lives were long. If one uses a very conservative formula of six children for each family, an average generation of 100 years, and a lifespan of 500 years, there would have been over 235 million people alive at the time of the global Flood. That is probably much too low an estimate. For instance, if the average family size were eight instead of six, and the generation was only 93 instead of 100, then the population at the death of Adam (930 years after creation) would have been 2.8 million. At that rate, the population at the time of the Flood would have been over 137 billion.”¹
- No one knows what the actual population would have been at the time of the Flood, but it easy to understand that the human population would have grown exponentially over the course of the 1656 years between the creation of Adam and the Flood



- With the massive increase in the world’s population, the expression of the depravity and corruption of mankind also became more evident
- The degeneration of man, illustrated in Genesis 4 by Cain and Lamech, culminates in Genesis 6:1-13 which show just how wicked the human race had become and that death was its ongoing punishment
- As the fallen human race multiplied and expanded, so did evil
- This passage clearly portrays just how wicked the human race had become
- It is important to remember that Genesis 6:1-8 are part of the *toledoth* section that began in Genesis 5:1
- The theme in this *toledoth* is that death is the judgment for the sinful race, evident in the repeated phrase “and he died” in Genesis 5 and in the severe judgment of the flood against sin in Genesis 6

EVIDENCE OF MANKIND’S CORRUPTION

The Sins of the “Sons of God” – “the sons of God saw” (v. 2)

Genesis 6:1-2 ~ Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, 2 that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.

¹ Henry Morris, *The Book of Beginnings*, 218.

- The first few verses of Genesis 6 are some of the most controversial in the entire Bible
- “Few texts in the history of interpretation have aroused more curiosity and divergence of opinion than Genesis 6:1-4 has. It is at once tantalizing and deeply puzzling.”²
- There are three main views concerning the identity of the “sons of God” and the “daughters of men”

42. Sons of God in Genesis Six

Position	Angelic Creatures	Apostate Sethites	Ambitious Despots
Persons	Fallen angels cohabit with beautiful women	Ungodly Sethites marry depraved Cainites	Despotic chieftains marry plurality of wives
Perversion	Perversion of human race by intrusion of angels	Pollution of godly line by mixed marriage	Polygamy of Cainite princes to expand dominion
Progeny	Monstrous giants	Wicked tyrants	Dynastic rulers
Proofs	The reference to angels as “sons of God”	The emphasis on men in the context	The antiquity of this interpretation
	The New Testament references to the angelic sin of Genesis 6 in 2 Peter 2:4–5 and Jude 6–7	The basis for human sin as the reason for the Flood	The biblical usage of “god” for rulers and judges
	The antiquity of the view	The thematic development of Genesis 4 and 5	The reference in the context to the development of wicked dynasties
	The satisfactory explanation that some angels are bound and others are not	The aversion in Genesis and elsewhere to intermarriage between the godly and ungodly	The Near Eastern practice of calling kings “sons of God”
			The reference in ancient accounts to the origin of kingship just prior to the Flood
Problems	The psychological and physiological impossibilities of angelic marriages	The textual difficulty in making “men” of Genesis 6:1 different from “men” in verse 2	The lack of evidence that such a system was established in the line of Cain
	The likelihood that “sons of God” refers to men, since it is used elsewhere of men	The absence of exact terms “sons of God” for believers in the Old Testament	The lack of evidence that “sons of God” was borrowed from contemporary literature
		Failure to explain the origin of the giants and mighty men through simply religiously mixed marriages	The fact that no writer of Scripture ever considered kings to be deities
Proponents	Albright, Gaebelein, Kelly, Unger, Waltke, Delitzsch, Bullinger, Larkin, Pember, Wuest, Gray, Torrey, Meyer, Mayor, Plummer, Alford, Ryrie, Smith	Hengstenberg, Keil, Lange, Jamieson, Fausset, Brown, Henry, Scofield, Lincoln, Murray, Baxter, Scroggie, Leupold	Kaiser, Birney, Kline, Cornfeld, Kober

3

² Walter Kaiser, *More Hard Sayings of the Old Testament*, 33.

³ Chart taken from Wayne House, *Charts of Christian Theology & Doctrine*,

- Support for the “sons of God” being fallen angels who cohabitated with the human females:

1. In the OT, the phrase “sons of God” always refers to angels – unfallen angels are God’s “sons” in the sense that they are His creation (see also similar phrases in Psalms 29:1 and 89:7)

Job 1:6 ~ Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.

Job 2:1 ~ Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.

Job 38:7 ~ When the morning stars sang together And all the sons of God shouted for joy?

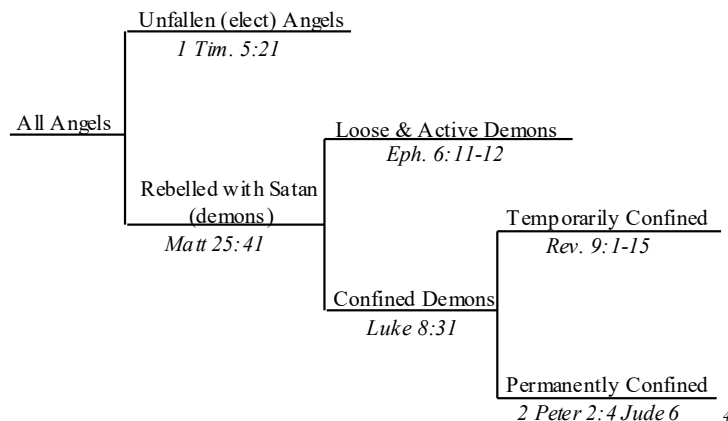
2. The NT speaks of permanently confined demons, likely referring to those wicked demons who perpetrated this heinous offense which precipitated the flood

2 Peter 2:4-5 ~ For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; 5 and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly

- These demons are permanently confined to *tartarus* (translated as “hell” in 2 Peter 2:4)
- The Greeks believed that *tartarus* was a place that was lower than Hades because it was reserved for the most wicked of human beings, gods, and demons
- The Jews eventually used this term to describe the place where fallen angels were sent...the lowest hell, the deepest pit, and the most terrible place of torture and eternal suffering
- According to Peter, these fallen angels are permanently confined in *tartarus* awaiting final sentencing because of some enormous sin they committed (other than the original sin with Satan)
- Peter clearly links these angels who “sinned” with the time of Noah, pointing to the event in Genesis 6

Jude 6-7 ~ 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. 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.

- These fallen angels overstepped their bounds by leaving their normal state (a spiritual existence), lusting after women, assuming an abnormal physical form, and promiscuously mating with them
- In v. 7, Jude links the sexual immorality of Sodom and Gomorrah with that of Noah’s day



⁴ Chart taken from Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 160

3. It is likely that it was these permanently imprisoned spirits whom Jesus preached victory over during the time between His death and resurrection

1 Peter 3:18-20 ~ For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.

- v. 18 affirms that, although his body was dead, Christ's spirit was still very much alive between his death and resurrection
- v. 19 tells us that Jesus went "to the spirits now in prison," a place where captives are kept and held under guard because of improper conduct
- v. 20 locates the violation of these "spirits now in prison" at the time of Noah, likely tying these spirits to those in Genesis 6
- It is to these imprisoned spirits that Christ "went and made proclamation" (v. 18)...the verb "made proclamation" is not *euangelizo* but rather *kerusso*...this was not an evangelistic sermon but an announcement of victory
- It was a word that often meant "to announce a triumph"
- Military kings and general would have a herald announce their victories and proclaim the fact that they had defeated their enemy
- That's what kind of sermon this was...a victory sermon...Christ was announcing His victory and triumph over those Satanic forces who sought to thwart God's plan of redemption

4. Earlier Hebrew interpreters and apocryphal and pseudopigraphal writings are unanimous in holding to the view that fallen angels are the "sons of God" mentioned in Genesis 6

- This view is found in the Book of Enoch, dating from around 200 BC
- It was also the view held by Philo, Josephus, most of the rabbinical writers, and the oldest church fathers – Justin, Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, and Lactantius

- Handling objections to this position

1. Matthew 22:30 indicates that angels do not marry so it is impossible for fallen angels to have a sexual union with human women

Matthew 22:30 ~ For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

- But Jesus only states that it is the "angels in heaven" who do not marry; that doesn't necessarily rule out fallen angels from cohabitating with women
- Jesus was not referring to fallen angels, who do not care about God's created order and actively seek ways to disrupt God's plan
- The fact that God's holy angels do not marry or engage in sexual relations does not mean the same is true of Satan and his demons
- Additionally, the text does not say "angels are not able to marry;" Rather, it indicates only that angels do not marry

2. Why did God flood the earth if the sin was with the fallen angels?

- “Even more serious is the problem of why judgment should fall on the humans and on the earth if the angels of heaven were the cause of the trouble. God should have flood heaven, not the earth. The culprits came from above; the women seem to have been doing nothing except being beautiful!”⁵
- But the wickedness was not just isolated in the demonic realm...it pervaded the human realm as well because children were born from the union of demon-possessed men and the “daughters of men”
- This is clear from v. 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.
- These demon-possessed men were marrying women and having children with them...thus perpetuating their wickedness
- These demons were infiltrating the entire population...and the more children these demon-possessed men had, the more opportunities there were to infest people with demons
- “Why would the demons do such a thing? The Bible does not specifically give us the answer. Demons are evil, twisted beings—so nothing they do should surprise us. As to a distinct motivation, one speculation is that the demons were attempting to pollute the human bloodline in order to prevent the coming of the Messiah. God had promised that the Messiah would one day crush the head of the serpent, Satan ([Genesis 3:15](#)). The demons in [Genesis 6](#) were possibly attempting to prevent the crushing of the serpent and make it impossible for a sinless ‘seed of the woman’ to be born.”⁶
- This was part of Satan’s ploy to thwart God’s plans and purposes
- Although this is one of the most difficult passages to interpret in the Bible, its main point is not hard to understand
- It illustrates just how wicked and corrupt the world had become when this unparalleled violation took place
- It shows why God decided to kill almost everyone on earth with a global flood

Genesis 6:3-4 ~ 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.”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.

- In v. 3, Moses states that, as a result of mankind’s wickedness, His patience would not last forever...His Spirit would not always be patient
- He would no longer mercifully convict and restrain...rather, He would bring judgment
- As a result, there would be 120 years from the events of Genesis 6:2 until the flood
- The 120 years does not mean, as some have suggested, that God is dictating that from that point forward, the average lifespan would be 120 years (that didn’t happen until the time of Moses)
- Rather, “this emphatic statement by God specifies that He, the Creator, was giving man only 120 years more until He, the God and Judge of all things, would bring an end to this world.”⁷

⁵ Kaiser, *More Hard Sayings*, 35.

⁶ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Nephilim.html>

⁷ Morris, *The Book of Beginnings*, 220.

- Who are the Nephilim? → although the Hebrew word *nephal/nephalim* is often translated as “giant,” it means “to fall,” referring to those who “fell” on others in the sense of conquering them
- The only other place this word is used in the OT is Numbers 13:33 ~ There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.
- The “giant” image was assumed because of the story told by the 10 spies who came back terrified of the people in the land who made them feel like “grasshoppers”
- But size is not inherent in the word *nephalim*
- Some suggest that the Nephilim were the offspring of the unnatural union of the “sons of God” and the “daughters of men”
- In this view, they were a race of giants and super-heroes who did acts of great evil
- Their great size and power likely came from the mixture of demonic “DNA” with human genetics
- However, it is better to take the Nephilim as those who lived before and after the illicit union
- The second sentence in v. 4 explains the Nephilim not the children born to the “sons of God” and the “daughters of men”...they are not the result of the cohabitation of angels and humans
- There is no “and” at the beginning of the second sentence that links the first and second sentences
- The absence of the “and” is because it is making a comment on the previous sentence
- In other words, the reason the Nephilim are not further identified is because they were “the mighty men who were of old, men of renown”...they were well known to Moses’ readers and didn’t need them explained

The Sins of Mankind in General – “the Lord saw” (v. 5)

Genesis 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.

- God’s judgment came in the Flood, not only because of the illicit unions between angels and humans, but also because of the prolific wickedness of the people in Noah’s day
- The people of Noah’s day were exceedingly depraved and demonstrated it in their lustful cravings
- This reality is corroborated later in the chapter

Genesis 6:11-13 ~ Now the earth was **corrupt** in the sight of God, and the earth was **filled with violence**. 12 God looked on the earth, and behold, it was **corrupt**; for all flesh had **corrupted** their way upon the earth. 13 Then God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is **filled with violence** because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.

- There is hardly a stronger statement in the Bible about the sin of mankind, demonstrating that wickedness starts in the heart of man
- “What a pitiful sight. Everything ‘good’ had been provided. The whole earth was before them with liberty to learn, explore, and develop all that would enhance their lives for wonder and joy. Yet, the whole population only sought for evil all the time.”⁸

Genesis 6:6-7 ~ The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 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.”

⁸ Morris, *The Book of Beginnings*, 221.

- God’s decision to flood the entire earth to rid it of wickedness shows God’s grief over sin
- He would tolerate the arrogance and rebellion of a wicked people no longer
- In what sense does God change His mind/repent?
- Often people wonder how both the immutability of God and the “changeableness” of God can be taught in Scripture as they seem contradictory
- In addition to Genesis 6, there are other passages that indicate that God “repented”

Exodus 32:14 ~ So the LORD changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people.

1 Samuel 15:11 ~ “I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands.” And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night.

Jeremiah 26:3 ~ Perhaps they will listen and everyone will turn from his evil way, that I may repent of the calamity which I am planning to do to them because of the evil of their deeds.

1. God does sometimes regret His actions and does therefore change His mind

- Open theists hold this position in that they believe that the pain caused Him by sinful humanity made Him re-think His decision to create them
- God’s plan for the human race did not go as He planned and the sinful behavior of humans was not foreseen by God
- God did not know that humanity would turn out this badly...it was unknown to Him
- This view stems from idea that God experience genuine emotions like grief and regret to the degree that it makes Him actually change His plans
- In other words, His plans for the human race can be thwarted by our actions

2. Human terms are used to express God’s emotions

- This is an anthropomorphic term in that it is a description of the Lord in terms of human emotions and passions
- It does not mean that God decided He had made a mistake or that He was unsure of His decisions
- God is immutable and does not change...His character and being can experience no change or mutation

Numbers 23:19 ~ God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

1 Samuel 15:29 ~ Also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind.

Malachi 3:6 ~ For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

- It does refer to a change in God’s actions that result from a significant change in His creatures
- The idea is that His feelings toward people change in response to some change on their part
- “In Genesis 6:6...[t]his denotes no change in his purpose or character. It only demonstrates that God has emotions and passions and that he can and does respond to us for good or ill when we deserve it. The point is that unchangeableness must not be thought of as if it were some type of frozen immobility. God is not some impervious being who cannot respond when circumstances or individuals change. Rather, he is a

living person, and as such he can and does change when the occasion demands it. He does not change in his character, person, or plan. But he can and does respond to our changes.”⁹

THE CONTRAST OF NOAH’S RIGHTEOUSNESS

Genesis 6:8 ~ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

- In contrast to the wickedness of his day, Noah lived a righteous life of faith before a holy God
- It was not his good works that made him accepted to God, but rather the fact that he had faith in the true and living God
- For this, he found grace...this is the first time the word “grace/favor” is found in the Bible

Hebrews 11:7 ~ By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

- By way of application, we must be willing to live godly lives despite the current of our culture wanting to force us to compromise
- For this, we will be hated and despised by the world...but blessed by the Lord

⁹ Kaiser, *More Hard Sayings*, 41.