

# THE CORRUPTION OF MANKIND

## INTRODUCTION

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- Genesis 6 reveals where fallen mankind goes whenever it rejects God and His Word
- It is like looking into a mirror as we look around at all the moral insanity going on around us, where evil is called good and good is called evil (Is 5:20)
- It should not surprise us when we see our culture engaging in gross and vile sins (abortion, homosexuality, transgender, etc.) since it has similarly rejected the true and living God
- It should also remind us of the inevitability of God’s judgment upon a world gone mad (Rom 1)
- It is important to remember that Genesis 6:1-8 are part of the *toledoth* section that began in Genesis 5:1

Section	Topic	Reference
I.	Book Preface: Creation Narrative	1:1–2:3
II.	The Genealogy of the Heavens and the Earth	2:4–4:26
III.	The Book of the Genealogy of Adam	5:1–6:8
IV.	The Genealogy of Noah And the Genealogy of Noah’s Sons	6:9–9:29 10:1–11:9
V.	The Genealogy of Shem And the Genealogy of Terah And the Genealogy of Ishmael And the Genealogy of Isaac And the Genealogy of Esau	11:10–26 11:27–25:11 25:12–18 25:19–35:29 36:1–8; 36:9–37:1
VI.	The Genealogy of Jacob	37:2–50:26

- “The *toledot* heading announces the historical development from the ancestor (or beginning point) and could be translated paraphrastically ‘this is what became of \_\_\_\_\_,’ or ‘this is where it started from’ (with reference to the following subject.)”<sup>1</sup>
- Each *toledot* contributes greatly to the theological message of Genesis...namely the narrowing process of God’s chosen line through which He would bring His Promised Deliverer

Adam → Noah → Noah’s sons → Shem → Terah/Abraham → (Ishmael) Isaac → (Esau) Jacob

- This structure is the very fabric around which the whole book of Genesis has been constructed
- 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

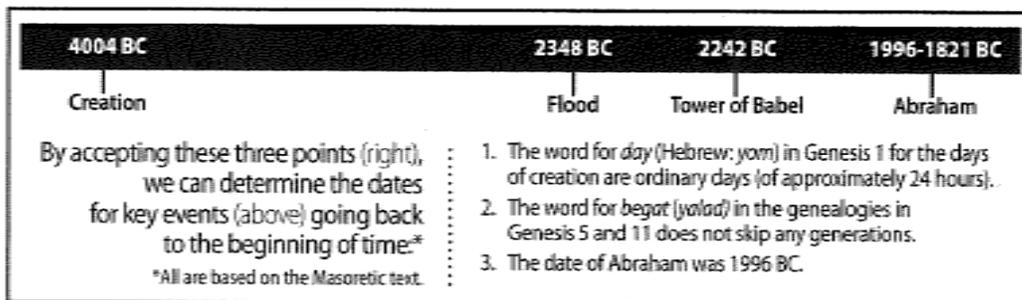
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### The Rapid Expansion of the World’s Population

<sup>1</sup> Allen Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*, 72-73.

**Genesis 6:1** ~ Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them,

- 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.”<sup>2</sup>
- 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

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

**Genesis 6:2** ~ that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.

- This is one of the most controversial passages 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.”<sup>3</sup>
- There are three main views concerning the identity of the “sons of God” and the “daughters of men”
  - 1) Angelic Creatures – fallen angels who cohabitated with beautiful women
  - 2) Apostate Sethites – ungodly descendants of Seth who married depraved descendants of Cain
  - 3) Ambitious Despots – despotic chieftains who married a plurality of wives
- Support for the “sons of God” being fallen angels who cohabitated with the human females:

<sup>2</sup> Henry Morris, *The Book of Beginnings*, 218.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Kaiser, *More Hard Sayings of the Old Testament*, 33.

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 89:6)

**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. Angels in the Bible are always male – the designations “sons of God” and “daughters of men” make no sense if it was merely referring to human intermarriage. It would be expected to go both ways...i.e. “the sons of men” could be Cainite men and the “daughters of God” could be Sethite women.

**Genesis 18:2; 19:1** ~ When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth...Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom...

**Luke 24:4** ~ While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing;

**Acts 1:10** ~ And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.

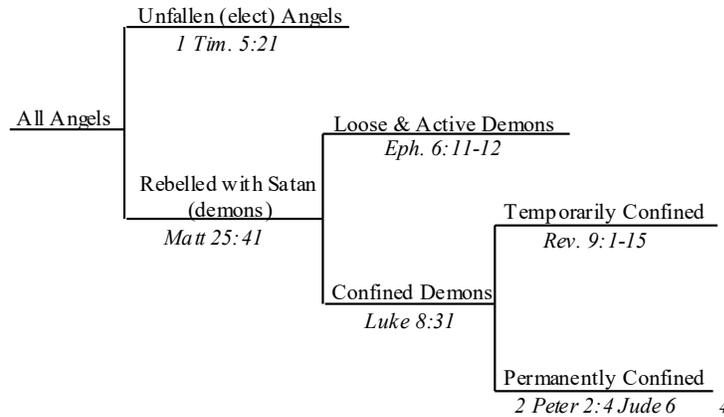
3. The NT speaks of permanently confined demons, likely referring to those wicked demons who perpetrated this heinous offense which precipitated the flood

**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
- Peter also makes a connection with the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah which was “sensual” (vv. 6-7)

**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 didn’t stay where they belonged...they stepped out of their “domain” by leaving their demonic realm and entering the realm of humanity by intermarriage
- In v. 7, Jude also links the sexual immorality of Sodom and Gomorrah with that of Noah’s day
- Similar to the homosexual desires of the Sodomites who went after “strange flesh,” these angels sought what was an unnatural flesh for them: human females



4. 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

5. 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.

<sup>4</sup> Chart taken from Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 160

- 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, Jesus says that angels **in heaven** do not marry...but on earth human clearly marry, allowing for the possibility that fallen angels **on earth** also 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!”<sup>5</sup>
- 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.”<sup>6</sup>
- “Satan at this point in history had no clue about which woman would bear this seed. His likely solution was to send his angelic cohorts to the earth to corrupt the women, by taking human form and intermarrying with them. If womankind was corrupted by their angelic mates, then the Seed could not arrive.”<sup>7</sup>
- 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

<sup>5</sup> Kaiser, *More Hard Sayings*, 35.

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

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Sarfati, *The Genesis Account*, 480.

- 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.”<sup>4</sup> 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.”<sup>8</sup>
- 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 were 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)**

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**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

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<sup>8</sup> Morris, *The Book of Beginnings*, 220.

- The people of Noah’s day were exceedingly depraved and demonstrated it in their lustful cravings
- 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.”<sup>9</sup>

**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.”

- 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...God did not know that humanity would turn out this badly...it was unforeseen by Him
- This view stems from idea that God experiences 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 (anthropopathism)

- 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.

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<sup>9</sup> Morris, *The Book of Beginnings*, 221.

- 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.”<sup>10</sup>

## THE CONTRAST OF NOAH’S RIGHTEOUSNESS

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**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

**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.

- It was not his good works that made him accepted by God, but rather the fact that he had faith in Him
- For this, he found grace...this is the first time the word “grace/favor” is found in the Bible

**Genesis 6:9** ~ These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.

- This is the third *toledot* in Genesis and it continues through chapter 9 (the next one begins in chapter 10)
- “This section traces what became of Noah: it tells of his righteousness in a corrupt world; his obedience to the Lord’s commands in preparing the ark; his deliverance from the flood; his worship after the flood; his reception of the covenant promises, blessings, and commands; and his drunkenness and nakedness in the tent. The section ends on a note much lower than that with which it begins.”<sup>11</sup>
- Moses describes 3 qualities of Noah that made him stand out in the midst of a perverse and wicked world
- There is an increasing spiritual quality associated with these 3 characteristics
  1. Righteous – he lived by God’s righteous standards
  2. Blameless in his time – this signifies perfection...not in the sense of flawlessness but in the sense of maturity and character (the same word is used in Leviticus to refer to the sacrificial animals who were perfect and without blemish)
  3. He walked with God – he lived in the same way as his godly ancestor Enoch

**Genesis 5:22, 24** ~ Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters...24 Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

- Noah was a spiritual giant in a world that was thoroughly corrupt
- The world was in turmoil...but Noah lived a godly life in the midst of this terrible wicked violence
- He refused to be a part of the violence and wickedness that had overcome the world of his day
- He separated himself from the wickedness of his contemporaries and chose to wholeheartedly follow God
- He rejected the pressure to conform to his godless generation

<sup>10</sup> Kaiser, *More Hard Sayings*, 41.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

- God told Ezekiel that, even if godly Noah were present, it would not stop His judgment against them

**Ezekiel 14:14** ~ even though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves,” declares the Lord GOD.

- As believers living in a similarly dark world, we must be those who also live above it, pursuing holiness and godliness in the midst of a godless society

**Philippians 2:15** ~ so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,

- Noah models for us how to live above the wicked ways of the world
- He shows us that it is possible to live “in the world but not of it”
- He illustrates what the godly of all ages have done no matter the opposition they might face...they refuse to be part of the world’s ways
- They refuse to allow the wicked world to press them into its mold

**Genesis 6:10** ~ Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

- The sons of Noah were not triplets (see Gen 9:24)
- It would be through Noah’s sons that God would begin over with the righteous

## **FURTHER EVIDENCE OF MANKIND’S CORRUPTION**

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**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.

- Wickedness and violence had come to dominate the antediluvian world
- 3 times the word “corrupt” is used in vv. 11-12
- 2 times the word “violence” is used in vv. 11, 13
- These terms provide a graphic description of human nature at its worst
- Noah lived among a people who were living as though nothing was the matter

**Matthew 24:37-38** ~ For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. 38 For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

- The people of Noah’s day were preoccupied with the mundane matters of life, completely unconcerned with the impending judgment despite receiving many warnings
- They carelessly disregarded the righteous preaching of Noah

**2 Peter 2:5** ~ 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;

- As a result of their wickedness, the Lord resolved to “destroy” them with a global flood
- The world always ignores the cries of the righteous...but future judgment is as certain as it was in Noah’s day