

Genesis Chapter 6 - Commentary By Mike Wells

Chapter 6 Overview:

The 6th Chapter of Genesis could be divided into four sections. Section 1 (verses 1-7) is the wickedness of the world which is going to provoke God's wrath. Section 2 (verses 8-11) is where Noah finds grace before God. Section 3 (verses 12-21) is where Noah is warned of the coming flood and given instructions for building the ark. Section 4 (verse 22) is Noah's reaction, faith, and obedience to God's command.

Genesis 6 : 1 – *And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them;*

- The focus now shifts from Chapter 5 and the godly line of Seth to the ungodly descendants of Cain.
- Following the genealogy of Chapter 5 tells us that there was exactly 1656 years between creation and the time of Noah.
- Given the longevity of the average life before the flood and assuming normal birth rate, some mathematicians have estimated that at the time of Noah the earth could have had as many as two billion people.
- Only a tiny, tiny portion – Noah's family of the two billion were deemed righteous before God.
- There have been archaeological finds that indicate an advanced civilization having some form of electric technology
- The world prior to the flood had a large population and from the finds preserved in coal seams apparently had an advanced civilization

Genesis 6 : 2 – *That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose;*

- There has been lots of debate over the years over who were the sons of God and the daughters of men.
- Some suggest that the sons of God were fallen angelic creatures who descended to earth and married women (daughters of men).
- There is no scriptural basis for the above view.
- In fact, Jesus indicated that the angelic realm is a sexless race, not having reproductive ability
- The "Sons of God" then is most likely a reference to the sons of the godly lineage
- Over the centuries, the sons of the godly line began to notice the young women of the daughters of men.
- This is not uncommon today, if ungodly women then were anything like ungodly women today, they likely dressed in a provocative and immodest manner and had low morals.
- Just like today, the attractive young women of the world caught the attention of the sons of the godly lineage

- There was a crossing of the godly line and the ungodly line
- They began to intermarry.
- The spiritual purity and the integrity of the godly line was thus compromised to the point where it almost didn't exist anymore.
- The godless society that developed from this intermingling is what God decided to destroy
- Only Noah kept his family separated and righteous

Genesis 6 : 3 – *And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*

- God saw the sinful human race and vowed that His Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh”
- The word **strive** (*dyin*) has the sense “to contend” or “to plead”
- God was saying He would not continually strive, plead, or contend with the humans.
- He noted that they were flesh, implying that they had given themselves over to sensuality and immorality
- God decided and determined that after 120 years, He would destroy the human race
- Why 120 years? - It may be that was the time it would take Noah and his sons to prepare the ark.

Genesis 6 : 4 – *There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.*

- The word translated as **giants** (*nephailim*) is used only one other place (Numbers 13:33) where the sons of Anak were described as giants.
- The word has the sense of tall, strong, and powerful people
- These offspring of the women of man and the sons of God became an additional element of the godless world in strength and renown.
- Most likely co-habitation was without marriage in many cases implying further immorality

Genesis 6 : 5 – *And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

- The word translated as **wickedness** (*rah*) is one of the basic words for sin in the Old Testament.
- The word translated as **imagination** (*yetzer*) has the sense of a framework of thought or philosophy.
- In other words, the thought structure of the human race had deteriorated to the place where it was “only evil continually”
- The human civilization had become preoccupied with sexual perversity and sensuality of all kinds.

- Sounds like today and today's conditions doesn't it?
- Remember what Jesus said in **Luke 17 : 26** – “*And as it was in the days of the Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man*”

Genesis 6 : 6 – *And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart*

- The Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved at His heart.
- The word translated as **grieved** (*atsab*) has the sense of being grieved and being “vexed”
- God was not only grieved with how sinful mankind had so corrupted themselves, but He also was vexed at heart over it.

Genesis 6 : 7 – *And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.*

- God determined to destroy the human race that He had created along with most of the entire realm of nature He had created.
- The word translated as **repented** (*nacham*) has the idea of regret
- The word translated as **destroy** (*machah*) has the sense “to wipe out”, “to obliterate or to exterminate”
- God had decided to wipe the slate clean and start over again.

Genesis 6 : 8 – *But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.*

- The word translated as **grace** (*khane*) has the idea of ‘favor’
- Noah had found favor in God's eyes

Genesis 6 : 9 – *These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.*

- The reason for God's favor is noted “Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.”
- Though a sinful man like all of us, Noah's walk pleased God
- Noah is noted as being perfect
- The word translated as **perfect** (*tawmeem*) has the sense of being complete or whole
- Noah was totally dedicated to God in other words
- Noah walked with God in a close fellowship with his Maker, just like his grandfather Enoch had.
- The word translated as **generations** (*toledaw*) has the sense of dependents

Genesis 6 : 10 – *And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

- Noah's sons were “Shem, Ham, and Japheth”

- Shem would later be the starting point of the eastern, Semitic people
- Ham (whose name means hot or burned) would later be the starting point of the people to the south (exp – Africa). – More later in Chapter 10
- Japheth would become the starting point of the people to the north, the euro-Caucasian nations - More later in Chapter 10
- The godly line to Jesus would flow through Shem who was 98 years old at the time of the flood (Genesis 11:10)
- Shem was born after God directed Adam to build the ark and most likely was the first born since he is always mentioned first.

Genesis 6 : 11 – *The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.*

- The word translated as **corrupt** (*shawkhath*) has the idea of being rotten
- The earth was rotten from the sexual perversion and immorality that had filled the earth
- The earth was also now filled with violence
- Jesus made comment about how the conditions of his return will parallel with those of the day of Noah

Genesis 6 : 12 – *And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth*

- The same thought was reiterated in Verse 12
- The world was not only in sexual perversion, violent crime was the everywhere.

Genesis 6 : 13 – *And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.*

- Notice again God’s charge that the world was full of violence
- The world we live in today celebrates violence in the entertainment industry
- Think about Hollywood and TV shows seem to glorify violence these days, not to mention sexual immorality
- Therefore, God told Noah that he was going to wipe the earth and all the people on it.

Genesis 6 : 14 – *Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.*

- God in His mercy had a plan ready to spare Noah and his family
- That plan was for him to build an ark to save him
- The reference to “gopher wood” is believed to be some type of Cypress wood
- Noah was instructed to seal it within
- The **ark** (*taybah*) has the sense of a “vessel”

Genesis 6 : 15 – *And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.*

- The length was to be three hundred cubits
- The width was to be fifty cubits
- The height was to be thirty cubits
- A Cubit is about 18 inches or so, it meant the length of a man's arm from his elbow to his fingertips
- Using this math, the Ark or vessel would have been about 450 feet in length, 75 feet wide and about 45 feet high.
- The draft of the fully loaded Ark was slightly less than half its height or less than fifteen cubits.
- Marine engineers have noted that the proportions described in the bible would have been optimal for stability in rough seas.
- It is interesting to note that in Genesis 7:20 – God notes that the flood waters were about 15 cubits above the mountains.
- In other words, God saw that the depth of the flood was such that the ark cleared even the highest obstructions below it.
- The ark was most likely long, low, and rectangular barge type of vessel versus the round vessel with a high bow and stern that we normally see drawn. (See magazine Cover – Answers in Genesis Magazine April-June 2007 Edition)

Genesis 6 : 16 – *A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.*

- God instructed Noah to build a window one cubit below the roof line of the ark
- This window was most likely for light as well as for ventilation
- The ark was also to have one door in its side and apparently three stories or decks high

Genesis 6 : 17 – *And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.*

- The purpose of the Ark was made clear, God intended to flood the earth and kill all things on it
- The word translated as earth (eretz) can be translated as either earth or land.
- Some folks believe that the flood was only a local flood - Scriptures make this type of position absurd!!
- Remember that the purpose God stated for the flood was to destroy the entire human race and all things on earth
- If it was a local flood only then Noah would not have needed an Ark, he could have just traveled to another location and sought higher ground
- There would also be no need to bring every type of living creature on the ark

- The view of a local flood has been propagated by liberal theologians who want to mesh scripture with evolution
- The implications of the flood destroy the very foundations of evolution as it places its emphasis up on the geological column of fossils
- These fossils with a sudden flood would happen very quickly making the earth very young and not millions of years old as evolutionist believe.
- Of course we know that the earth is young and science's dating methods don't stand up if there was a sudden massive flood.

Genesis 6 : 18 – *But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee*

- God noted that He would establish a new covenant with Noah
- Noah was therefore able to take his family into the ark (a total of eight)

Genesis 6 : 19-20 – *19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. 20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.*

- Noah was to bring two of every kind of animal, male and female along with the necessary food to preserve all.
- Critics have charged that it would not be possible to bring every kind of animal in pairs onto such a vessel much less food to sustain them
- There are several answers to this charge
- First – Not every subspecies needed to be taken – only a pair of each kind was necessary (exp – not every breed of dog had to be taken, only the basic dog species)
- Second – There is no reason to believe that the pair of animals had to be mature adults (elephants and even dinosaurs are all very small at birth)
- Third – It is quite possible that God induced some form of hibernation for many of the animals leaving them in a semi-sedated state for the duration
- Forth – The volume of the ark was immense (going by the outside dimensions, the ark contained more than 1.5 million cubic feet of space).
- This would be plenty of room for basic species and their food especially if they were young

Genesis 6 : 21 – *And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.*

- In addition to all the animals, Noah was to stock the ark with the food necessary to sustain his floating zoo and his family

- God most likely gave him special wisdom to know what kinds of foods and how much to store

Genesis 6 : 22 – *Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.*

- Noah obeyed God completely!!
- He was clearly a man of great faith
- **Hebrews 11:7** – *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith”*