

Genesis Chapter 6 Notes (Defenders Study Bible by Henry Morris)

6:1 multiply. God had commanded Adam and Eve to “multiply” (Genesis 1:28). With each man and woman enjoying hundreds of years of parental productivity plus almost ideal environmental and climatological conditions, the earth could well have been “filled” with people long before the Flood. For example, an initial population of two people, increasing at the rate of 2% annually (estimated to be the annual growth rate at present) would generate a population of well over ten trillion people in 1656 years (the time span from Adam to the flood).

6:2 sons of God. The identity of these “sons of God” has been a matter of much discussion, but the obvious meaning is that they were angelic beings. This was the uniform interpretation of the ancient Jews, who translated the phrase as “angels of God” in their Septuagint translation of the Old Testament. The apocryphal books of Enoch elaborate this interpretation, which is also strongly implied by the New Testament passages (Jude 6, II Peter 2:4-6; I Peter 3:19,20). The Hebrew phrase is *bene elohim*, which occurs elsewhere only in Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7. In these three explicitly parallel usages, the contextual meaning can be nothing except that of angels. A similar phrase *bar elohim*, occurs in Daniel 3:25, and another, *bar elim*, occurs in Psalm 29:1 and Psalm 89:6. All of these also refer explicitly to angels. The intent of the writer of Genesis 6 (probably Noah) was clearly that of introducing a monstrous irruption of demonic forces on the earth, leading to universal corruption and eventual judgment.

6:2 took them wives. The “taking” of these women most likely refers to fallen angels, or demons, “possessing” their bodies. The word “wives” (Hebrew *ishshah*) is better translated “women.” There is no necessary intimation of actual marriage involved. By this time in history, anarchism and amorality were so widespread that these demons were easily able to take possession of the bodies of multitudes of ungodly men; these in turn engaged in promiscuous sex with demon-possessed women, with a resulting rapid population growth, Satan perhaps hoping thereby to generate a vast army of human recruits to his rebellion and also to thwart the coming of God’s promised Seed by thus corrupting all flesh.

6:3 My spirit. One of the ministries of God’s Holy Spirit has always been to convict man’s spirit of “sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:8). Man is also “flesh,” however, and there is perpetual conflict between the flesh and the spirit, even in the life of a believer (Romans 8:5; Galatians 5:16,17). God is long-suffering with respect to man’s rebellion, but only for a time: the hour of His judgment must eventually arrive.

6:3 hundred and twenty years. This prophecy was apparently given, perhaps through Methuselah, just 120 years before the coming Flood. The prophet Enoch had already been translated. Shem, Ham and Japheth had not yet been born and God’s specific commands to Noah (Genesis 5:32; 6:10,13,21) not yet given.

6:4 giants. These “giants” were the monstrous progeny of the demon-possessed men and women whose illicit activities led to God’s warning of imminent judgment. The Hebrew word is *nephilim* (“fallen ones”), a term possibly relating to the nature of their spiritual “parents,” the fallen angels. That they were also physical giants is evident from the fact that the same word is later used in connection with the giants in Canaan at the time of Joshua (Numbers 13:33) and by the fact that the word here was translated in the Septuagint by the Greek word *gigantes*.

6:4 also after that. “After that” clearly refers to Numbers 13:33 and probably represents an editorial insertion in Noah’s record by Moses. These giants in Canaan may also have had demonically-controlled parents; they were also known as the Anakim, the sons of Anak.

6:4 daughters of men. The idea that these “daughters of men” were actually descendants of Cain, and the “sons of God” descendants of Seth has been a widely held Christian naturalistic interpretation. This was not the intended meaning of the writer, however, who could certainly have written that the male descendants of Seth began to take wives from the daughters of Cain if that were his meaning. The descendants of Seth were not “sons of God” (most of them perished in the Flood) and the female descendants of both Cain and Seth were certainly “daughters of men” (literally, daughters of *Adam*). Besides, Adam had many other sons in addition to Cain and Seth. Further, even though intermarriage between believers and unbelievers is wrong, it could not in itself have produced universal wickedness and violence.

6:4 men of renown. The antediluvian giants had, by the time of Moses, become renowned heroes of antiquity, as far as the world was concerned. They, like their parents, were probably demon-controlled, their giant stature engineered by genetic manipulations discovered and carried out by these evil spirits. They could not have been demi-gods (half man, half “god”), however, as ancient mythology claims, since such imaginary beings are beyond the pale of God’s creative purposes. Fallen angels are not prospects for salvation, whereas fallen men and women are. A half-angel, half-human being would be an impossible anomaly, in terms of soteriology. The only apparent solution to all the problems posed by these verses is demon possession of both parents and progeny, *not* demonic marriage or procreation.

6:5 only evil continually. Universal wickedness requires a universal cause adequate to produce it. Nothing less than a worldwide influx of demonic control seems adequate to explain it.

6:6 his heart. The first mention of the word “heart” occurs here, connecting the evil in man’s heart with grief in God’s heart. This figure occurs often in Scripture, the “heart” representing the deepest seat of one’s emotions and decisions.

6:7 repenteh me. The apparent contradiction involved in the Biblical record of God “repenting” when the Bible also says God does *not* repent (contrast I Samuel 15:11 and 15:29) is resolved in terms of man’s viewpoint versus God’s viewpoint. To “repent” means to “change the mind.” God cannot repent, since He cannot change His mind concerning evil. He *seems* to repent, when man changes *his* mind concerning evil. God’s attitude toward man is conditioned by man’s attitude toward Him. It is because God does *not* repent that He must *seem* to repent when man “changes his mind.”

6:8 found grace. This is the first mention of “grace” in the Bible: the first mention in the New Testament is Luke 1:30, where Mary “found favour” (same word as “grace”) with God. God’s grace is found, not earned! Note the consistent Biblical order here: Noah first found grace, then he was a justified, righteous man, finally becoming perfect (complete or mature) in his relation to both God and man, and ultimately walking with God in a life of total faith and fellowship.

6:9 generations of Noah. This seems to be Noah’s signature concluding his personal record (Genesis 5:29–6:9a). It is significant that his last word emphasizes only that he was being saved from a sinful world merely by the grace of God.

6:9 perfect in his generations. It is likewise significant that the first sentence of the *toledoth* of Noah’s sons (note Genesis 10:1) stresses the godliness of their father. Noah is an outstanding example of

parental example and guidance. His sons were saved on the ark because of his own righteousness (note Genesis 7:1).

6:11 *filled with violence.* In order to be “filled” with violence, the earth by this time had become filled with people.

6:12 *all flesh.* Since “all flesh,” as destroyed in the Flood, included animals (Genesis 7:21), some have suggested that animals also had “corrupted their ways” and were contributing to the worldwide violence. This is doubtful, since animals do not make moral judgments. However, as a part of man’s dominion, they shared in his curse and now in the judgment of the Flood. This verse may possibly imply the development of carnivorous appetites and increasing hostility to man by the animals.

6:13 *with the earth.* God did not promise to destroy man *from* the earth, but *with* the earth. The physical earth-system itself, as man’s home and dominion, must share in his judgment. The Flood obviously was to be global and cataclysmic, not local or tranquil, as many modern compromising Christians have sought to interpret it.

6:14 *pitch.* The ark (an ancient Hebrew word used also for the small box in which the infant Moses floated on the Nile) was made of a hard dense wood whose species has not yet been identified; it was made waterproof, not by a bituminous pitch (a different Hebrew word) but by some as-yet-unknown “covering.” The Hebrew word is *kopher*, equivalent to *kaphar*, frequently translated later as “atonement” (e.g., Leviticus 17:11). In providing a protective covering against the waters of judgment, it thus becomes a beautiful type of Christ.

6:15 *three hundred cubits.* The dimensions of the ark were ideally designed both for stability and capacity. It has been shown hydrodynamically that the ark would have been practically impossible to capsize and would have been reasonably comfortable, even during violent waves and winds. Assuming the ancient cubit to have been only 17.5 inches (the smallest suggested by any authority), the ark could have carried as many as 125,000 sheep-sized animals. Since there are not more than about 25,000 species of land animals known (that is, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians), either living or extinct, and since the average size of such animals is certainly much less than that of a sheep, it is obvious that all the animals could easily have been stored in less than half the capacity of Noah’s ark, each pair in appropriate “rooms” (literally “nests”).

6:16 *window.* The “window” was probably an opening for light and ventilation extending circumferentially around the ark, with a parapet to keep out the rain. The one large door in the side was to be closed only once (after the animals were in) and opened only once (to release them a year later).

6:16 *third stories.* The three decks may have been laid out as follows: large animals on the bottom; small animals and food storage on the middle deck; family quarters, possessions, records, etc., on the top deck. Water could have been stored in cisterns on the roof and piped throughout the ark where needed. Overhead water storage could also have provided fluid pressure for various other uses.

6:17 *a flood.* The Flood (Hebrew *mabbul*) was a unique event. Various other words were used in Scripture for local floods. The *mabbul* was *the* Flood.

6:17 *every thing that is in the earth.* The purpose of the Flood—to destroy all flesh—could only have been accomplished by a worldwide deluge. The idea of a local flood is merely a frivolous conceit of

Christians seeking to avoid imagined geological difficulties. Although many marine organisms would perish in the upheavals, everything in the earth (that is, “on the land”) would die.

6:19 *two of every sort.* Two of each kind of bird, cattle, and creeping thing (the “beasts” are also included in Genesis 7:14) were to be put on the ark. Again, marine animals are omitted, as representatives of their kinds could survive outside the ark. Note that the animals were to “come unto thee.” God directed to the ark, by a miraculous selection process, those animals who possessed the necessary genes for the migratory instincts which would be needed by their survivors in the post-Flood world. Noah did not have to gather the animals himself, but merely to take into the ark two of each kind as God sent them to him.

6:21 *all food.* Since the pre-Flood world was essentially uniform climatologically, it was probably equally uniform ecologically, with representatives of all plants and animals located reasonably near Noah’s home base.

6:22 *so did he.* This simple statement summarizes a whole century of absolute obedience to God’s Word by Noah, under the most difficult and discouraging of circumstances. Not only here but three other times (Genesis 7:5, 9, 16), it is said that Noah did all God commanded him.