

The Book of Genesis

Chapter 6

6:1-2 The human race began to increase and to spread over the earth and daughters were born to them. The sons of the gods [descendants of Cain who called themselves gods, 4:26] saw how beautiful these daughters [the descendents of Seth] were, so they took for themselves such women as they chose. (REB)

Corruption of Seth's Line

During the time of Methuselah, the line of Seth became corrupted and no longer followed God. These two verses explain how that corruption started—through intermarriage with the wicked line of Cain.

6:3 Consequently the EVER-LIVING said, "My spirit shall not call to man forever, for he is sinful flesh; but they shall have a hundred and twenty years." (FEN)

For seven generations, God had designated preachers of righteousness through the line of Seth. Now, with the corruption of that line, God showed that He would not allow civilization to continue in that condition. Humanity is now given 120 years before its destruction.

6:4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown. (NIV)

Nephilim

The KJV translates the Hebrew "Nephilim" as "giants." The Hebrew is literally translated "one who falls," this would be a being of great power, not necessarily one of giant stature [which would be the Hebrew: "Rephaim"]. These were the prominent men of Cain's line whose power and renown led to them becoming the "gods" of mythology—Lamech, Tubalcain, etc.

6:5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. (NIV)

6:6 And the EVER-LIVING sighed for the doings of man upon earth, and it grieved His heart. (FEN)

6:7 So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them." (NIV)

Consequences of Wickedness

Josephus writes, "...Adam's prediction that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and at another time by the violence and quantity of water..." (Antiquities, I.II.3). God perpetually warned humanity about the result of their sin. God's intention was to destroy the sinful world and start over with a pre-tested seed, which meant He would need to choose one and work with it before terminating that wicked civilization.

6:8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. (NIV)

Finding Favor

The KJV uses "grace," the New Testament term for undeserved kindness. Noah was either attempting to follow God to the best of his ability or God called him out of the wickedness of that time.

6:9 This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God. (NIV)

Noah reached this state of being without blame after God called him and extended His grace. To be righteous and blameless, one must be forgiven of sin—under the blood of Christ—and live God's way by the help of His spirit.

6:10 Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. (NIV)

Noah's Sons

These are the sons Noah fathered after he was 500 years old (5:32). It is highly unlikely that these were Noah's only children. It is reasonable to believe that Noah's earlier children were so deeply rooted in the wickedness of the world that God gave him these three sons. Noah was able to instruct them in God's way, and demonstrated enough influence in their lives that they would live in harmony aboard the ark.

6:11-12 Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence [TAN: "filled with lawlessness"; FEN: "crime"]. **God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways.** (NIV)

Corrupted His Way

The KJV states "corrupted his way." This can be interpreted that man had corrupted the natural way of man by perversions, or could also imply the corruption of God's way.

6:13 So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. (NIV)

The Capacity of Noah

Noah had been a man of wealth and power before God called him, Josephus even mentions "Noah's government." In order to be a "preacher of righteousness" (2PE 2:5) in the pre-Flood world, it was necessary for Noah to reach the people of that time with God's warning. He also had to possess the financial means that would enable him to build the largest floating vessel ever made until this present age.

Confronting Wickedness

By this time, Noah had proven to God that he would remain faithful to His way both in word and deed. Josephus tells how Noah reacted to the society of that day: "*and, being displeased at their conduct, persuaded them to change their dispositions and their acts for the better; but, seeing that they did not yield to him, but were slaves to their wicked pleasures, he was afraid they would kill him, together with his wife and children, and those they had married; so he departed out of that land.*" (Antiquities, I.III.1) It is possible that Noah returned to this area after Lamech's [of Cain's line] death.

6:14 Make yourself an ark of gopher [NIV,REB: "cypress"; FEN: "pitch-pine"] **wood; make it an ark with compartments** [NIV: "rooms"; FEN: "decks"], **and cover it inside and out with pitch.** (TAN)

Deck Space

If the larger animals were very young, such as the elephants and giraffes, they wouldn't need the same amount of ceiling height as ones which were fully grown.

6:15-16 This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. Make a roof [KJV: "window"; TAN: "an opening for daylight"] **for it** [REB: "giving it a fall of one cubit when complete"] **and finish the ark to within 18 inches of the top. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks.** (NIV)

Cubit

The NIV uses the 18-inch cubit. If this were the 25-inch cubit, the dimensions would have been 625 x 104 x 62 feet, and the ark would have had almost 3 million cubic feet storage capacity. The KJV describes the commanded dimensions of the ark as being 300 x 50 x 30 cubits. "Cubit" is derived from the Latin "cubitus"—"the lower arm"—used to denote the distance between the elbow and the extremity of the middle finger.

Structural Differences

There were great ocean-going ships built before 2200 B.C. The biggest design difference between these ships and Noah's ark was the solid cover God instructed Noah to build over the top deck to prevent the ark from being swamped by huge waves. In this way, the other ships, undoubtedly used by other humans to escape the Flood, could be sunk, ensuring only Noah and his family's survival.

6:17-18 I am going to bring floodwaters [Hebrew: "mabbul"—specific to this worldwide flood, not the same word used to describe a local flood] **on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens** [signifying worldwide destruction], **every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.** (NIV)

Covenant

This is the first occurrence of the word "covenant" in the scriptures.

6:19-20 You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. (NIV)

The Animals

God brought "kinds" aboard the ark, not two [or more] of every species. Even then, God specified land-dwelling creatures; there was no need to bring aboard animals that lived in or on the water—such as ducks, seals, and sea turtles.

6:21 You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them." (NIV)

Type of Kingdom

During this period, the ark was a type of the kingdom of God. Everyone on the ark was under God's government, administered by Noah. If, after the deception in the garden of Eden, God allowed the devil to alter the nature and physiology of certain animals so that they became carnivorous, it is reasonable to

believe that prior to boarding the ark, God altered them to become herbivorous—just as they will be in the Millennial Kingdom. This modification made it much easier to prevent accidental loss of the only male or female rabbit, squirrel or mouse, as well as simplifying the feeding. A vast quantity of hay could be brought aboard for the majority of the larger animals while barrels of grain, dried fruits and nuts would suffice for Noah's family, birds and rodents.

6:22 Noah did everything just as God commanded him. (NIV)

Noah's Obedience

HEB 11:7: "*By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.*" Noah had a role to fulfill before he could receive God's promise of physical salvation from the Flood.