

## GENESIS 6

Powellhust Men's Study, 09 February 2023  
New International Version

### Learning objectives

- Identify the mysterious 'sons of God'.
- Identify the ancient 'giants on the earth'.
- Explain why God exterminated human beings.

### Sons of God, daughters or men

<sup>1</sup> When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup> the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose.

- Human beings: Hebrew *ha-ʾdam* = the-humankind.
- Sons: Hebrew *benei ha-ʾElohim*, 'sons-of-the-gods'? (The singular Deity in 6:1-8 is Yahweh.)
- Married: Hebrew *lqḥ* = 'to take, grasp, seize'. Forced / unnatural marriage?

### Who were/are those sons of God / of the gods?

#### Theories

- Ancient kings practicing polygamy.
- Ancient chiefs and the right of 'the first night'.
- The 'godly lineage of Seth' marrying pagan women.
- Divine beings who made use of human women.

#### Divine beings

- The angels who sinned, Jude 1:6
- 'Sons of God' at creation, Job 38:7
- The 'divine council', Psalm 82
- They engendered 'giants' (Nephilim)

### Yahweh sets a limit on the human life span

<sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said, "My spirit shall not abide in mortals forever, for they are flesh; their days shall be one hundred twenty years."

- Yahweh affirms human mortality. Hebrews 9:27
- 'My spirit' recalls Genesis 2:7
- 'For' = in-which-also = 'since' (?)
- A wisdom text from the town of Emar cites 120 years as the most years given to humans by the gods. Another indication of the antiquity of Genesis, from sources, or perhaps the source, shared by other ancient societies.

### Watchers corrupt the human race

<sup>4</sup> The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went in to the daughters of humans, who bore children to them. These were the heroes that were of old, warriors of renown.

- Nephilim: LXX *gigantes*, 'giants'. Tall, strong humans. Numbers 13:33. Hero = strong.
- Book of Enoch equates these with 'watchers' who taught women to seduce, and men to make war.
- Ancient Jews taught that demons are the souls of drowned giants.

### Human wickedness prevails

**<sup>5</sup> The LORD saw that the wickedness of humans was great in the earth and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD was sorry that he had made humans on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.**

If Yahweh knows everything since the beginning, and he knew free moral agents would go evil, then why was he sorry when they did, and why did he grieve over the outworking of his own plan? (Knowing that tragedies will happen, does not lessen human grief when they come to pass.)

### 'I will blot out humankind'

**<sup>7</sup> So the LORD said, "I will blot out from the earth the humans I have created—people together with animals and creeping things and birds of the air—for I am sorry that I have made them."**

- I made: *bara*? = the Genesis 1 mankind?
- Why the other creatures? Had they too been genetically corrupted by the watchers?
- Could modern gene therapies so alter our human DNA that the race will no longer be eligible for redemption by Jesus' blood?

### Righteous Noah finds grace with Yahweh

**<sup>8</sup> Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD.**

**<sup>9</sup> This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God.**

**<sup>10</sup> Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.**

- Find: *mş?*, to find, reach, meet, obtain, achieve.
- Righteous: *şaddîq*, righteous, just, true, pure, perfect.
- Blameless: *tamîm*, complete, unscathed, intact, honest.
- Was Noah's lineage purebloods? Unmixed with giant's DNA from the 'sons of God'?
- How could he 'walk with God' outside of Eden? (How do we 'walk' with God?)

### Whilst humanity falls into wickedness

**<sup>11</sup> Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. <sup>12</sup> God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways.**

- Sight: 'to the faces of'. 'In the face of'?
- Violence: *hamas*. Enough said?
- Corrupt(ed): root *şht*, pit, grave; spoil, ruin, miscarry.
- People: *basar*, 'flesh', their physical being.
- Ways: their behaviour.

### Yahweh prepares to start over

<sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out.

- Ark: *tévâh*. < Egyptian, ‘chest, sarcophagus’.
- Cypress: *gofer*. (Unknown wood.)
- Pitch: *kofer*. ‘< Akkadian *kupru* pitch and asphalt. Cp. Exo. 2:3.

### Noah’s ‘ark’

<sup>15</sup> This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. <sup>16</sup> Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit high all around. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks.

<sup>17</sup> I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish.

- Cubit: Egypt 20.1”. Greek 18” (Was Moses from Greece? Or from Egypt?)

### Yahweh makes a covenant with Noah

<sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you.

- Covenant: *berît*. Agreement. Treaty. Contract. May be imposed by sovereigns on vassals.
- All of Yahweh’s dealing with humans is by his covenants & promises.

### Jesus and the New Testament

<sup>37</sup> “As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ... <sup>39</sup> and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away.” Matthew 24

<sup>27</sup> The day Noah entered the ark ... the flood came and destroyed them all. Luke 17

<sup>19</sup> The imprisoned spirits ... <sup>20</sup> were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved. 1 Peter 3

If Jesus and the New Testament affirm the flood, and if there was no such flood, then:

- Was Jesus wrong, deluded, mistaken?
- Was Jesus accommodating to Jewish superstitions?
- Do New Testament books pass off old myths as truth?
- Can we safely reject the Tanakh and the NT?
- What should we conclude about worldwide flood accounts and massive skeletal deposits?
- If Yahweh destroyed the world once, then could he ever do so again? Will he?