



Sermon – 06/05/2022
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Verses Covered This Week

Genesis 6:1 – 22

2 Peter 2:4 – 5

1 Peter 3:20

Matthew 24:36 - 40

Let me invite you to open your Bibles back with me to Genesis chapter 6. Genesis 6. And if you're a guest for the first time today, whether you're watching online or right here in the room, welcome home. I want you to know for all of you that we're celebrating the Lord's Supper today. During the response time, make sure you come to the tables and grab your elements so that we can partake of that family meal.

Now, as we come to Genesis 6, we get to one of the most familiar passages in the Bible. The story of Noah and the ark. We've all seen it from our childhood. Some of you grew up in vacation bible school or Sunday school with the flannel graph that was there with all the different animals charted out on the wall. We've seen it in kid's literature. All around culture there's a sense of familiarity with the text and what takes place. And one of the dangers when you get to a familiar passage just like this is that you can feel like you know what happens so well that you forget why it's happening in the first place. And what we find in the story of Noah is it's a story of God's judgment on His enemies. It's a story of God's salvation for His people and it's a story of God's covenant for His promises. And right here in Genesis 6 as we work our way through it today, we're going to see that judgment of God on display. Let's pick up where the passage begins. Genesis 6 starting in verse 1 and here's what Moses tells us as we read on down to verse 7. When man began to

¹When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them,
²the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any that they chose. ³Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." ⁴The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown. ⁵The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of his thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. ⁷So the

LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them."

Let's pray together. Father, in this moment, as we come face to face with Your judgment, I pray that You would open our hearts to receive Your word, that by it, our lives will be changed, that Your Spirit would help us to see Jesus more clearly, the way that He took that judgment for us in our place, God. Lord, as we come face to face with the gravity of sin this morning, we're reminded of all the darkness that is in the world around us. And so we pray even now that You the light of Your Gospel into our hearts in a way that makes us more like Christ in whose name we pray. Amen.

I want you to see an image on the screen as we start this morning. Some scientists made a amazing breakthrough discovery when it comes to astronomy. They were able to capture the first image of the black hole that's at the center of the Milky Way. They used eight different observatories around the Earth to string together an image of what this might look like if you could see it. And right there at the Milky Way, at its center, is this black hole. And if you're not familiar with the way black holes function, they're built around what's known as a singularity. It's an object that's so small, it's smaller than anything you can think of and but at the same time, it's so heavy that it's more weighty than anything you can imagine. And as a result of that, it has an intense density to it. And that density gives it a gravitational foundation that the entire Milky Way Galaxy where the Earth revolves around is located. And what happened is as they captured this picture, it gave us one sense of something that we could never otherwise see because those black holes are the essence of darkness. It's a place where not even light can escape. Once you cross the event horizon and get into the gravitational pull, the intensity of that black hole, nothing can escape from it, not even the light. What scientists tell us is that as it consumes things from the universe, including stars and other matter, it it's as if it's feeding the black hole. And that it's growing in its darkness, that its force is constantly expanding in a way that allows that darkness to spread and spread and spread until the shadow of darkness continues to increase. When we come to Genesis 6, we see the darkness of sin. The essence of darkness right here in the text. And it all begins back when the singularity of sin takes place in the Garden of Eden. In that moment, when Eve bites of that fruit, it is a small act with dense implications for the spiritual life of the world. And as we see from Genesis 3 on now to Genesis 6, the darkness of sin expands. That shadow increases. It seems as if there is no hope to stop it. Until God steps into the picture. That's why the story of Noah is not just a story of judgement but of hope. And it's a hope as you'll remember back in Genesis 5:29. Last time we were in this text, we saw the essence of that hope when Noah's father Lamech named him. He gave him the name Noah. That name that means rest or relief. And the rest and relief that his father was hoping for would finally come through his son. We don't see it. Instead of rest what we find is rebellion. And the rebellion of the people of the earth leads to the judgment of God.

What we're going to find as we unpack this text today is that we will see several dimensions of the judgment of God that you and I need to come face to face with this morning. and the first one we're going to notice right back here in the passage that we've already read in verses 1 through 7 is the purpose of the judgment of God. So, notice how the story begins. See, right here in verses 1 through 4, we see this unusual and fascinating passage. It talks about the the sons of God and the Nephilim and it's hard to make sense of these realities. But as we turn our attention to the

text, we may not be able to identify exactly who these ancient people are. But what we must identify is the sin that's at the heart of their lives in a way that gives us a window into the sin that's a part of our lives that warrants the judgment of God. So, notice the way it starts in verse 1. It begins in verses 1 and 2 to speak of the sons of God. They marry the daughters of men and as scholars have looked at this over the centuries. They have centered around one of two possibilities here. One is that these sons of God could be sons of the line of Seth who are marrying the daughters of men, uh, daughters from the line of Cain. And so what you have happening here is a merger of the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent in a way that dishonors God. That's certainly possible. But the other view of this text is that the sons of God are not speaking about humans but demonic, angelic forces who take on human bodies in order to marry and to reproduce with human wives. And as you hear me say that, you're immediately saying, well, that can't be right. That sounds totally crazy. But guess what? Every time the phrase, the sons of God is used in the Old Testament. It's in reference to angelic beings and it shouldn't be surprising that angelic beings can have some sort of personal embodiment. We see that show up repeatedly throughout the Bible. But one of the ways that we can get a window into this, I want you to see on the screen the way that Peter talks about this passage. 2 Peter chapter 2. And in verse 4 and 5, he speaks about it here. Paul also talks about it in Jude chapter 6. And in both cases when they refer to this passage, they refer to these sons of God in ways that make it seem as their understanding is these are demonic beings who have embodied human flesh. It says this in second Peter 2:4;

⁴For God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgement; ⁵if he did not spare the ancient world but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness with seven others when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;

So, right here in verse 4, we see Peter referring to them as these fallen angels. And when we come back to Genesis 1 through 4, what we find is they don't just take wives, they also produce offspring and verse 4, begins to describe them. Look back at it. It speaks about these people known as the Nephilim. Who are they? Well, notice what verse 4 says,

⁴The Nephilim were on the Earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came into the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men of old, men of renown.

So, it seems as if these Nephilim are the offspring, the children of these illicit marriages. And the way that Moses talks about them, it seems as if his audience, those he's writing to, have a familiarity with them and their legacy. He's not unveiling something new. He's unmasking something ancient. He says, these mighty men, these men of renown, the ones who seem so great in stature. He says the importance about them is not the stature of their size but the stature of their sin. Because what we find is that the sin that is going on in the world leads to the judgment of God. There is a purpose in God's judgment here in the text. He holds us accountable for our sinful actions. He does that with the sons of God, with the Nephilim, with all that are living in the day of Noah and he does it for you and me. He looks at our actions when we turn away from Him and He holds us accountable for the ways that we fall short of His design. And so what's important to grasp here is not the identity of those who are in the text but our identities apart from Christ as sinners. See, the purpose of God's judgment is not just to

confront our sinful actions. If you begin looking in verse 5 with me, he also confronts our sinful thoughts. So, look at the way that the text picks up there. The reason for God's judgment can be seen in verse 5. It says,

⁵The Lord saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of his thoughts of his hearts was only evil continually.

I mean, get the picture that's here. Notice what it says. It's as if he's saying at every moment every intention of every thought, of every heart, of every person is only evil continually. It is a complete wickedness. It is a total turning away from God and it doesn't just happen at the level of our actions but at the level of our thoughts. That's what the text is showing us here. And and that reminds us of all the ways we need to be confronted with the call of the Gospel as it relates to our thought life. That God doesn't just care what we do with our hands. He also cares what we do with our hearts. What we do with our thoughts. That's why Jesus gives us that warning in the Sermon on the Mount that anger is the equivalent of murder, that lust is the equivalent of adultery, our thoughts are worthy of judgement just as much as our actions. That's what Genesis 6:5 is showing us. That's why Jesus and the Gospels and the entire New Testament call us to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. To do whatever it takes to pursue the renewing of our mind. Our lives, our hearts are at stake, in our thought life. It's what brings about the judgement in Genesis 6. And it's part of what brings judgement that each one of us deserve today apart from Jesus Christ.

But I want you to notice now when you look back at Genesis 6, see the way that God responds. Notice how he reacts. It says, the Lord regretted that He had made man on the earth and it grieved Him to his heart. See, God is not sinister but sorrowful. He is not glad but grieved. The picture we have here is not that of an uncaring judge of the universe but a brokenhearted father. One mourns and laments and feels deep sorrow for the sin of his people. In fact, the language used here elsewhere in the Old Testament is the same kind of language that you would use when a family member loses a loved one to death. That's the type of grief He feels. The pain. The sorrow. And that's not unique to God the father. We see Jesus mourning over Jerusalem as He gets ready to head into the Holy Week. We see Paul reminding us that we should not grieve the Holy Spirit with our sin. What this text is showing us is that our sin can lead to God's sorrow. That our guilt can lead to God's grief. And through that sorrow, through that sin, as a loving father to his wayward child, He brings discipline. He brings judgement. That's the purpose behind what God is doing in the flood.

But there's a second thing I want you to see about the judgment of God in this text. It's not just the purpose of God's judgment but let's look, number 2, starting in verse 8 at the patience of God's judgment. So, follow along with me in how it reads.

⁸But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. ⁹These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. ¹⁰And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Now, we know from the book of Genesis all the way back in Genesis 2, God told Adam and Eve, the day you eat of the fruit, you shall surely die. There was a promise of judgement even before the first sin took place. And yet even though that's the case, we do not see the widespread

judgment of God immediately. There is a patience in His judgement and this portion of the passage gives us a window into what that patience looks like. Notice the way that God's patience protects a righteous remnant. That's exactly what we see in verses 8 through 10 when the text contrast Moses with the description of the evil people around him. Look at the difference back in verse 8, he found favor in the eyes of the Lord. In other words, he's a recipient of God's grace. You go on to verse 9, it describes him as both righteous and blameless. In other words, God's favor is the foundation for Noah's faith. God's righteousness is the foundation for his righteousness. And then, look at verse 10 when all the people around him are turning from God in rebellion, instead it tells us that Noah turns to God in communion. It says he walks with God. In language it echoes Genesis 5:24 and the way that it speaks about how Enoch walked with God. There's a patience in God's judgment so that He might protect this righteous remnant. And Peter comes back and speaks about this passage elsewhere in the New Testament. I want you to notice on the screen 1 Peter 3:20. What happens is Peter talks about God's patience in this passage when he says this. 1 Peter 3:20,

²⁰because they formerly did not obey, listen to this, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.

So that phrase there. God's patience, waited in the days of Noah. Why? Because He was protecting a righteous remnant. 1 Peter 3:20 says, that He was preserving Noah and his family. He was setting apart a people for rescue from the judgment that was to come. But there's more to the patience of God in this passage. Let's pick up in verse 11. We'll see how the God's patience preserves a corrupted creation. That's where it says in verse 11, if you'll read along with me.

¹¹Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹²And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. ¹³And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

So, notice what happens here. The corruption of humanity leads to the corruption of creation. Why? Well, we know back from Genesis 3 that when the curse of sin enters into the world, it doesn't just bring a curse on humanity but all of creation. It's all affected by the weight of sin. And yet God in His kindness doesn't just discard the creation. He doesn't just say, let's flush it and start with the totally new world. Instead, what we find here is in His patience, He preserves and purifies a corrupted creation. It's part of why the New Testament tells us in Romans 8 that the creation groans under the weight of sin, waiting for its deliverance. But you'll see that when the judgment comes, it might be a patient judgment in the moment. But when it arrives, this text tells us it will be a total judgment. Look back at verse 13 at the end. It says,

¹³Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

There is nothing that will escape the judgment of God. Both sinful humanity and corrupted creation will experience that judgement. And this is just a foretaste of what God will do for us in His Son on the cross. That when the judgment of God comes against Him, it is a total judgment affecting not just humanity but all of creation. That right here in the judgment that we see in the

story of Noah, what you have is a judgment that comes so that the preservation of the corrupted creation can happen. That a restoration can occur. That a new creation can take place. And that is pointing forward to exactly the same thing in the coming of God's Son. That when Jesus is raised from the dead, victorious over sin, He not only conquers the grave, He not only defeats sin and death, He ushers in a new creation. God is preserving and restoring and purifying His created order. That's the patience of God.

But notice the way that this text goes on. We also see how God's patience provides an unexpected deliverance and we'll see it described beginning verse 14. If you'll read along with me.

¹⁴Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. ¹⁶Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks.

So, as you hear this, put yourself in Noah's shoes for a moment. Because right before we started reading this portion of the passage, God has just told him, he's going to bring judgement on the earth through a flood. And you can imagine the horror and the dread that Noah would have felt in that moment because at this point, he doesn't know that God's about to promise him an unexpected deliverance. He was likely overcome. But then, when he tells him that he will experience this unexpected deliverance, that sigh of fear probably turns into a sigh of relief. There's a way of escape. There's hope. But you can't help but wonder at the same moment when he feels that sigh of relief, did he have a sense of uncertainty. Are you serious? An ark? I mean, when it talks about this ark, it's about the length of Kyle Field. It'd be the equivalent of building the Titanic in West Texas. There's no water around. It makes no earthly sense. And yet God calls him to this unexpected deliverance. And what's important here is not the size and shape of the boat but the size and shape of God's patience. That He bears with us in our sin. That His kindness leads us to repentance. That He provides this way of rescue. And what happens here is the promise of this boat is a promise of deliverance through the waters of judgement that prefigure exactly what God does for us in Jesus. He makes a way of unexpected deliverance that we don't deserve because of our sin. And the way that He does it is by carrying us through the waters of judgement on an instrument of wood. In the case of Noah, it is the wood of the ark. In the case of us, it is the wood of the cross. That God gives us His patience. He shows us His mercy for the sake of this unexpected deliverance. I just want you to think for a minute about how the patience of God should fuel the perseverance of his saints. I mean, God bears with Noah. He gives him this project. And the text will tell us later on it took decades for him to go from when he got the the architectural specs here of the boat to when it was actually seaworthy and ready to go. And you can imagine in in the midst of such an evil culture, the amount of hostility, mockery, opposition that he might have taken. Whatever the ancient equivalent of stealing catalytic converters was probably happening right there in the ark. Lack of supplies, intense physical strain for decade after decade after decade. You wonder if there were moments where Noah was wrestling with, is this really necessary? Is it really worth it? And what allowed him to persevere, what enabled him to press on is he never lost sight of the mission. He never lost a sense of the future that God was preparing for him. And when he saw the way that his small role fit into the big picture of God, God's patience fueled his perseverance.

I don't know what season the Lord has you in right now, but if you find yourself struggling to press on wrestling with persevering through that battle with sin or that that bout with suffering or that difficult task the Lord has called you to. Perhaps you need to take a step back and pick your eyes up off the immediate and see the bigger picture. See the patience of God. Reconnect with His mission for your life in a way that will drive you just like it did for Noah.

But there's one other thing about the judgment of God we can't help but see in this text and it picks up now in verse 17. The third thing I want you to notice is the promise of God's judgment. We've seen his purpose. We've seen his patience. Now, let's start reading in verse 17 about that promise. Here's what it says.

¹⁷For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die. ¹⁸But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. ²⁰Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. ²¹Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them." ²²Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

So, so far in this passage, we've seen why God brings judgement and what God is going to do to bring salvation in the midst of that judgment. But now, in this passage, we see how the judgment will come. It will come through this worldwide flood, worldwide sin leads to worldwide corruption which will lead to a worldwide flood to bring about the worldwide judgment of God. All will be held to account. And embedded in this part of the passage is the promise of God's judgment. And I want you to see several dimensions of this promise that we see there. It's a promise, as verse 17 tells us, of a certain judgment. That's why it says at the beginning of the verse, I will bring a flood. And at the end it says, everything that is on the earth shall die. It's not an option. It's not a possibility. There's no to be determined about this, it is coming. It is certain. It is unmistakable. But it's not just a certain judgment, it's also a covenantal judgment. So, beginning in verse 18, it tells us,

¹⁸But I will establish my covenant with you

And then in verses 19 through 21, it unpacks who will benefit from that covenant, not just his family, but two of every animal, and even all the food that is on the earth. There's promise in preparation for the judgment. And, of course, later on in the passage in Genesis 8, God unpacks this covenant even further. But the thing that we need to understand for now is that what we experience when judgment comes depends on where we stand with the covenant of God. Are we part of that covenant people or are we not? That covenant is the foundation of our salvation from God's judgment. But there's one last piece of this promise of judgment you need to see here and it's back in verse 22. We see a promise of coming judgment. So, look at what it says there. It commends Noah. He did this. He did all that was commanded him. So, he obeys God. He responds to this crazy and unexpected method of deliverance and jumps right into it. He is praised for that. And as we know because of his covenant benefits from God, he is marked out

by the covenant. He does not experience the judgement in that moment. But what we find beginning in Genesis 9 and we see elsewhere in the entire Scripture in all of human history, even though he did not experience the judgment of God in this life, Noah, just like everyone of us hearing these words today faces the judgment of God in the next life. Noah is a sinner just like everyone of us. He faces that same judgment seat that each one of us will stand before. That's exactly why I want you to see one last passage on the screen. When Jesus is talking in Matthew 24. Because what He says to us as He speaks there is that the story of Noah isn't just a foretaste of the first coming of Jesus Christ. In His death and resurrection that reflects the deliverance of God brings about through the ark in the midst of the waters of judgement. It's not just a sign of a first coming but also his second coming. So, notice how the text says in Matthew 24 beginning in verse 36 on down through 40, here's what it says.

³⁶“But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. ³⁷For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

You sense the warning that's in this passage? Do you sense the danger that Jesus is speaking about? He he looks back at the people of Noah's day and he says, they just carried on as if nothing was going to happen. As if no judgement were to come. As if no flood was heading their way. They went, still went to Taco Tuesday. They still went to that outdoor wedding. It says they were eating and drinking. They were marrying and being given in marriage. They lived their life now as if the future didn't matter, until it was too late. And he gives that same warning for you and for me. He says, just as in the day of Noah, that the people of God were surrounded by others who didn't think about the future, who didn't recognize the judgment of come, to come, who didn't appreciate that one day, God's Son would return to bring about the culmination of God's judgment. They didn't change their lives. They didn't stop long enough to allow their busyness to step aside so that they could come face to face with their sin and grapple with what they would do with God's design for their life. And I can't help but wonder how many of you find yourself in that same spot this morning. That your busyness numbs the pain of your shame. That your activity helps you feel less guilty. And if you just pretend like everything's fine and normal, maybe it'll turn out alright. The author of Hebrews in Hebrews 9:27 tells us, it's appointed for a man once to die and then comes judgement. The same judgment that Genesis 6 unpacks for the people of Noah's day is coming in even greater force in a spiritual way for each one of us. And the thing we need to wrestle with this morning is what this text brings to light. What are you going to do with the coming judgment of God? And everyone of us faces the same choice as the people in Noah's day. See, in the days of Noah, with the flood of God's judgment coming, you had one of two options. You were either in the boat or out of the boat. There was no middle ground. There was no in between. And that choice had to come before the judgment arrived or else it would be too late.

So, the question that each one of us needs to wrestle with this morning is, are you in the boat? In the days of Noah, God gave one way of salvation from His judgment and unless you embraced it, you faced that judgment apart from God's deliverance. And that same reality is true for each one of us today. That apart from God's work in His Son, that unexpected deliverance that comes

through that new Noah who suffers in our place, we will face the same fate. That's the reality that each one of us needs to wrestle with today. Which is why it's so fitting that we come to this text on a day that we are partaking in the Lord's Supper because we know the way that this story goes. That the covenant we see first promised here in Genesis 6 is explained further after the flood resides in Genesis 8. And when God gives that covenant in full in Genesis 8, it comes with a sign and a picture. Do you remember what that sign in the covenant was in Noah's day? The rainbow. God gives a visual sign of the covenant to remind His people of His goodness in delivering them from the judgment they deserve from their sin. And when we partake of the Lord's Supper today, that's exactly what it is for us. It's a sign of God's covenant commitment to us through the new covenant of Christ's blood. It is that visual picture of His Gospel goodness on display for you and me. So, as we do each month, we're going to partake of this as a family meal. And you're welcome to the table if you know Jesus and you're following Him as a baptized believer. This is a meal for you. And as we prepare our hearts to respond, I want to remind you that during the response song, we'll make our way to the tables and to prepare ourselves to partake of these elements. This is God's gift to us. To remind us of His goodness for us in Christ. And so in light of that, let's go to the Lord in prayer in this time.

Father, as we turn our hearts and minds to the table, as it reminds us of the broken body and shed blood of Jesus, as it embodies and reflects the deliverance that You gave in Noah's day and You gave through your Son, I pray that through this reality, You will help us to see You in a fresh way. With new eyes that long to follow You with all our hearts, Lord, that persevere in the mission because of Your patience and that press on in the midst of the challenges we face even in the midst of the great darkness all around us. Lord, we pray that if there are people that are here today that have not yet stepped onto the boat, who have not yet put their faith in Christ, Lord, would You rescue them from the judgment to come even today? And we ask these things in Christ's name. Amen.