

GENESIS Why The Beginning Matters

Study 8

The Family of Sin

Genesis 6-8

Part 1 of 3: God is Never Silent about Sin

Genesis 6:1-5 (ESV)

When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." The 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.

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

1) a) Objective question. Select all that apply. What are the two theories on who are the 'Sons of God' (v.1) and who are the 'daughters of man'(v.4)?

	Sons of God	Daughters of man
A.	Seth's line	Cain's line
B.	Cain's line	Seth's line
C.	Angels	Humans
D.	Devils	Humans

b) Discussion question. Which was the view that Dr. Peter in the video lecture thinks is more likely and why?

Genesis 6:6-7 (ESV)

And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So 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."

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

2) a) Objective question. Select the most appropriate answer about God's grief and regret.

- A. God's grief and regret is the exact same as human's grief and regret, humans are made in the image of God mah.
- B. God's grief and regret is bit the same as human's grief and regret because when God is hurt, He is hurt because humans have lost His love and missed out on His love (other-person focused: the other person missed out on the benefit), whereas when humans are hurt, it is because they lost out of the love (self-focused benefit: "I didn't get it")

b) Discussion question. Can God regret? (Refer to the example of God's decision on making Saul king in 1 Sam 15:10-12 ; 28-29 and the video lecture to help you answer)

Basically God is *kik-sam* (激心), emotionally affected, but does not regret his decision because he knew it would happen, he still felt the emotions of betrayal and described his emotions to us through the bible.

Quick Verse Reference

1 Samuel 15:10-12

Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel: "I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions." Samuel was angry, and he cried out to the Lord all that night.

Early in the morning Samuel got up and went to meet Saul, but he was told, "Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set up a monument in his own honor and has turned and gone on down to Gilgal."

1 Samuel 15:28-29

Samuel said to him, "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to one of your neighbors—to one better than you. He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a human being, that he should change his mind."

Genesis 6:8-14 (ESV)

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And 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. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.

3) Fill in the blanks. The Hebrew word for “corrupt”=“destroyed”, implying earth is in self-destructive state because of the evil. Refer to the video lecture slide and fill in the statement below:

Flood story is an	Interpretation	Of an	Actual historical event
Retold in the rhetoric and	theology	of	Ancient Israel

Genesis 6:15-22 (ESV)

This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. Make 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. For 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. But 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. And 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. Of 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. Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them.” Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

4) Objective question. Select the most appropriate answer. Which of the following is a true based on evidence or data or bible verses?

- A. It took Noah and his sons 120 years to build the ark
- B. Noah preached to his neighbors (or even to all the lands) during this time to urge them to repent.
- C. Noah and his sons were ridiculed by people who considered him crazy and had no inclinations to accept his repeated invitations.
- D. None of the above, these are just traditions with no data.**

Genesis 7:1-24 (ESV)

Then the Lord said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate, and seven pairs of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth. For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.” And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the Lord shut him in.

The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

5) Reflection question. There are also similar flood stories in Ancient Near East area such as in the Babylonia Epic- Gilgamesh, the Epic of Atrahasis and in the Qur'an (Suras 11 and 71).

There is also a debate whether the flood happened globally, in the known world, regionally or locally, but regardless of the details surrounding the flood, we know that this is God's world and that God judges evil and every judgement is a reminder that we should repent. Reflect on your life on a scale of 0-10, how much would you rate yourself on how often do you think about the evil within you and repent? (0-Never, 10-every moment)

Quick Verse Reference

Luke 13:1-5

Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no!

But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”

Part 2 of 3: God Always Comes in The Midst of Our Storm

Genesis 6:8-10 (ESV)

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

6) Discussion question. Noah ‘found favor’ with God, was he a righteous man? (Refer to the video lecture and the verses below to answer your question)

Quick Verse Reference

Romans 3:10-11

As it is written:

“There is no one righteous, not even one;
there is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God.

Romans 3:23-24

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus

Psalm 32:1-2

Blessed is the one

whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the one

whose sin the Lord does not count against them
and in whose spirit is no deceit.

Psalm 32:10-11

Many are the woes of the wicked,

but the Lord’s unfailing love
surrounds the one who trusts in him.

Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous;

sing, all you who are upright in heart!

Hebrews 11:7

By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.

Genesis 8:1-2 (ESV)

But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided.

7) Discussion question. Can God ‘forget’? What does it mean to ‘remember’?

Quick Verse Reference

Ecclesiastes 12:1

Remember your Creator

in the days of your youth,
before the days of trouble come
and the years approach when you will say,
“I find no pleasure in them” —

Part 3 of 3: God Never Surrenders His purpose for Creation

8) Reflection question. Just as there was Judgement in the days of Noah, there will be a final day of judgement. At this point of you life, rate from 0-10 how fast you want judgement to come. (0-Never, 5-sometime in my life, 10-Right now)

Quick Verse Reference

Luke 17:26-30

“Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.

“It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

“It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

Take Away

Part 1 of 3: God is Never Silent about Sin

Part 2 of 3: God Always Comes in The Midst of Our Storm

Part 3 of 3: God Never Surrenders His purpose for Creation

Case Study

Case 1 – The Nature of Sin

Andrew is a religious Jew who believes in following the Torah. He claims that by following every point of the Mosaic Law and the 10 commandments given by God, he can go to heaven. He reasons that the Law was given as a way back to God after Adam's fall.

1) a) Discussion question. From a Christian's perspective, what is Andrew missing in his reasoning? Consider Gen. 6:5.

Model Answer

Andrew is missing the fact that all men are born sinners and that God cannot tolerate sin. In Gen. 6:5, we learn here of the **seriousness** of sin. *"I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth" (!) v.7* One of the main points of the entire flood narrative is that God cannot tolerate evil. We acknowledge the fact that we are flawed and sinful, but we don't believe that it needs to be punished. Though the belief in heaven or hell lingers in our country, the belief in 'Judgment Day' has almost vanished outside of seriously Christian circles.

b) Discussion question. Andrew sees the Law as a behavioral guide – "do this, do not do that, etc". If he successfully kept his behavior in check by following the Law, he believes that he will never commit sin. Is sin just in action or does it begin in the heart? Consider Gen. 6:5 again.

Model Answer

In Gen. 6:5, we learn here of the **interior** nature of sin. *"...the thoughts of the heart..." (v.5).* Sin is first and primarily a matter of the heart. Certainly, there is much behavior that is always wrong. But if we focus too much on behavioral violations, we will miss the embryonic and internal forms of sin that may 'fly beneath our radar'. Sin is first a matter of attitude and motives, and it can influence and grow even before it has 'broken out' into behavior.

c) Discussion question. Consider Gen. 6:6. Sin grieves God because it contradicts his nature. If one person repents because they are afraid of the consequence of sin, and another repents because it is contradictory to God's nature, which is true repentance? Why?

Model Answer

In Gen. 6:6, we learn of the ***grievousness*** of sin. *"The Lord was grieved... and his heart was filled with pain."* (v.6) Here we have the ultimate reason that sin is sin. Put it this way — what makes something wrong and not just impractical or harmful? Romans 3:23 says famously that what makes "sin" a sin is that it contradicts the 'glory' or nature of God. But that is rather an abstract way to put it. Here we see the same truth put in a most vivid way. Because sin contradicts the nature of God it deeply grieves him and actually causes him pain! This has profound practical implications for people who want to change their lives and habits. This is one of the secrets to repentance. If you say, "I must stop doing this thing, because it will get me into trouble," then you are not really sorry for the sin but for the consequences or results of the sin. You are not sorry primarily because it grieved God, but because it grieved you and/or others. This means that as soon as your sinful habit stops causing trouble for you, you will continue to do it. But if you recognize and feel poignant about what your sin is doing to God, you will have a deeper and more pervasive motivation to turn away from the sin itself.

Case 2 – Word of God

Darryl is an elder of the Fifteenth Baptist church. He is very passionate about the Lord and His people. He spends a great deal of time reaching out to others in and out of the church as he is gifted with evangelism.

To him, it is necessary to attract the largest crowd possible to be present in the church so he discusses with his fellow elders about what makes a church desirable for all to come. He emphasizes the need for people to "feel" the presence of God through worship so a big portion of the budget for the church is spent on musical instruments, equipment, and renovating the church for a grand look.

However, this leaves no budget for buying new Bible study materials and maintaining the Zoom account for Gamma.

When his fellow elder asks why Darryl does not leave any balance for the study of God's Word, Darryl replies that many churches have Bible study but have little to show for it. He says that they have "head knowledge but no heart knowledge", which only leads them to be judgmental and does not serve to attract people to church. After all, he reasons that there is already preaching on Sunday morning.

Hebrews 11:7 – "By faith Noah, when warned about things not seen, in holy fear built an

ark to save his family. By his faith, he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.”

2) a) Discussion question. Daryl is attempting to de-emphasize God’s Word and its application for the church. Can we have faith without God’s Word to anchor us? Consider Hebrews 11:7.

Model Answer

First, we see that faith is deeply connected to God’s Word. Noah got a “warning”, or a Word of God, which contradicted his sense experience. The things God told him about were “*not seen*”, and they were quite at odds with everything visible and tangible. But Noah lived and acted on the basis of God’s revelation, not the basis of his feelings or senses. (Here he truly shows himself not to be the “seed of the serpent”, for the heart of the serpent’s strategy was to contradict the word of God .) The practical application is that we should take the Bible very seriously and seek in a disciplined way to saturate ourselves with it.

Second, we see that Noah lived in a condition of “*holy fear*”. Thomas Manton, commenting on the flood narrative, said, “*The people of the world did not tremble till the water began to rise. But Noah trembled when God did but speak.*” We must be careful, though, to distinguish Fear from fear. The term “*holy fear*” is a good way to differentiate the Biblical concept of the “*fear of God*” from the condition of “*being scared*”. Trust in God’s Word had put Noah into a condition of “*inner awe and wonder*” before God. This was not a surge of fright, but almost the opposite! It meant his heart and behavior were controlled by reality as God defined it, not as the world defined it. He was imperturbable. Nothing dissuades him or dismays him.

b) Discussion question. Darryl claims that too much Bible study leads people to be more judgmental and condemning. Is that the desired outcome of studying God’s Word?

Model Answer

Studying the Word of God should lead us to be more Christlike because it serves as a guide for our thoughts and the intentions of our hearts.

Instead, we should let our example, not our words, “*condemn the world*”. This is an interesting phrase. We are not called to “*condemn the world*” with judgmental verbal denunciations. Even Jesus said that he did not come to “*condemn*” the world — but to save it (John 3:17). Nevertheless, there is much in the world that is bad and wrong and God’s Holy Spirit is in the world to “*convict it of sin*” (John 16:8). But, to show the world it’s sin, the Holy Spirit can use your faith and behavior far more than it can use your words.

So our study of the Word of God should lead us to be better in our faith and behavior. The unwanted effect of growing to be more judgmental is not a byproduct of Bible study, it is just a manifestation of pride that is already existing in a person's life.

Case 3 – Shortsightedness

Eugene is a Christian attending the Laodicean Church. He has worked very hard in life and desires very much to stop working and retire in luxury. His many years of work paid off and he is now a multimillionaire. He enjoys eating sumptuously, drinking expensive wine, and being merry with never-ending parties and celebrations.

He occasionally skips church on Sunday to enjoy playing golf with his friends at the Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club.

On one Sunday morning, when the preacher taught that we should be looking at investing in eternity instead of our life here on earth, he complains that he just wants to enjoy the fruit of his labor.

"Is it so wrong for me to enjoy a little of life's pleasures?", he exclaims with bitter disappointment.

Mat 24:37-39 – "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.."

3) a) Discussion question. Darryl claims that too much Bible study leads people to be more judgmental and condemning. Is that the desired outcome of studying God's Word?

Quick Verse Reference

Ecclesiastes 3:12-13

I know that nothing is better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives, and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor—it is the gift of God.

Proverbs 30:8-9

Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches—Feed me with the food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny You, And say, "Who is the LORD?" Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God.

Model Answer

There is inherently nothing wrong with eating, drinking, and being merry. The removal of God from our lives in the pursuit of anything else is wrong. This is clearly seen in Proverbs 30:8-9.

Eugene was denying the Lord by prioritizing his enjoyment of earthly pleasures, making it an idol in his life.

b) Reflection question. We are living in the times of Noah, where people care about filling their life with pleasures without thoughts of God. How should we be preparing for the Lord's coming again? How would Noah have prepared himself if he lived now?

Case 4 – God's Love vs God's Holiness

Simone and Phoebe are both new to Alpha and they were learning about God's attributes. The God of the Bible hates sin because He is a holy and righteous God. But they are also taught that God is love.

They were then promoted to Gamma as they found Alpha too easy to understand. They attended Study 8 and learned about Noah's flood. Unfortunately, they felt a little lost reconciling God's attributes with how He destroyed the world because He was supposed to be a loving and kind God.

They ask you 3 questions as stated below (Disc Ques 4a-c).

4) a) Discussion question. How was God's holiness displayed in Noah's time?

Model Answer

Gen. 6:13 is a very chilling and sweeping expression of God's holiness and justice. The "*violence*" of the human race is a tremendous issue that cannot be ignored. Ironically, contemporary people complain that "if there is a just God, why does he allow so much evil, injustice, and oppression in the world?"

However, when we find a Biblical account in which he does something about the violence in the world, we complain that he is "a harsh, punishing God". However, 6:11 provides a very telling and subtle answer to this objection. We are told that God saw that "*the earth was corrupt*" — but 'corrupt' translates to the Hebrew word for 'destroyed'. In other words, what God decided to judge and cleanse was already "*virtually self-destroyed already*" (Atkinson, 137; Kidner, p.87). The human race had destroyed itself! Sin is a kind of self-judgment, self-punishment, and de-constructive. God's judgment-work is simply to confirm our choices.

The fury and power of the flood teach us that God is a God of might and justice and, yes, destruction. 7:21 — "*Every living thing that moved on the earth perished — birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind.*" Atkinson notices

that the Flood is the pattern of creation in reverse (p.136). God has the right, the power, and the wisdom to judge.

- 1) Because he is Creator — he has the right, since he owns all that is. No one else would have the authority to destroy, but the Creator does.
- 2) Second, because he is Creator — he has the power, since he assembled all that is. No one else could un-knit the fabric of nature as he could.
- 3) Third, because he is Creator — he has the wisdom, since he knows all hearts and all ends. Only he knows what people deserve, or what they would do if he gave them more time, and so on.

b) Discussion question. How was God’s love displayed in Noah’s time?

Model Answer

Gen. 6:6 gives us a picture of God’s love *“using the boldest terms, counterpoised elsewhere if need be, but not weakened”* (Kidner, p.86). It tells us that God’s grief over our sin goes to the point of his own personal pain. Commentators point out that the terms our misery under sin — *“pain”* (3:16) and *“toil”* of (3:17) — are very similar to the words *“pain”* and *“grieved”* here in 6:6. In other words, God has so tied his hearts to us that the pain and brokenness of human life now actually affects him too! Even this early in the Bible, we see him entering into our difficulties.

The flood shows also the love and grace of God. In the midst of God’s judgment, he also is showing mercy to Noah and his family. He prepares a way to save this family despite the judgment that is coming upon the world. The ark is a ‘vessel of grace’. Because they get into the ark, Noah and his family are saved. In fact, the purpose of the flood, in the final analysis, was to *save* the human race. Faith was going to die out without God’s intervention. The human race had waxed evil very quickly. By judging the incorrigible and saving the receptive, God gives the human race a new start and ‘saves’ it. Thus both his justice and mercy are evidenced in the flood.

c) Reflection question. How did God display His holiness and love to us?