

## **Genesis in Biblical Perspective: The Gospel of Christ from Genesis – Giants or Angels**

**Genesis 6:1-8**

By [Dr. Harry Reeder III](#)

This is the word of God. Genesis 6:1-8.

1 When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, 2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. 3 Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." 4 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. 5 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. 6 And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7 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." 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

May God bless this His Word to the heart of His people.

I hate sin. I asked the Lord to make sure that that is the only thing I hate in life but I also hate the consequences of sin every time I stand beside the grave. The wages of sin is death. My hospital visits, broken bodies, counseling rooms, broken marriages, broken families, broken hearts, broken dreams, sin is seen in all of these. I hate sin. I am so grateful for God's grace that is greater than all of our sin but I hate sin because sin multiplies. Sinners multiply sinners. Sin multiplies sin. The effects of sin multiply. It puts people, families, lives, organizations, societies, nations and cultures into death spirals unless it is checked by the transforming grace of God.

The book of Genesis has ten books in it. Book one has been studied and it covered the origins of the heavens and the earth and what comes out of the earth and the heavens; man from the ground, woman from man, marriage, the dignity of man, the mandate of being fruitful, multiply and having dominion over

the creation, sin from man bringing death and destruction and the breaking of the relationship with the Living God. Then there were two sons. One perverts worship. He prostitutes it into something for himself and then becomes angry at God and his brother who has favor in the eyes of God. His name is Cain and he kills his brother Abel. Here is seen arrogance, antipathy and anger. The result from that is a line from Cain that starts with him, a murderer, and ends up with a man named Lamech that produces a family in which he embraces bigamy, children who stand against God in cultural accomplishments that are done in pride, a city built in rebellion against God and he becomes a serial killer who writes a song about his arrogance against God. Lamech says in Genesis 4:23-24, *"Listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold."*

The line of Cain is going into this death spiral and on the other side is Seth. Seth is the replacement for Abel. Book two in Genesis gives the reader the line of Seth which is the line that produces men like Enoch who walked with God was no more. This line produced Methuselah who lived long years of blessings from the Lord. There was also a Lamech from the line of Seth who fathers a son named Noah. Here is the line that God is blessing. Book two now comes to an end and in the next study book three in Genesis will be opened up.

As book two is coming to a close it is exciting to see writers who end a chapter where one cannot wait to start the next one because of the way the chapter ends. This is the way I viewed Chuck Colson's book *Loving God*. He ended each chapter in such a way that I could not wait to start the next one.

When people write this way it is called epilogues that become the prologues to the next book or the next chapter. In the movie world they call them trailers. This study of Genesis 6:1-8 is the trailer or the epilogue that becomes the prologue for book three of Genesis. It is an unbelievably challenging, intriguing and almost overwhelmingly complex text but it is also has phenomenal, powerful insights to grab hold of one's life if one deals with it carefully and properly. In this study Genesis 6:5-7 will be looked at first, then Genesis 6:1-4 and the study will end by looking at Genesis 6:8.

Genesis 6:5-7 is a summation. It is God's summation of His assessment of humanity. Here God saw all of humanity and the overwhelming avalanche of evidence is depravity. Man is totally depraved. Notice what it says in Genesis 6:5, *"...every intention of the thoughts of his (man) heart was only evil continually."* There is God's verdict of His assessment of humanity that is before Him. All flesh has gone astray. The word *flesh* in Genesis 6:3 becomes a theological, technical term in the Bible. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is in contrast to the deeds of the flesh. Flesh does not mean skin. Starting right here in Genesis 6 it is a term meaning man living with antipathy and arrogance between him and God and self reliance and self gratification is guiding man's life. It is man in

rebellion independent of God as opposed to the life of the Spirit where one is dependent upon God's grace and mercy. So here is man living independent of God and God says, "The overwhelming evidence that has come forward to Me is that man is totally depraved. He is only evil continually always and now he is leading life that is showing universal depravity where all flesh has gone astray."

Or as the New Testament says, "All have sinned..." There is none who is righteous, no not one. There is none who seek for God. They go after their own way. Now in the context of all of that He not only says here is total depravity of the person, here is universal depravity of all of humanity but man's unchecked insatiable appetite for sin and rebellion will lead to absolute depravity, the death spiral of humanity and manifested in its culture. That is God's verdict. His diagnosis is not an environmental problem but it is a heart problem. "... *The thoughts of his (man) heart was only evil continually.*"

Now comes God's judgment. "I will now bring all of humanity to an account." He has now set up the prequel to the sequel that is going to come and that is the judgment by waters which begins in the third book of Genesis. Where did this evidence come from for God to give this verdict? At least an assessment, a thread, an insight of the evidence is given in Genesis 6:1-4 that gave rise to God's verdict, assessment and judgment in Genesis 6:5-7. Man began to multiply according to Genesis 6:1-4.

*1 When man (referring to the line of Cain and the line of Seth) began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, 2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. 3 Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." 4 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.*

Out of the two lines that are multiplying the men give rise to the daughters of men. In Genesis 6:2 the sons of God find them attractive. The word *attractive* in the Hebrew means provocative sexually. Therefore the men then respond to them with autonomy. They took for themselves multiple wives as they chose.

Now with power they amass to themselves wives not like Lamech who took two wives which is bigamy and not even polygamy but this is known as harems. These women surround them for their sexual gratification. God sees it and says, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever." In other words, why is man able to rebel against God in arrogance and sin? It is because God in common grace is even upholding the lives of those who are sinning against Him. Yet He says this will not be for long. In fact He gives this span of 120 years before the judgment will come.

Some people read this 120 years as God changing the lifespan of man but I do not think that is what the text is saying. The text is saying from the time of God's assessment and His promised verdict there is going to be a period of His kindness in which there is a man by the name of Noah that is going to be raised up and build an ark. God will bring this family of Noah's through that ark and have that man preach to call people to repentance and that time will be 120 years. Then the Spirit of God will be taken away. The One who restrains total depravity from absolute depravity will be removed and then the death spiral accelerates to warp speed. Yet even at the moment the Spirit of the Living God and God's common grace is upholding those who are rebelling against Him.

Recently I was in Wal-Mart and I hear a child screaming. It is only a matter of time for that screaming child to be right next to me. The screaming child always finds me. So sure enough right next to me in the check out line is this screaming child. This poor father who has had this fit of ignorance to take this baby out without the mother to the Wal-Mart is something I cannot understand. The father is trying to get the baby to be quiet and the baby will not be quiet. Eventually this child goes into a temper tantrum where he begins to slap the face of his father as hard as he can. The only reason this child could slap his father in the face is because his daddy still held him. I wanted to say to the father, "Drop him" but I know that is not the Christian thing to do. But that is the picture here in Genesis 6:1-4. God, in whom we all live, move and have our being, is upholding them even while they are slapping Him in the face with this degeneration of the culture. However God says, "Not for long." When God becomes grieved in His holiness it is not but a time for His judgment to fall. That is in book three of Genesis.

In the meantime who are the sons of God and who are the daughters of men in this passage? Many think this is just a straight forward statement. Back in Genesis 4 the line of Cain produced daughters of men and now the line of Seth, the Godly line, produce the sons of God. The line of Seth has now entered into the line of Cain where the sons of God are marrying the daughters of men which is called marrying outside of the Lord or outside of fellowship. The sons of God are marrying outside the covenant with this impulse of being sexually provocative and entering into relationships. The marriage covenant is now broken within the Godly line and there is this intermingling of the two lines.

Beyond that they have gone into polygamy and now to the development of these harems in the picture of this text. I do think this is true that the line of Seth gets intermingled with the line of Cain. Whenever God's people have their heart captured by the heart of the world it is only a matter of time until they are indistinguishable from the world and instead of being salt and light they actually begin to be participants in the acceleration of the death spiral of a culture. The reason sexual addictions from pornography to promiscuity are so serious is because the breaking of families in the church today is only a millimeter

statistically behind the world. This happens when Christians have allowed the world to capture their hearts instead of Christ.

It is clear that has happened in this text because Seth and Cain have somehow intermingled because when one reads Genesis 6:5 all flesh has gone astray. Genesis 6:5b, "...*the thoughts of his (man) heart was only evil continually.*" This includes all of humanity. Then comes that great word in the Bible, "but." Romans 6:23, "*For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" All of humanity has gone its own way and God says, "I am going to bring judgment" and then comes Genesis 6:8, "*But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.*" The word for *favor* in the Hebrew is a word that connotes grace and mercy. Noah found not earned but found favor in the eyes of the Lord. In the midst of this sweeping torrent of cultural degeneracy with a cast of absolute rebellion and arrogance against God, here a man and his family and like a bulwark, God is their refuge, standing.

The one view says that this is just the line of Seth and Cain that are intermarrying and because they are intermarrying that is what is happening. The only problem is that the text is not just talking about the line of Seth and Cain. It has already mingled them when it brings judgment on them as it says that men were multiplying everywhere. Who is multiplying everywhere? It is man in general and not just Sethites and Cainites. Who are the daughters? They are the daughters of man. It is looking at all of humanity and not just at the line of Seth and the line of Cain. All of humanity has gone astray and all of humanity will come under the judgment of the flood throughout the entire creation.

Who are the sons of God? This is view number two. This is the oldest view. This is the view of the Jewish commentators. This is the view of one Jewish commentary that is quoted in Jude and 2 Peter. These passages have already been brought out and they are about Enoch and the book of Enoch. This view is that the sons of God are actually a phrase that identifies angels meaning that these angels have entered into these inappropriate relationships with the daughters of men resulting in this cultural death spiral and these men of renown, these Nephilim. This is the oldest view and fits the text best. In fact the phrase "beney ha'Elohim" meaning the "sons of God" is only found three times in the Bible. Here are the other two times. Job 1:6 says, "*Now there was a day when the sons of God (beney ha'Elohim) came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.*" In the NIV translations they go ahead and interpret it and put in the word "angels." The word "angels" is not there but that is how it is used consistently.

The second place is in Job 2:1, "*Again there was a day when the sons of God (beney ha'Elohim) came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.*" It is obviously referring to an angelic presentation, angels that are present that come before the Lord.

Satan is a fallen angel and he makes his appearance as well. This is the same phrase that is used in Genesis 6 and this is the consistent use of it in the Scripture.

In fact, it seems to be buttressed in the passages of Scripture that seem to be referring to this. Here are some New Testament passages that also support this. In 2 Peter 2 the reader is being warned against false teachers who leave the realm of teaching truth and take up the abode of teaching lies and false doctrine. This is given in 2 Peter 2:1-3 and then starting in verse 4 there are some illustrations of God's response. 2 Peter 2:4-6, 4 *"For if 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 judgment; 5 if 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; 6 if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly."* Then it goes on with more illustrations but in this passage there is a time when angels have committed a sin and the sin is a sin that God's brings judgment on and confines them to the abyss, a place of judgment in hell. Then in this passage chronologically comes the flood, then Sodom and Gomorrah.

What is that sin that the angels committed? This is found in another passage in the New Testament. Jude 1:5-7,

*5 Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. 6 And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day— 7 just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.*

The sin that the angels committed was that they did not stay within their own position of authority and left their proper dwelling and there is that same chronological line up here – the sin of the angels, the judgment of Noah and then Sodom and Gomorrah.

Then there is a hooking of the sin of the angels and the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah. The angels left their proper station and went to an improper dwelling place for improper activity defined in similarity to the days of Sodom and Gomorrah which had not only sexual promiscuity, sexual perversion (men with men, women with women) but then the unheard of impulse of such people trying to reach out this time in reverse for the angels to know them who had come to

visit Lot. Lot ends up giving his daughters in the angels' place. There is this sexual drive, idolatry and sex with a vengeance.

Now, the problem with the second view is that angels do not marry neither are they given in marriage and yet there is this idea of this cohabitation with angels which seems to be the consistently dealing of the text. How is this solved? When one gets to the third view I think we have arrived. Here is the third view.

Where did they end up? In Genesis 6:2-4 it says they ended up in the Nephilim. The word Nephilim comes from a Hebrew root that means "fallen ones." This is not angelic cohabitation with humanity. This is fallen angels which the New Testament calls demons, following Satan's pattern reaching out and here is the first case of what will later be clarified in the New Testament of demonization. These are fallen angels at work upon the Nephilim, on the fallen ones and instead of the abode created for the angels they made their abode in the fallen ones, the Nephilim. Thus there is this spiritual depravity that is accelerated through the process of demonization of the Nephilim and the result is giants of renown, epic heroes of the culture that are known for their violence. These people take what they choose. They are known for their sexual motivation when they saw the women provocative. They were not like Lamech. He was only a bigamist. These people take as many wives as they choose to fulfill their attractions. Now these harems gather around them.

This is exactly what is giving us the picture. There is Cain seven generations later. Then there is Lamech who is not just killing but he is killing more than any and he kills with arrogance, murder and violence. He takes two wives for himself and threatens everyone by saying, "Remember this, I killed a boy. I killed an old man. I killed anybody who raises their hand against me."

So here is this process that now ends up with a welcome mat out in the lives of such men for the presence of depravity and demonization. The parallel that is here can also be seen. Satan did not want his abode either. He wanted God's abode. Then he came to Adam and Eve and said, "You can have God's abode" and when they saw (lust of the eyes) the tree is good for food (lust of the flesh) and it was beautiful they took from its fruit and ate. This same pattern is right here in Genesis 6. Now not only has Satan fallen but fallen angels who want their own abode now not to take God's place but to take hold of, dominate and ravish humanity. They now come in the other direction and when they saw and it looked beautiful they took as they chose. It is the same exact pattern that brings the degeneration of the culture so that now there are these celebrities like Lamech and others. In Genesis 10 the same words are used to describe Nimrod, the mighty hunter of renown in the fallen line of Ham.

This is not unusual to hear about these warlords of the culture. Uganda today is still reeling under the ravages of Idi Amin, a professed Muslim but actually a

practicing Satanist. He had his harems, his Nubian secret police and he did as he pleased and destroyed thousands and thousands of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Our world has had its Hitlers and its Stalins. We have them right now in the Sudan. We have these who are demonized, driven by sexual gratification, power and domination. These in the culture, instead of reeling against it and revolted by it, it begins to lift it up and sing about it like the song of Lamech. I would say the first gangster rap song is that of Lamech's back in Genesis 4 which is the glorification of what he was doing.

The culture continues in its death spiral. The line of Seth is obliterated and intermingled. Here are these demonically dominated tyrants who now take hold of the culture by the throat. God says, "One hundred and twenty more years and it's done." This study is so important.

Here are a couple of very practical things one can take from this study. The first one is that when one reads this text and then reads the rest of one's Bible know that spiritual warfare is real. Ephesians 6:12, "*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*" It is hard for many to understand that spiritual warfare is real because today's culture is made up of materialists and naturalists. Many can only go with cause and effect with what is seen. We do not see the angelic warfare that is going on today that one might worship and not be captivated by the spirit of the age. One does not see the angel Michael warring in the heavens. Those things are not seen but they are really at work.

When one sees the declension of what goes on in an Oval office, in the courtrooms of a society or in a Sudan as Christians are being slaved, tortured, killed and made objects of sexual gratification that is not simply a political problem that has to be accomplished through some amendment to a constitution. That is spiritual warfare. We are not in a cultural war. There is a cultural battlefield but we are in a spiritual war. That is where we stand and it has been right from the ions of the fall of humanity into sin. There are some who are not just affected by the depravity of a culture but they open up and become synagogues of Satan, abiding places. Never was an angel made to abide and bring destruction and evil in a human but these have left their proper place to bring rebellion against God, the degeneracy of a culture.

Spiritual warfare is real but this must be said. You live on the side of the Scriptures fullest revelation in Jesus Christ and on the side of the cross where you know, while you are fully aware of spiritual warfare, you do not walk in fear. On the one side there are these naturalists and over here is this mysticism, the spiritualism that is going on in our society and then the taking of the spiritualism of the eastern religions and trying to incorporate it in the name of spiritual warfare. When one preaches the Gospel the evil one has to flee. When one



embraces Jesus Christ there is no place for the evil one in a person's life. 1 John 4:4, "*Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*" Christ defeated Satan at the cross. You are not allowed to flee Satan. You are called in James 4:7, "*Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*" This is not a battle we are fighting in to see who is going to win the war. The war has been won so bring the spoils of victory to the battle in your personal life, in your family's life, in your public life, in the culture's life, in the political life. Bring the spoils of victory in Christ to bear with grace, truth and evangelism, winning people to Christ. With the very work of discipleship where we train up men and women to know Christ to train up families that embrace Christ is the way the spiritual warfare is won. Satan must flee when Christ is preeminent in someone's life.

The second basic thing is wherever spiritual warfare is unmet in the strong victorious name of Christ, it will leave its ruination behind. One can see it here in Genesis 6. Sexual domination, sexual promiscuity, sexual perversion will dominate that culture. The abuse of women will dominate that culture. The rising up of "epic heroes and giants" who will glorify violence and sexual prowess will dominate the culture. I want all of us to understand this text but as I read this text I thought of every man reading this today, every man with a son, and every man with a grandson. The world puts its "Lamechs" and "Nimrods" in front of one's sons and in front of you and that is not manhood. Men do not destroy. Men win like Noah, they rescue. They redeem. They walk with God. They have a righteous life. They fill their life not with the addictions of the culture but with the grace and truth of God.

O for a generation to raise up one more Noah to stand against the "Lamechs" and the "Cains." Men, you cannot do it by opening up your son's heart to this drivel and trash and even wrestling. They want you to think of it as cartoon stuff. There is the glorification of sex, the abuse of women, steroids and everything else. This culture is so driven by sexuality that they keep inventing a pill to stay at it. People say, "We can't get old." We are absolutely driven in our culture by the physical, sensual, sexual and glorification of power. So much so that it goes right into the halls of our most esteemed office and our highest elected position and when the book is written about the sexual perversion and promiscuity the excuse that is boldly given is this; "I did it because I could." That is what Lamech and Nimrod would say. "I do it because I can. I've got the power to do it." I know some men reading this are not going to be elected to President but you are becoming more powerful. You are successful in your business. You are successful in your home. You are successful in your neighborhood. You are getting acclaim, applause and you are moving up the ladders. The more God moves you forward the more you want to get someone around you to hold you accountable to as many people as possible because power intoxicates you.

Men, you ought to have three or four guys who can call you up at any time and say, "Who are you looking at? What are you thinking about? What are you reading? What are you watching?" Men, do you love your wife? Are you pursuing purity for a wife that God is going to give to you? Are you fighting for your marriage? Then surround yourself with those individuals. The men who succumb to the demonization are the men who walk it alone and exalt themselves above everything and anything. Soon is the fall and the fall is great. Spiritual warfare is real but Christ has won the victory. My basic plea is that the ruination of the loss of dealing with the spiritual warfare that is before by abandoning the means of grace that is the Word of God in fellowship, worship and focus of God will lead to the sexuality that dominates the culture, it will lead to promiscuity, perversion, centers of power, glorification of those who have that power and then we will have a culture of "Rambos" and "Terminators." Real men do not destroy. They bring life. They do not create business deals that ruin people. They do not advance in business and in life at the expense of people. On the contrary, as they go through life they are gathering as many people as they can around them to know Christ, grace and truth. A man of God is strong and courageous but he is not a tyrant. A man of God is graceful and sensitive but he is not a woman. He is not effeminate. He is a gentle man. The culture has its cartoon heroes that are not funny. They destroy.

So I appeal to you to not give the devil an opportunity, to not grieve the Holy Spirit and the answer is to open your heart to Jesus Christ that He would fill us. He is so filling us and our passion for Him is so great that we have no room for the cultural depravity. On the contrary, we want to bring the salt and light of our Savior and we will start with our wives, our children and with all who are around us that Christ would be all and in all. Lamech is dead. All who raise themselves up against God are swept away when judgment comes. Edi Amin is in exile and is dying of cancer but there is a Savior who raises up the Noahs of the day and by God's grace may He begin with us.

Prayer:

Father, thank you for the moments together in Your Word. I plead with You to speak to our hearts, let not this passage in its difficulties and challenges detour us from the basic true message that powerfully calls upon us. Open your heart not to the false teaching that you can be God but open your heart to the true and living God, through Jesus Christ. Come to Him and trust Him. If you have accepted Christ as Lord of your life then every day walk with your God. Fill your heart with Him that you will love what He loves. O God, hear this prayer and bring forth a people victorious in the name of Christ, who has won the victory for our souls. I pray in Jesus name, Amen.

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