

God Grieved that He Created Humanity (Genesis 6:1–8)

Grace Chapel January 23, 2008 Dr. John Niemelä

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW OF GENESIS

FLOW OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

(Toledot 1): 1:1–2:3: God formed (days 1–3) so He could fill the earth with light and life (days 4–6) and He rested, because creation was done (day 7)

Toledot 2: 2:4–4:26 (Day 6ff.) God’s evaluation of creation (after forming Adam) was, “Not Good that man should be alone,” so He created the woman that the earth could be filled with people, but humanity fell into death while the woman was in her first pregnancy and that child murdered his brother before spawning a lineage

Toledot 3: 5:1–6:8 All of Adam’s descendants died, except Enoch who walked with God, then demons began procreating with humans (in an attempt to destroy humanity, but Noah found grace in God’s eyes

EXPOSITION

6:1–2 As population grew, sons of gods (demons) forced women into their harems

The phrase *the sons of God* is *b^enē ha'ēlōhīm*. It is plural. This plural form for *God/gods* can mean *God* (the one true God) or it can mean (false) *gods*.

NKJV etc. translate it: The sons of God

I translate it: The sons of the gods

How do we discern which way to translate it?

English present tense verb forms distinguish between singular and plural verb forms/ Hebrew distinguishes in this way for all tenses.

English examples:

The people's God *is* true (*is* = singular verb)

The people's gods *are* false (*are* = plural verb)

1. Hebrew uses a singular verb, when God is the subject
God *created* (If it were present, it would be: God *creates*)
 The Hebrew verb form is singular.
2. Hebrew uses a plural verb, when gods are the subject
 Their gods *shall be* a snare to you (Judges 2:3)
 (If it were present it would be: Their gods *are*)
 The Hebrew verb form is plural.
3. When God/gods is *not* the subject of a verb, context must decide
 No contextual evidence links them to God
 Therefore, I translate it: *the sons of the gods*

The sons of the gods (b^enē ha'ēlōhīm) refers to demonic beings

1. It seems to have been a technical term for angelic beings in Job 2:1

2. The usage in Job does not prove its meaning in Genesis, but the New Testament commentary on Genesis 6 argues for *the sons of the gods* being demons.

3. 2 Peter 2:4–5 is a New Testament comment on Genesis 6

Note that certain demons have already been chained in anticipation of judgment. The question is whether the sin of these angels (verse 4) occurred at the time of Noah (verse 5)

4. Jude 6 is a New Testament comment on Genesis 6

Note that certain demons have already been chained in anticipation of judgment. Did these angels leave their abode in the days of Noah

5. 1 Peter 3:18–20 is a New Testament comment on Genesis 6

It speaks of Jesus making a proclamation to the *now imprisoned* spirits who formerly were disobedient

1. in the days of Noah
2. by the Spirit

When was the proclamation? In Noah's day. NOT after the cross.

When were those spirits disobedient? In the days of Noah

Were they imprisoned when He made proclamation? No

6. I take it that some demons disobediently left their abode by procreating with human women in the days of Noah (1 Peter 3:18–20; 2 Pet 2:4–5; Jude 6)

7. What about Matthew 22:30? Does it say that angels are neuter?

Review 6:1f As people multiplied, sons of gods (demons) began taking harems at will

New: 6:3 The Spirit will not remain on the sidelines forever; earth's judgment day would be 120 years after this proclamation

Man's days are 120 years

This is not a statement about how long individuals would live

It is a statement that judgment would come in 120 years

6:4 *N^ephilim* were in the land in those days

**The Greek Old Testament (Septuagint) translates it giants
(this is based on Numbers 13:33)**

Rather than understanding them as physical giants, the end of 6:4 refers to them as powerful men of fame (fame derived from demon powered abilities)

The ancient pantheons drew upon *the sons of the gods* as their gods

Summary: 6:1–4 As people multiplied, demons began taking harems at will, but God would not let demonic procreation with women and their powerful and famous offspring to continue forever: judgment would fall in 120 years

6:5 God's overall evaluation was that man (His creation) was totally corrupt and only had corrupt thoughts

6:6 [Instead of evaluating humanity as very good, as God did on day 6: Gen 1:31] God was grieved to evaluate created humanity as very bad

6:7 As a result of this evaluation, God determined to impose a death sentence on the beings created on the sixth day

6:8 Despite God reaching a negative evaluation of humanity in general, Noah found grace in God's eyes

Did Noah deserve the judgment also?

Did God need to show grace at that time?

CONCLUSION