

CHAPTER 6

"when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them"

Henry Morris estimated the population to be ~7 billion by the time of the flood

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"My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years"

"man" = adam (אָדָם)

"strive" = yāḏōn (יָדָוּן); to contend, plead, or judge

Possible readings of the 120 years:

-1) A 120-year countdown to the flood

-2) A new limit on human lifespan

-Difficulty with 2: post-flood lifespans were still very long (Shem 600, Arphaxad 438, Abraham 175).

"My Spirit shall not strive with man forever"

-This implies that He will for a season...

2 Peter 3:9 — The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

1 Timothy 2:4 — God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Romans 1:21 & 24 — because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful... Therefore God also gave them up...

Isaiah 55:6 — Seek the LORD while He may be found

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"the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose"

"sons of God" = bene Elohim (בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים); an exact Hebrew phrase used elsewhere only in Job 1:6 and 2:1, where it always refers to angels.

Two interpretive camps on this verse.

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VIEW 1 — GODLY LINE OF SETH

"Sons of God" = godly men of Seth's line; "daughters of men" = ungodly women of Cain's line.

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VIEW 2 — ANGELIC BEINGS (FALLEN ANGELS)

bene Elohim consistently means angels in Old Testament usage (Job 1:6; 2:1; cf. Job 38:7).

The Septuagint (LXX) manuscripts translated the phrase as "angels of God."

Josephus understood it as angels; Augustine (~AD 400) was the first major shift away from this view.

2 Peter 2:4-5 — God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell (Tartarus) and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved for judgment, and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah... bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly.

Tartarus & the Titans

*Titan family tree

Luke 8:31 — And they [Legion] begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

Revelation 9:1 — Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit.

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Jude 6-7 — And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; as Sodom and Gomorrah... having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh.

"Abode" (oikētērion) appears only one other time in the NT — 2 Cor 5:2, of our earthly body/tent.

-The angels left their proper bodies/abode.

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"There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown."

"giants" = Nephilim (נפיליִם); "fallen ones" or "those who cause others to fall."
-LXX Greek = Gigantes (γίγαντες) "Giants"

"also afterward"

Goliath had brothers — five of them, also giants (2 Samuel 21:15-22).

Og of Bashan's bed: ~13 ft × 6 ft (Deuteronomy 3:11).

Numbers 13:33 — There we saw the giants [nephilim] (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight.

Deuteronomy 2:11 — They were also regarded as giants, like the Anakim, but the Moabites call them Emim.

Post-flood giant references: Anakim, Emim, Zamzummim, Rephaim, Og of Bashan, the Philistine giants. All trace back to descendants of Ham.

The LXX translates gigantes for four Hebrew words — Nephilim, Gibborim, Rephaim, and Raphah (Goliath's line). The ancient translators saw them as one connected category.

How were there giants afterwards if all drowned?

*Nephilim Line

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"the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart"

"sorry" / "grieved" = an anthropopathism
-"That's one sad looking pair of shoes."

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"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD"

First mention of "grace" in the Bible

Hebrews 4:16 — Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

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6:9

"This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God."

"genealogy" = toledoth (תולדות);

Note: 5-8 use "the LORD" (Yahweh / יהוה);
v9 onward shifts to "God" (Elohim / אֱלֹהִים).

"perfect" = tamim (תָּמִים); without blemish. Used 44× in OT, most often of sacrificial animals
"without spot or blemish."

-Likely speaks of his genealogical purity.

"And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth."

-Shem born when Noah was 502 (c.f.11:10)

-Ham is the youngest (c.f.9:24)

-Japheth is the oldest (likely born @500)

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6:11-12

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence"

"corrupt" = shachath (שָׁחַת); translated "corrupt" 22× in OT, but "destroy" 96×.

-The earth was at the point of self-destruction.

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"The Days of Noah"

The Mandela Effect:

-a phenomenon where a large number of people share the same false memory, often confidently remembering something that never actually happened or is different from reality

Matthew 24:37 — "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Luke 17:26 — “And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:

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6:13-22 Preparing the Ark

"Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch."

"ark" = tevah (תִּבְהָ); not the same word as the Ark of the Covenant (aron).

-The only other place tevah appears is Exodus 2:3 — the basket placed in the Nile carrying the infant Moses.

-Both are “vessels of salvation through judgment waters.”

"rooms" = qen (קֶן); usually translated "nests"

"cover" / "pitch" = kaphar / kopher (כָּפַר / כִּפֶּר); same root translated "atonement" 71× in the OT.

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THE ARK AS TYPOLOGY OF CHRIST:

-One ark — one way of salvation.

-Three decks — three-in-one structure

-One door — John 10:9, "I am the door."

-Covered with kopher (atonement) inside and out

-God shut the door (7:16) — the security of the believer

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6:15-16

"The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits."

Cubit definitions vary:

-Hebrew short cubit = 17.5 in

-Common cubit = 18 in

-Long cubit = 20.4 in

-Egyptian long cubit = 20.65 in

-Babylonian = 19.8 in

The ratio (300:50:30 = 6:1:0.6)

At 17.5" cubit: 438 ft long × 73 ft wide × 44 ft tall ≈ 1.4 million cubic feet of internal space.
-At 18" cubit: ~1.5 million cubic feet (a half-inch cubit difference adds 100,000 cubic feet).
-Our church sanctuary is just shy of 37,000cf²
So it is 41.1x smaller than the ark.

Volumetric equivalent: ~522 standard railroad livestock boxcars.
-A boxcar holds ~240 sheep;
-the ark could hold ~125,000 sheep.

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"You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above"
-those "in ark" (in Christ) do not look at the world's chaos but look up to God.

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WORLDWIDE FLOOD LEGENDS

Mesopotamia — Ziusudra / Sumerian Flood Story — c. 17th century BC written tablet
The Sumerians told of Ziusudra, a king warned by Enki that the gods would destroy mankind with a flood; he survives in a great boat, the storm lasts seven days and nights, he opens a window, offers sacrifice, and is granted special favor afterward.

Babylon / Akkad — Atrahasis — c. 18th–17th century BC
The Akkadian Atrahasis Epic tells of the gods deciding to destroy humanity by flood, while Enki warns Atrahasis to build a boat, preserve life, and survive the deluge

Babylon — Epic of Gilgamesh — early 2nd millennium BC roots;
The Babylonians told of Utnapishtim, who is warned of a coming flood, builds a great boat, preserves human and animal life, sends out birds after the waters subside, lands on a mountain, offers sacrifice, and is granted immortality.

The Greeks told of Deucalion and Pyrrha, who survive when Zeus destroys humanity by flood; Deucalion builds an ark, they land on Mount Parnassus, offer sacrifice, and humanity is renewed afterward.

India — Manu and the Fish — 8th–6th century BC
The Indian tradition tells of Manu, who shows kindness to a fish, is warned that a flood will destroy humanity, builds a boat, ties it to the fish when the waters rise, and survives to become the ancestor figure of renewed mankind.

Cherokee tradition tells of a dog warning his master that a flood is coming, instructing him to build a raft, take his family and provisions, and survive while the waters rise over the mountains and drown the rest.

The Hawaiian Nu'u tradition tells of a man who builds an ark or great canoe, survives a great flood, lands on Mauna Kea, offers sacrifice afterward, and is corrected by Kāne after wrongly giving credit to the moon.

In Inca-related traditions, Viracocha destroys a former corrupt or rebellious race with a great flood, sometimes sparing a small remnant, after which a renewed humanity or civilization begins.

Some Mexican traditions tell of a former age destroyed by flood, with a small number of survivors preserved, sometimes in a vessel or enclosed container, after which mankind continues.

6:17

"And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life"

"floodwaters" = mabbul (מַבּוּל); a unique Hebrew word reserved for THIS catastrophic worldwide flood. Only one other occurrence: Psalm 29:10 — "The LORD sat enthroned at the flood (mabbul), and the LORD sits as King forever."

-Distinct from the normal Hebrew word for local flooding. The Holy Spirit chose a unique word to mark the unique event.

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"But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark — you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you"

"covenant" = berith (בְּרִית); first occurrence in the Bible (law of first occurrence). An unbreakable divine agreement.

Typological picture of end-times deliverance:

-Enoch (5:24) — taken BEFORE the flood = picture of the church / pre-tribulation rapture.

-Noah's family — sustained THROUGH the flood by covenant = picture of believing Israel through the tribulation.

-The unbelieving world — perished in the flood = picture of those who reject Christ at His coming in judgment.

-(Enoch was not post-flood or mid-flood — he was pre-flood. The pattern matters.)

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6:19-21

"And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you"

"two of every sort" — animals came TO Noah; God directed them.

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HOW MANY ANIMALS?

"kind" = min (מין); not equivalent to the modern taxonomic "species."

-Canine "kind" includes dogs, wolves, coyotes, etc.

Only animals with the "breath of life" in their lungs taken. Arguably not insects, and obviously not sea creatures.

Conservative estimate: ~3,000 kinds. Higher estimate: ~18,000 kinds.

Henry Morris's math:

-18,000 kinds × 2 (allowing for extinct species) = 36,000 animals

-72,000 total (paired)

-Capacity of the ark: ~125,000 sheep.

-72,000 animals, ark ≈ 58% full

-@10k kinds it's only ≈ 30%

Babies: Smaller, sleep more, eat less, reproduce longer

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"they shall be food for you and for them"

Plant food gathered — Noah and family were still vegetarian. Meat was not permitted until after the flood (9:3).

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6:22

"Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did."

~100 years of construction (Noah was 500 in 5:32; 600 when the flood came).

-God spoke once — Noah obeyed for a century without repeated reminders or signs.

2 Peter 2:5 — Noah, "a preacher of righteousness." His life and his words both proclaimed coming judgment.

Hebrews 11:7 — By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.