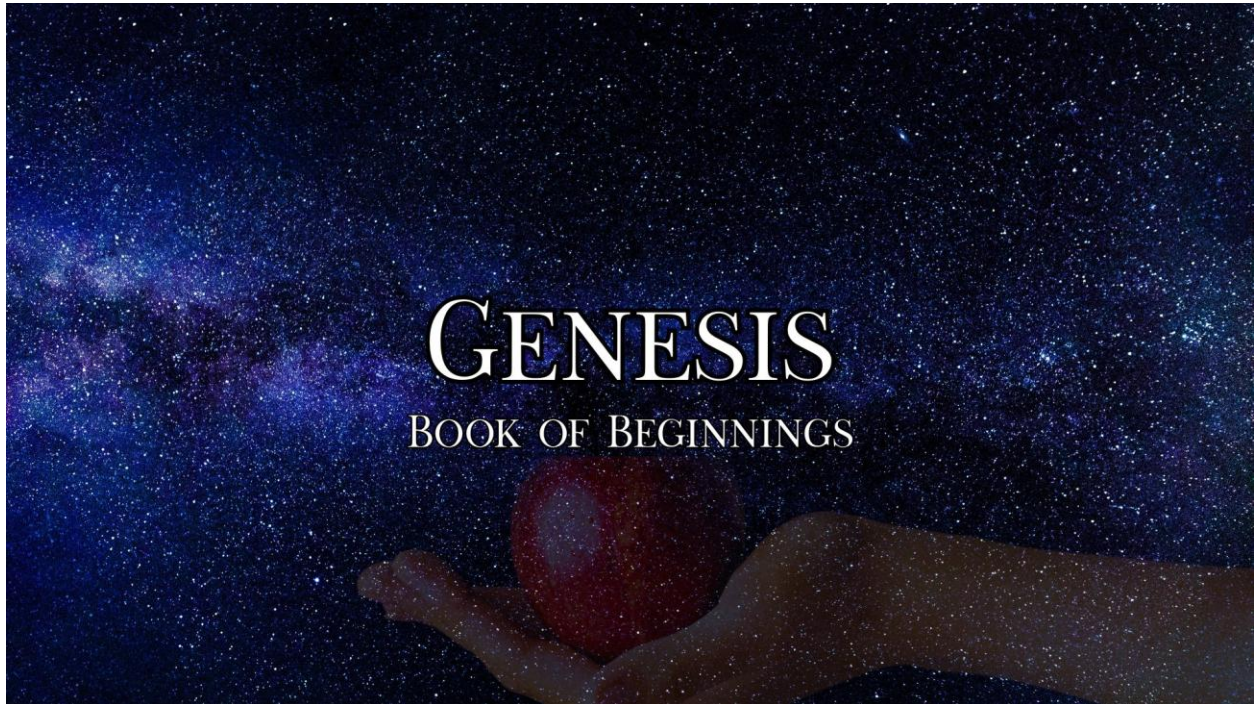


Small Group Guide: Genesis 6 — Being Like Noah in a World Against God



Overview

This session explores Genesis 6:1-22, one of the most debated passages in Scripture. The sermon walks through three interpretive views of the "sons of God" and "daughters of men," examines the historical and scientific evidence surrounding Noah's ark, and calls believers to the kind of faithful obedience Noah demonstrated in a culture consumed by evil. The central challenge is this: in a world that tilts against God, will we do what God commands?

Key Takeaways

- Critical thinking is not the enemy of faith. Engaging seriously with difficult or controversial passages is a mark of intellectual and spiritual maturity.
- Three main views exist for interpreting the "sons of God" in Genesis 6: the Authoritarian Kings view, the Sethite view, and the Supernatural view. The supernatural view is the oldest and most widely held position of the early church.
- The phrase "B'nai Elohim" (sons of God) appears elsewhere in the Old Testament to refer to angelic beings, lending weight to the supernatural interpretation.

- The New Testament writings of Peter and Jude appear to reference the same events described in Genesis 6, suggesting the apostles themselves understood this passage in a supernatural light.
 - Noah's obedience was not the result of perfect circumstances. He acted on God's word for 120 years with no visible confirmation that God would keep his promise.
 - The sermon's closing challenge draws a direct line between Noah's faithfulness and what Christ calls his followers to today: to stand firm in obedience even when the entire culture tilts against righteousness.
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Discussion Questions

Opening

1. The sermon opens with the idea that we often make decisions based on emotion rather than critical thinking, using the example of the Nixon-Kennedy debate. Where in your own life have you noticed yourself making emotional rather than reasoned decisions, and how did that turn out?
 2. How comfortable are you with sitting in the tension of a controversial or difficult Bible passage? What makes that easy or hard for you?
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Digging into the Text

3. The sermon presents three views of who the "sons of God" are in Genesis 6. Which view do you find most compelling, and why? What would change about how you read this passage depending on which view you hold?
4. The pastor notes that the supernatural view was the nearly universal position of the early church, held by figures like Clement of Rome, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus, but that it was largely replaced by Augustine's Sethite view in the fifth century. Does it matter to you how old an interpretation is, or how widely it was held by the early church? Why or why not?
5. The sermon points out that Paul writes in Ephesians 6 that our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual powers and principalities. How seriously do you take the reality of spiritual warfare in your everyday life? Does your answer change when you consider passages like Genesis 6?

6. The pastor describes God's statement that his Spirit will not strive with man forever, and interprets the 120 years as a period of patience before judgment rather than a cap on human lifespan. What does this interpretation reveal about God's character, and how does it shape the way you understand the flood narrative?
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Noah's Example

7. The sermon describes Noah as someone who was not perfect by God's standards but was "perfect in his generation" because he was the one just man seeking God while everyone around him pursued only evil. What do you think it looked like practically for Noah to stand apart from his culture? What does that look like for a believer today?
 8. Noah received one word from God and then spent 120 years building the ark with no visible confirmation that the flood was coming. What does that kind of long-obedience look like in your own walk with God? Is there something God has called you to that requires sustained faithfulness without immediate results?
 9. The sermon closes with this statement from the pastor: "In the deluge, against reality and against morality and against truth, can we be like Noah? Can we say, according to all that God commands, I will do?" What is the hardest part of that kind of commitment for you personally?
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Culture and the Current Moment

10. The sermon observes that our media, tools, academia, and cultural institutions often work against Christian truth, and yet there are signs of cultural hunger for meaning and purpose. Where do you see that hunger in the people around you? How can you engage it?
 11. The pastor notes that secular humanism and selfish ambition have led to more depression, anxiety, and a loss of purpose, and that only Jesus offers a historically grounded answer to the human need for meaning. How do you personally articulate that to someone who does not share your faith?
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Practical Applications

- **Practice critical engagement.** Pick one passage of Scripture this week that you have always found confusing or uncomfortable. Look into the different interpretive views, consider the historical context, and bring your findings back to share with the group next week.
- **Identify your cultural pressure points.** Write down two or three areas of your life where the surrounding culture is pushing you away from obedience to God. Pray specifically over those areas this week and ask God for the kind of quiet, steady faithfulness Noah demonstrated.
- **Take the long view on obedience.** Is there something God has placed on your heart that you have delayed acting on because the results seem too far off or too uncertain? Take one concrete step toward that this week, even a small one.
- **Engage the spiritual dimension.** If spiritual warfare is real, it should affect how we pray. Commit this week to praying not just about circumstances but about the spiritual realities behind them, using Ephesians 6:10-18 as a guide.
- **Be a voice of purpose.** The sermon points out that the world is searching for meaning and that Jesus is the only historically grounded answer. Identify one person in your life who is searching, and pray for an opportunity to have a genuine conversation with them this week.

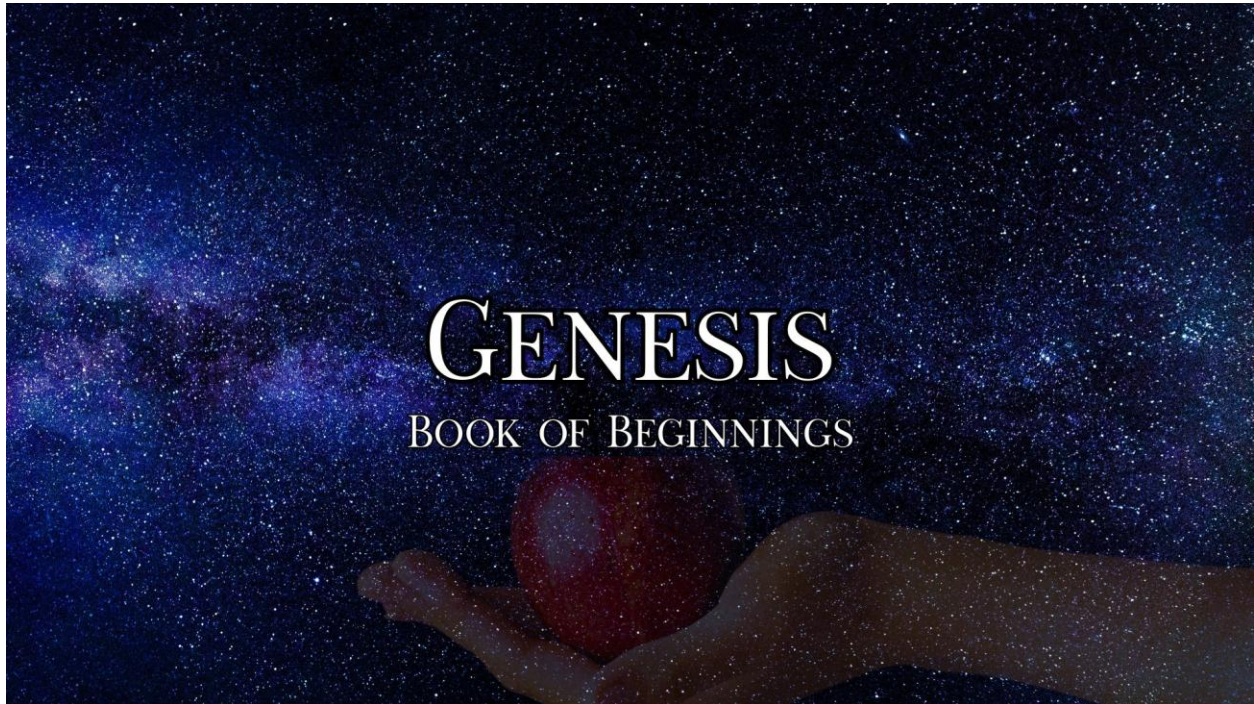
Closing Reflection

Noah did not stand apart from his generation because he was stronger or smarter or more naturally righteous than everyone else. He stood apart because he listened, and then he acted on what he heard, for 120 years, in a world that gave him every reason to stop. The grace he found in God's eyes was not earned by perfection. It was demonstrated through persistent, quiet, costly obedience. That is the invitation extended to every believer in every generation, including this one.

Close your time together in prayer, asking God to give your group the clarity to think well, the courage to stand firm, and the faithfulness to do what he commands regardless of what the world around you says.

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on the Themes of Genesis 6 and the Story of Noah



Day 1: The Weight of a Corrupt World

Reading: Genesis 6:1-8

Devotional: The world in Noah's time had reached a point where every thought and intention of the human heart was bent entirely toward evil. Nothing was left untouched by corruption. Yet even in the middle of that darkness, one man stood apart. Noah did not find grace because he was sinless. He found grace because he was still looking for God when no one else was. The world around you may be loud in its rejection of righteousness. The question is not whether the pressure is real. The question is whether you are still looking toward God.

Practical Application: Take a few minutes today to honestly assess what voices are shaping your thinking. Which ones are pulling you toward God, and which ones are pulling you away?

Day 2: Faith That Builds Without Rain

Reading: Hebrews 11:7

Devotional: Noah spent 120 years building an ark for a flood that had never happened. He had no evidence that rain was coming. He had no crowd cheering him on. He had no proof that God would follow through on what he promised. What he had was a word from God, and he treated that word as though it were enough. That is the definition of faith. It does not wait for conditions to be favorable. It does not require the promise to be visible before it begins to act. Noah built because God spoke, and that was sufficient.

Practical Application: Identify one area of your life where God has spoken clearly but you have been waiting for visible proof before you act. Take one concrete step of obedience today.

Day 3: Grace Found in the Middle of Judgment

Reading: Genesis 6:8, Romans 5:20-21

Devotional: The passage in Genesis does not say that Noah earned grace. It says he found it. That distinction matters enormously. Grace is not a reward distributed to those who perform well enough. It is something discovered by those who are still seeking. In Romans, Paul describes how grace increases even where sin has multiplied. The flood was an act of judgment, but inside that judgment was an ark. Inside that ark was a family. Inside that story is a picture of what God always does. Even in his most severe responses to human rebellion, he makes a way for those who are looking for one.

Practical Application: Reflect on a season of difficulty or judgment in your own life. Where was the ark in that season? Where did grace show up even when you did not expect it?

Day 4: The Spiritual War Behind the Physical World

Reading: Ephesians 6:10-12, 2 Peter 2:4-5

Devotional: The strange and unsettling passages in Genesis 6 serve a purpose beyond satisfying curiosity. They pull back a curtain. They remind us that what we see with our eyes is not the whole story. Paul makes the same argument when he tells us that our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual powers and forces of darkness. Noah was not just building a boat to survive a flood. He was standing against the full weight of a

corrupted world that had opened itself to forces it was never meant to welcome. We are doing the same thing every day.

Practical Application: Spend time today in prayer specifically addressing the spiritual dimension of a struggle you are currently facing rather than treating it as purely a practical or emotional problem.

Day 5: Standing Alone, Standing Firm

Reading: Matthew 24:37-39, Luke 11:24-26

Devotional: Jesus pointed back to Noah not as a history lesson but as a warning and a pattern. The days of Noah were marked by people who were fully absorbed in ordinary life while ignoring the reality of what was coming. Noah stood apart not because he was dramatic about it but because he was obedient. He did what God commanded. All of it. Not the parts that were convenient. Not the parts that made sense to the people around him. All of it. That kind of quiet, sustained, complete obedience is what separates a life that endures from a life that is swept away. Be like Noah. Do what God has commanded.

Practical Application: Write down one command from Scripture that you have been partially obeying or selectively applying. Commit today to bringing your life into full alignment with it, and ask God for the strength to follow through.