**SDG Lesson#6**

**Genesis Chapters 6 and 7**

Chapter six presents a challenge to us in the first two verses. The account begins simply enough, the human population was multiplying. In fact, it was probably growing exponentially. When we review the genealogy of chapter five we see that the men started fathering children when they were anywhere from 65 to 187 years old; we also see that they also had other sons and daughters. Then, when we see that they lived for another 700 to 800 years we can conclude that they had very large families. The potential for hundreds of offspring is well within the range of reason. All of these children then married and also began to have children. The population of the world was probably numbering in the millions! However, the multiplication is not our problem; our challenge comes in verse two.

1. What is meant by the phrase “sons of God?”

Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7 – These references all refer to the heavenly beings or angels as the sons of God.

Deuteronomy 14:1; 32:5; Psalm 73:5; Isaiah 43:6; Hosea 1:10; 11:1 – These references all refer to humans as the children, daughters or sons of God.

**Hebrew Word Study – “sons of God”**

**The Hebrew phrase “sons of” can be used or interpreted in different ways. The first is a literal reading. The “sons of” an individual are his actual offspring. The second is a figurative reading. The “sons of” an individual are those who are led by that individual. The final reading of the “sons of” an individual is a combination of the first two. We are the children or sons of God. He is our Father because our life originated from Him. Yet, He is also our leader.**

There are a number of possible interpretations of verse two:

1. The sons of God refer to fallen angels, demons, who took on earthly bodies and took wives for themselves from the human race.
2. The sons of God refer to angels who went against God’s will, took on earthly bodies, and took wives for themselves from the human race.
3. The sons of God refer to corrupt men who had positions of power and authority and used this power to take wives for themselves.
4. The sons of God refer to the godly descendants of Seth who married ungodly descendants of Cain.
5. The sons of God refer to mankind on a path of sin. In this case, they began to take wives instead of a wife as ordained by God. They did this out of lust to satisfy their own selfish desires. Put another way, they rejected God and worshipped themselves.

2. Read Matthew 22:30. What does this verse say about angels? How might this effect our interpretation?

Angels do not marry, and angels are in heaven. Therefore, angels could not be the sons of God, because they took wives for themselves.

3. Read 2nd Peter 2:4-5 and Jude 6. What do these verses say about angels? How might this effect our interpretation?

Both of these verses speak of angels being judged because of their sin. Jude adds that they did not stay within their own position of authority. Some scholars feel that these two verses are a commentary on what happened in Genesis 6:2. However, it also fits the account of Satan’s rebellion, judgment and removal from Heaven.

**Analysis of the Challenge…**

**We do not know exactly who the sons of God were. However, since angels are spiritual beings, not physical, and since they do not marry, it seems that idea of them being the sons of God spoken of in Genesis 6:2 is unlikely. Furthermore, since Peter speaks of their judgment, and no such judgment is mentioned in Genesis, it would appear to be even more unlikely. Finally, the first five verses of this chapter serve as an introduction to why God flooded the earth. Notice, in verse 5 that the Lord saw “the wickedness of man was great.” There is no mention of angelic/demonic influence or wickedness. Therefore, this study will operate under the interpretation that man moved away from God’s decree concerning marriage and selfishly indulged in his lustful desires.**

4. How did God respond to the sin that was mentioned in verse 2? What does this mean?

God’s judgment was that man was too sinful to be saved. His Spirit would work on the hearts of men to bring them to repentance. However, this would not go on forever, a limit was given of 120 years. Mankind had 120 years to turn from his sin or be destroyed.

5. Who were the Nephilim?

These were mighty men or fighting men.

6. What is meant by the description, “who were of old” and “men of renown?”

These were fighting men or warriors who were known for their valor, victories and power. Their reputations and the stories of their conquests had been passed on for generations.

7. The first four verses lead us to verse five. How wicked had man become?

He was so wicked that every thought of his heart was evil.

**Hebrew Word Study: Nephilim**

We do not really know what this Hebrew word means. It is only used twice in the Bible, once, here in Genesis 6:4 and again in Numbers 13:33. Here they are mighty men of renown. In Numbers they are referred to as being gigantic. They were so large that the Israelite spies said they seemed like grasshoppers compared to the Nephilim. Putting the two together, we have a definition that says, the Nephilim were large mighty fighting men who gained a reputation through their exploits.

There is another possible definition. There is another Hebrew word that is very similar in structure. It is Nepilim and means “fallen ones.” Those who believe the sons of God were fallen angels believe the Nephilim are the offspring of the demonic Nepilim.

8. What was a hallmark of this wickedness? (Consider the previous questions, discussions and what is written in verses 11 and 13)

Men taking wives are mighty men of renown synonymous with violence. Man was self-centered and used violence to get what he wanted.

9. The Lord was sorry that He made man. What does this mean?

Sin sorrowed or grieved God. God grieved for man and for all that He had made because sin was destroying it all. What had been very good was now very bad.

10. What was God’s answer to His grief and the wickedness of the world?

God would blot out all life.

11. What trait or characteristic of God does this show?

This shows God judgment and justice. It also indirectly shows His holiness. Since He is set apart for righteousness, He cannot accept unrighteousness.

12. How is this trait further revealed in verse 8?

It would not be right to blot out the righteous with the unrighteous. Therefore, God shows true justice and holiness.

13. What are the three characteristics by which Noah is described?

What does each mean?

Noah is described as being:

1. Righteous – He did what was right.
2. Blameless in his generation – Blameless means that no fault could be found. This does not mean he was sinless. In his generation, people acted on their sinful thoughts. Noah did not.
3. Walked with God – Noah lived in accordance with the expectations of God. This is also called the path of righteousness.

14. We have already seen that the manifestation of man’s evil heart was violence. What tool of violence was God going to use to destroy mankind and all life? (vs. 13)

Gad said He would destroy them with the earth.

15. Describe the ark:

The ark was approximately 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet tall. It was made out of wood that was covered with pitch or resin to seal the joints. It was probably in the shape of a rectangular cube. There was a roof set 18 inches above the ark that would provide ventilation. It had a door in the side and had 3 decks. This gave it 95,700 ft2 and displacement of 43,000 tons. It was highly buoyant.

16. Who or what did God say would be killed in the flood? Who or what wouldn’t be destroyed?

All flesh that had the breath of life would be destroyed. This would exclude plant life, the fish, and crustaceans, as well as shellfish and those on the ark.

17. What people was Noah supposed to take with him on the ark?

Noah was to take his wife, their three sons and their son’s wives.

18. When we hear of the flood we think of judgment and destruction. Such a view forgets that God did not just speak of death. What else did God speak of?

God also spoke of the salvation of mankind and of every kind/family of animal. He also spoke of establishing a covenant with Noah.

19. According to verses 19-20, what else was Noah supposed to take with him on the ark? How could he do this?

Noah was to take two of every sort/kind of animal/bird on the ark. They were to be male and female. God brought two of every kind to Noah, he did not go out to get them. They came to him to be saved.

20. What is meant by “sort” or “kind?”

This would be the equivalent of the “family” in today’s taxonomy. There would be two members of the cat family, two from the dog family, etc.

21. Why is an understanding of the word “sort” or “kind” important?

By providing for a male and female from each family, God preserved the DNA for the multiplicity of organisms we have today. This was highly efficient, and the animals could easily fit on the ark.

22. What else was Noah to take on the ark with him? (vs. 21)

Noah was instructed to take along enough food to feed all life on the ark.

23. Chapter seven begins with additional instructions. Why did God instruct Noah to take seven pairs of clean animals and seven pairs of birds with him on the ark? (8:20 & 9:3)

These animals would later be used for sacrifice and food.

24. Chapter seven also begins with instruction for Noah and his family to enter the ark with the animals. Yet, God said, “for in seven days I will send rain…” Why, did God wait seven days?

Seven is the number of perfection. All mankind had the perfect amount of time to repent and join Noah. They obviously had asked Noah what he was doing, had seen the animals come and witnessed them all going into the ark. They didn’t believe.

25. What is the significance of 40 days and 40 nights?

40 is the number of God’s time for judgment, teaching, etc.

26. When did the flood begin?

In the second month, on the tenth day of Noah’s six-hundredth year.

27. Where did all the water come from?

The Bible speaks of water from the sky and from the ground.

28. What is significant about the phrase, “And the LORD shut them in?”

Yahweh Himself came to earth to save Noah by shutting him in the ark and to judge the world.

29. What else can be learned from this? (2nd Peter 2:4-17)

This is the beginning of God showing both His judgment and desire to save. It will culminate when He returns on Judgment Day.

30. Some contend that this was a terrific local flood. How does the Bible describe it?

The Bible says it covered all the mountains. The highest mountains were covered by 15 cubits of water (22 feet 6 inches).

Notice the progression of God’s judgment:

Vs. 21 – all flesh died

Vs. 22 – died

Vs. 23 – He blotted out every living…

* They were blotted out from the earth.

31. What is the significance of this terminology?

God not only killed them, He blotted out the mark of them. A worldwide flood of such proportions would have caused massive erosion. All living creatures would have been drowned. Their bodies would therefore sink and be buried under the sedimentation. There would be no sign of them after the flood.

32. How long did the flood waters last on the earth?

In the course of 150 days the waters rose and receded.

Over the years there has been quite a bit of speculation on the whereabouts of Noah’s Ark. Where did it really land? Have people actually seen it? There are numerous accounts of reported sightings and historical references to several potential locations of the arks resting place. If you are interested in learning more about the search for Noah’s ark you can go to the following site for a whole series of articles on the subject:

<http://www.biblearchaeology.org/search.aspx?q=noah's%20ark>

The following articles are recommended:

* **The Landing-Place of Noah's Ark: Testimonial, Geological and Historical Considerations: Parts one – four**
* [**An Armenian Perspective on the Search for Noah's Ark**](http://www.biblearchaeology.org/post/2008/02/23/An-Armenian-Perspective-on-Noahs-Ark.aspx)