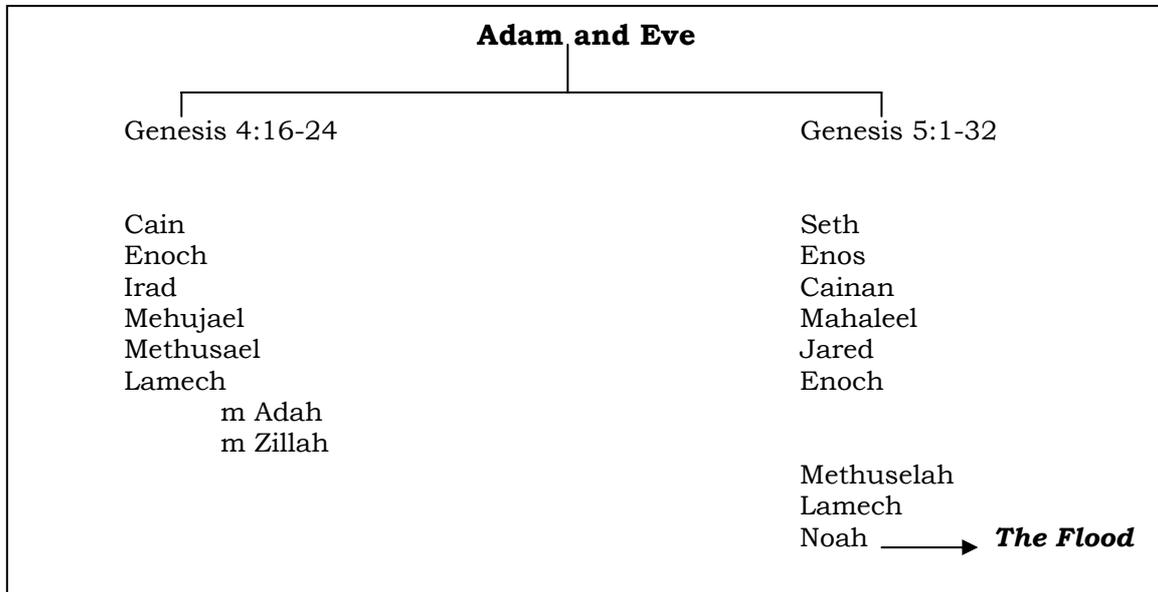




THE FLOOD OF NOAH'S DAY

Reading: Genesis 5-8

The two lines of descent from Adam which are set out in Genesis are those of Cain (Genesis 4) and Seth, who replaced Abel (Genesis 5).



Having ignored God’s offer of mercy, Cain removed himself from the presence of the Lord, going east to the “*land of Nod*”, meaning “exile” (Genesis 4:16). He exiled himself from the influence of instruction in the ways of God. His descendants therefore were wilful, and quickly degenerated into the godless ways of wickedness and sin. When we come to the days of Noah we find that this line was predominant in the earth, producing the unrestrained wickedness that brought divine judgment in the flood.

After the murder of Abel by his brother Cain, Adam and Eve had another son whom they named Seth, meaning “Appointed”. The reason this name was chosen is given, “*For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel*” (Genesis 4:25). Seth and his descendants identified with God and His ways: “*Then began men to call upon the name of the LORD*” (Genesis 4:26). An outstanding example in this line was Enoch who “*walked with God*” (Genesis 5:22). He warned his generation of God’s impending judgment on the utter ungodliness that filled the earth (Jude 14-15). So there was by now a clear line of demarcation between the two “seeds”. Those who followed God’s ways were called “*the sons of God*”. Yet by Noah’s day even these “*sons of God*” had departed from God’s ways.

“God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth” Genesis 6:1-8)

The period from the creation of Adam until the flood was 1656 years. This was a long period of time in which wickedness had multiplied and developed to an alarming degree.

We recall that when God initiated the marriage between Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:23-24), He established the principles upon which true marriage was to be based. His purpose was that a couple, in their Godly fear, would be united in their desire to honour Him and so produce a family whom they could instruct in His ways (Malachi 2:14-16; Ephesians 5:25-28; 1 Peter 3:7; Ephesians 6:4). Sadly, by Noah’s day, the principles of marriage as God initially intended were completely rejected and marriage had become a meaningless ritual.

Verse 2

“The sons of God” This is a term that is used in the Bible to describe those who have been instructed in God’s ways (1 John 3:1). We note that the line of Seth had produced several who



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believed God and trusted in Him; namely, Enoch (Genesis 5:24), Lamech (5:28-29) and Noah (6:9). The vast majority by now had neglected the truth of God they had once known. Many who had been instructed in God's ways departed from them and found pleasure in the company of those who had either forsaken God or never known Him.

"The daughters of men" The distinction made is that these women were not "of God". Later, God forbade Israel to intermarry with the nations of Canaan who were pagan, as they would soon be turned away from serving Him (Deuteronomy 7:3-4).

"They saw ... that they were fair" They were attracted to them on a purely sensual basis. It had been clear from the very beginning when Eve was created, that the companionship she would provide should help the man reflect God's ways. The "sons of God" had lost sight of that Godly purpose.

Verse 3

"For that he also is flesh" Man was wilful, determined to go his own way. Such behaviour was characteristic of mortal man ("flesh") when he strays from God's way. God would not continue to strive with such wickedness.

"his days shall be 120 years" Here is an example of God's longsuffering. He would allow 120 years for man to repent while Noah warned the people and the Ark was being built (1 Peter 3:20).

Verse 4

"giants" Heb "nephilim", from "naphal", meaning "to fall". They were tyrants. It is used of the warlike giants who later lived in the land of Canaan (Numbers 13:33). Thus when the "sons of God"—those who initially belonged to families who had feared God—married the brazen and ungodly "daughters of men", their children were known as "mighty men", "men of renown".

"mighty men" Heb "ha gibborim" meaning "powerful champions" in war. It is used of Nimrod (Genesis 10:8) and Goliath (1 Samuel 17:51).

"men of renown" Heb for "renown" is "shem" and means "name". These great men made a 'name for themselves' as so many men have in the past, e.g. Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and other such tyrants, and as so many do today as they grasp for power. Their names are renowned for their infamy rather than their good deeds. The effect of such wickedness in Noah's day was that the earth was filled with **corruption and violence**.

God's Estimation of Man's Wickedness (Genesis 6:5-13)

Verse 5

"And God saw" How foolish to think that God is not aware of the state of sin in His earth.

"the wickedness of man was great" Note how this period is described in the New Testament (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5; Luke 17:26-27; Matthew 24:37-39).

"every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" God specifically attributes the sinful state of the earth to man himself. Evil comes from the "heart of man" (Mark 7:20-23; Jeremiah 17:9). The idea conveyed by the Hebrew word "yetzer", translated "imagination", is whatever is formed in the mind, the intentions of a man's heart. The heart or mind is the seat of evil, for that is where every desire has its beginning. What God saw was that every man wanted what was evil. (James 1:13-15).

Verse 7

"I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth" God could see that such a severe course of action was necessary to deal with the problem of man's wilful and ungodly behaviour.

Verse 8

"But Noah found grace" In contrast to verse 7 which speaks of God's severity, this verse speaks of His goodness. His "grace" or "favour" is the basis for man's salvation (Ephesians 2:7-10; Exodus 34:6; 33:19). Noah's character is described in verse 9. He too, like Enoch (Genesis 5:22), "walked with God". Because of this Noah and his family were saved.



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Verse 11

“The earth also was corrupt before God, and filled with violence” When men ignore God and forsake His ways and determine to be directed by their own desires, invariably corruption and violence are the result and all society suffers. This complete moral and social collapse began when those who had known God’s ways turned away from them and married those who were willingly ignorant of God’s ways (verse 1-2).

Noah’s Ark (Genesis 6:14-22)

Specific details of the size of the Ark that Noah built are given. It was 300 cubits long (150 metres), 50 cubits wide (25 metres), and 30 cubits high (15 metres). It had three levels, and the floor space was 11,250 square metres. It was a large vessel with the capacity to carry a very large load.

The Flood (Genesis 7 & 8)

The details of the flood reveal that although the rain fell for only 40 days and nights, Noah was in the Ark for 1 year and 10 days. The rain began to fall on the 17th day of the 2nd month of Noah’s 600th year (Genesis 7:11). He came out of the Ark on the 27th day of the 2nd month in his 601st year (Genesis 8:14). The effects of the flood brought the death of *“all flesh”* that moved upon the earth—of birds, and cattle, and wild beasts, and every creeping thing, and every man, *“all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was on the dry land died”* (Genesis 7:21-22; cp 2:7).

“I will not again curse the ground” (Genesis 8:20-22)

Once out of the Ark, Noah built an altar and offered a burnt offering to God to thank Him for His deliverance, and to dedicate his life in service to Him. God promised that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood.

It is interesting to note that although the flood had destroyed the wicked sinners from the earth, God acknowledged that the root of the problem remained, *“for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth”* (Genesis 8:21). God knew that sin and wickedness have their roots in man’s sinful nature (Mark 7:20-23; Romans 7:18-21). Notice that the destruction of the whole of society could not be attributed to the “devil” or “Satan” as taught in popular theology. It was man himself who had chosen to ignore God’s ways, and the root of that sin was his evil imagination or *“deceitful lusts”* (Ephesians 4:22; James 1:14-15).

Jesus’ Warning for Us Today (Luke 17:26-27; Matthew 24:37-38)

Jesus saw in the wickedness of Noah’s day a parallel with the unrestrained immorality, violence and corruption which will develop in the world just prior to his return. He said, *“As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be”* (Matthew 24:37). As God judged the wickedness of man and destroyed them in the flood, so He will judge the world by His Son (Acts 17:31). This immoral and wicked society which we see about us today warns God-fearing people that the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent.

Noah’s Flood - A Guarantee that Judgment will Come

The apostle Peter was well aware that many would scoff at the idea of God judging this world for its wickedness. But he reminded his readers that the flood was a sure sign that God would again judge the earth and cleanse it of wickedness (2 Peter 3:4-7). He also saw in Noah’s salvation the hope of salvation for all those who are, like Noah, prepared to be just and upright and turn to God through baptism (1 Peter 3:20-22).

Noah did More than Build an Ark

Not only did Noah build the Ark but he consistently warned his generation of the judgment to come. They mocked more and more and took no notice of the signs—**until** the flood came (2 Peter 2:5). It was then too late for them to repent and be saved.

Faith - The Motivating Power of Noah

Noah believed God and that belief caused him to obey God and build the Ark in which he and his family were saved (Hebrews 11:7). God has given us a way to escape the coming judgment upon



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this wicked age. Do we believe Him? Do we have faith to act like Noah that we may be saved together with our families? (Mark 16:15-16).

Summary Points

1. By the days of Noah the earth had become “*filled with corruption and violence*”. The reason given was that “*every imagination of the thoughts of his (man’s) heart was only evil continually*” (**Genesis 6:5**). Once again we see that the root of sin is the thoughts that arise from man’s heart when they are not controlled by the word of God.
2. The flood of Noah’s day is a warning to this evil age (**Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27**).
3. The salvation of Noah is compared to baptism (**1 Peter 3:21**).

Lesson 6 - Questions

1. In the days of Noah “*the wickedness of man was great*”. Where did this evil have its roots? (see Genesis 6:5)
2. What two words are used to describe the state of the world that brought judgment by the flood in Noah’s day? (Genesis 6:11)
3. How did God describe the root of sin in Genesis 8:21?
4. Where in the Bible is the salvation of Noah likened to baptism?
5. What was the power in Noah’s life that motivated him to build the Ark?
6. The Lord Jesus Christ refers to the days of Noah. What warning does he give from those days?