

Chapter Six – The Catastrophe

“Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.”

We’ve already seen that the trend of humanity was a massive descent into the mire of sin. And we’ve noted the scripture says that the days just preceding the coming of the Lord (as a conquering King) will be like the days we see described here (see Mat 24:37).

The fulfillment of much prophecy coinciding with this time leads us to believe that we indeed are in the “last days”. Consequently, these verses are very important for us to understand and very pertinent.

Examining verses one and two, we can note that population increase was a factor. Simple arithmetic and some reasonable assumptions concerning frequency of birth lead us to expect that Adam could have lived to see between one to five million of his descendants. And it is

not unrealistic to think of as many as seven billion people on the planet at the time of the great flood. You can do the math yourself.

But of even more importance was what was transpiring in the human ‘gene pool’. Let me explain.

It has to do with these “*sons of God*” and the fact that they were taking wives “*of all whom they chose.*” This latter part in the Hebrew means they were completely unrestrained - they were impregnating huge numbers of women in unbridled wantonness. Even for sinful man, it was an unnatural frenzy of sexual activity. But why?

“Many people have understood that the sons of God were those from the line of Seth, and the daughters of men were from the line of Cain, and this describes an intermarriage between the godly and the ungodly - something God specifically prohibits (Deuteronomy 7:1-4; 2 Corinthians 6:14). But this approach leaves many unanswered questions: Why did this make God angry enough to wipe out almost all the earth's population? Why was

there something "unnatural" about the offspring of these unions?”

“It is more accurate to see the sons of God as either demons (angels in rebellion against God) or uniquely demon possessed men, and the daughters of men as human women. The phrase sons of God clearly refers to angelic creatures when it is used the three other times in the Old Testament (Job 1:6, 2:1, and 38:7). The translators of the Septuagint who translated sons of God as "angels" clearly thought it referred to angelic beings, not the line of Seth.” (David Guzik)

Now, in the book of Matthew, Jesus clearly said that in heaven, the angels do not have sexual relationships. So do we have a conflict? I don’t think so -- in the book of Jude we read, “*the angels who did not keep their proper (own) 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, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh are set forth as an example...*” Jude 6, 7

So again, in heaven we know that the angels have no sexual relations, but these angels left the heavenly realm, left their own domain. And Jude points out that it was specifically to engage in unnatural sexual relations. As a consequence they were imprisoned in chains of darkness in what is called the Abusso or the Abyss - the bottomless pit. These are the worst of the worst - the kind of demons even the demons don’t want to be around.

Recall the story of Jesus’ encounter with the demoniac Legion by the Sea of Galilee. Legion was possessed of a hoard of demons who when they saw Jesus coming, pleaded with Him not to torment them and specifically not to send them to the Abyss. Now, the bottomless pit is probably not a place anyone would want to find themselves, but I’m convinced that their real fear was to be in the presence of these especially nasty spirits.

We don’t need to fear them however “*for Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by*

Whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared...” 1 Pet 3:18-20
(See also 2 Pet 2:4)

Jesus told them, “*Hands off my people. I’ve paid the price for them and I’m giving notice -- they are off limits.*” But why, if they are already in chains would this be necessary?

We are told in Revelation that these beings are let out of this prison for a season during the Great Tribulation (see Rev 9:1-11) and they are truly hideous. It says that because of them men will seek to die to escape their torture but will not be able to -- another reason you don’t want to be here during the tribulation.

But if you are, TURN TO JESUS. Make Him the Lord of your life. The eternal reality of hell is far, far worse than the temporary hell on earth of the tribulation.

You see, although we believe the church will be in heaven during this time, there will still be those on earth who come to a saving relationship with Christ. It’s quite

likely they will be martyred for their faith but many will gladly ‘hug the cross’.

“From the book of 1 Enoch, which is not inspired scripture, but may still contain some accurate accounts: “And it came to pass that the children of men had multiplied that in those days were born unto them beautiful and comely daughters. And the angels, the children of heaven, saw and lusted after them, and said to one another: ‘Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men and beget us children . . . [They] took unto themselves wives, and each chose for himself one, and they began to go unto them and to defile themselves with them, and they taught them charms and enchantments . . . And they became pregnant, and they bare great giants . . . And there arose much godlessness, and they committed fornication, and they were led astray, and became corrupt in all their ways.’” (David Guzik)

All this begs the question, why would Satan send his angels to intermarry (either directly or indirectly) with human women?

Let’s look at the next two verses for the clue:

“And the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years. 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 of old, men of renown.”

I believe it’s possible that Satan was trying to pollute the gene "pool" of mankind; to introduce a genetic "virus" that would make the human race unfit for bringing forth the Son of Man -- the Seed of the woman - the Messiah - promised in Genesis 3:15. If so, he nearly succeeded for the human race became so corrupted that God had to clear the slate and imprison the rebellious angels.

For some people, this is hard to believe. Perhaps because it’s difficult to accept anything supernatural. But keep in mind it was hard for the people of Noah’s day to believe a worldwide flood was coming. It had never even rained let alone flooded. That’s

why it’s so important to draw conclusions from the Word rather than depending upon our own frame of reference – that is, what’s comfortable for us to accept intellectually. That’s not to say our intellect is a less important part of our relationship with God - it’s fundamental. Faith, however, can sometimes compel us believe in concepts that are beyond our intellectual understanding (e.g. the Trinity, predestination, grace, etc.).

Note that the Lord said His Spirit was striving with man. The Hebrew word for striving is a primary root and denotes principally to rule or to judge but the sense we have here is of contending with man - pleading a cause.

There came a point when His longsuffering ended. However, I don’t think it was a matter of God getting tired of presenting the truth or convicting their hearts, because he doesn’t tire and never changes in character. Rather, there came a point when man’s heart got so used to sin and so hard that it could no longer receive truth, it simply wasn’t possible for it to hear truth or receive

conviction. It was like the following passage in the book of Hebrews:

“Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways. So I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter My rest.’” Beware brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, but exhort one another daily...lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” Heb 3:7-13

Man was self-destructing and deaf to the voice of the Lord. Of course, this sounds like today -- recent news articles tell of scientists who are trying to clone headless people in order to ‘harvest’ organs; meanwhile, Christians and other ‘political’ prisoners in China are executed for the same purpose. Traditional families are disintegrating before our eyes while homosexual couples are married by mainline churches. Children are murdered, raped, and prostituted in

every major city. Nuclear arsenals are targeted at civilian populations. Television pumps out toxic imaginations on hundreds of channels in hundreds of millions of homes. Demonically inspired religions are rampant and have infiltrated every facet of society, even the church. Not a pretty picture – but indeed, it is a replay if you would of the days of Noah.

Sometimes, you just have to start all over and change the ‘rules’. That’s what God did and He did it in order to save man in the end. How ironic that in order to save man, He had to all but destroy him. But that can be the case, sometimes, with the individual as well.

Pastor Jon Courson of the Applegate Christian Fellowship in Jacksonville, Oregon tells the story of a young man he knew, Steve, an outstanding athlete - a pole vaulter. This man was one of the world’s best and in the prime of his life was poised to set the world record. In preparing for an up-coming meet, he was jumping on a trampoline and while doing a flip, came down hard on the metal bar which acted as a frame. He hit it with his neck

and was instantly paralyzed - a quadriplegic.

Some years later, Jon recalls that he was invited to a conference along with many other young athletes and was looking forward to hearing this famous pole vaulter speak. The first night the speaker didn’t show up and likewise on the second. The third night however, the somewhat disgruntled crowd welcomed Steve who came on stage in his wheelchair and approached the mike. It didn’t take long for the crowd to still as he shared the testimony of his accident and apologized for the first two nights. He explained that often times the pain in his body was simply too great for him to deal with.

But what really caught their attention was when he explained the joy in his heart. *“You see,”* he said, *“although I thought I was a Christian before the accident, it’s only afterwards that I’ve truly come to know my Lord personally, intimately.”* He continued, *“If I had it to do all over again, if it was my choice to lose all that I have lost and to endure what I now must endure...if it meant having what I now have, an awareness of my*

Savior, a wonderful relationship with Him...I’d do it again. I would.” Many young athletes gave their hearts to Christ that evening. Sometimes it takes such difficulty to save us.

“Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

Man had become wholly evil. And this is another lesson -- in the beginning, all he knew was good for all that God had created was good, in fact, very good. But then man wanted to have the knowledge of good AND evil which simply meant that he was unsatisfied with good alone and wanted evil. As we well know, he got what he wanted. As a result, the pendulum swung clear to the other side -- 100% evil. That’s the way it is with sin. It’s never satisfied. It demands more and more until you’re consumed. It’s a deadly parasite that kills its host. But all the while it tricks you into thinking you’re still in control.

In this verse the word “great” means literally “captain”. That is, the wickedness of man ruled the

earth. Originally, God commissioned man to rule the earth in love and purity, but as Satan's marionette, man has ruled the earth in wickedness.

“And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.”

Now, this does not mean that God was surprised by the state of affairs or that if He had it to do over again, He wouldn't. What this does show us is that even though God is omniscient and knows the end from the beginning, He is nevertheless deeply affected by man's pain. In fact, these words mean that He was experiencing pain of a sort in His own heart. But He allowed this to happen and He allows suffering in each of our lives. Sometimes we ask, “Why, Lord?”, but it's never a matter of getting the answer to “Why?” Rather, it's about understanding that He Himself is the answer. Look to the cross. Look to the deepest love of all.

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”

Some scholars believe Noah is a symbol of the Jewish people who will be God's witnesses during the Tribulation, likewise finding grace in His eyes. As for Noah, can you imagine being just about the only God-fearing man in a world filled with perversion and violence? Can you imagine working for 120 years on an outlandish project like the ark? (I'm doing good if I can build a bookshelf -- and it's really outlandish!)

Now, Noah was about to receive some encouraging words from the Lord in the next verse. But before that, we see that he wasn't saved from the flood because of his uprightness or integrity but rather because of God's grace. Noah was a sinner just like you and I, and he was the recipient of God's marvelous grace, that is, unmerited, undeserved favor and blessing. This too is consistent as a foreshadow of the Jewish people for Israel will be saved because of grace, not because of their religious piety or ingenuity.

“This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect (blameless) in his generations. Noah walked with God.”

I find this very interesting. Noah was just and literally blameless in his “generations”. Note the plural. This word literally means a “turning”. The plural is used frequently in the scripture, but to attribute a single characteristic to one person over a series of generations is unique.

I'm inclined to believe this is a symbolic reference to the Jewish people but more specifically, to the remnant according to the election of grace (see Rom 11:1-5). These are those who are indeed blameless because of grace through faith (see Eph 2:8,9).

Now, God Himself says that the Jewish people as a whole are in practice anything but just and blameless; in fact, the Bible is filled with God's dealing with them for their injustice and wicked ways. However there are some other scriptures that, beginning with Abraham, indicate that God's perspective of His people is nonetheless assertive of the positive -- as a loving Father

towards His children. For example, when initiating the Abrahamic Covenant, God says to him, “*I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless.*” (Gen 17:1)

Later, to the children of Israel, Moses declared - “*You shall be blameless before the Lord your God,*” which was a prophetic word, which he followed with another prophecy that I'm convinced indicates how this blamelessness would happen - “*The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear...*” speaking of Christ.(Deut 18:13,15)

From the tabernacle to the altar of sacrifice to the ark of the covenant...the writings of Moses are filled with pictures of the Son of God; in fact, many of the rituals used by the Levites and priests are representative of placing the blame which justly belongs to Israel upon a sacrificial Lamb or upon the Scapegoat - the types of Jesus Christ. Jesus said,

“... if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.” Jn 5:46

But how can a people, any people, be just and blameless in the eyes of God? Only by the grace of God, that is, by accepting the gracious gift of God's Son who died in our place upon the cross and in doing so, took our blame and carried our sins. And as Paul wrote, the day will come when the Jewish people will recognize and accept Jesus as their Messiah. That's when they'll be blameless. But...

...can this grace, this revelation of Christ given to the last days Jews affect their previous generations? Will it somehow span their generations? Will the goodness of God reach back to those whose eyes were blinded since the time of Christ?

We know that when Jesus went to the grave and then rose again, the people who were in paradise (see Luke 23:39-43) followed Him to heaven -- that is, all the believers in God who had died up to that time were resurrected - captivity was taken captive.

And we know that those since who have died knowing the Lord, being saved, are also with Him for Paul wrote, "...to be absent from the

body" is "to be present with the Lord." (2 Cor 5:8)

But what about all the Jewish people since the time of Christ who would have believed if their eyes had not been blinded?

What does the Bible say? "God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew...Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace...What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. Just as it is written: "God has given them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear to this very day.""

The "elect" Paul speaks of here are the Jews (and Gentiles) who did hear the Lord Jesus and got saved during the birth of the church. So who are "the rest" who were blinded? -- This is rest of Israel at the time of Christ's earthly ministry and those since.

But Paul continues, "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the

Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins."...For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Rom 11:2,7,8,25,26,32,33)

I do believe that when God says all Israel will be saved, He means all Israel will be saved - all the elect, all whom He foreknew, all those "according to the election of grace."

In other words, I'm inclined to think this grace is not confined to a single generation of the last days. God is committed to fulfill His word and He is fully able. We'll see.

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

Again, names are significant, for as we consider the Jewish people and the circumstances surrounding them in the last days, these names are very appropriate. Shem means "renown" or "name"; Ham means "hot"; and Japheth means "wide spread".

How are these names word-pictures of the Jewish people in the last days? Let's look at some scriptures and consider Shem as a starting point:

In Ezekiel 39, we have the climax of a dramatic prophecy -- in the last days, Gog, the leader of Rosh (Russia), Meshech (Moscow), and Tubal (Tolbulsk) will lead a vast army down out of the north and invade Israel (see also Eze 38). God says He will fight and destroy Gog and his army and send fire upon Magog (though other scriptures indicate that it's possible that the Antichrist may try to take the credit for this.) This whole prophecy is fascinating.

And so Israel will emerge victorious in a fantastic upset, the greatest military upset in history. "Then those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and bucklers, the bows and arrows, the javelins and spears; and they will make fires with them for seven years....It will come to pass in that day that I will give Gog a burial place there in Israel, the valley of those who pass by east of the sea; and it will obstruct travelers, because there

they will bury Gog and all his multitude. Therefore they will call it the Valley of Hamon Gog. For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them, in order to cleanse the land. Indeed all the people of the land will be burying, and they will gain renown for it on the day that I am glorified," says the Lord God." Eze 39:9-13

Also, in the last days, the Lord says to His people, "'Behold, at that time I will deal with all who afflict you; I will save the lame, and gather those who were driven out; I will appoint them for praise and fame in every land where they were put to shame. At that time I will bring you back even at the time I gather you; For I will give you a name and praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I return your captives before your eyes," says the Lord." Zeph 3:19,20

So we see the name, Shem is pertinent. The people of Israel will have fame and renown in these days. Next, how about Ham? Any heat? any fire in the last days? Yep.

"'And it shall come to pass in all the land," says the Lord, "that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one third shall be left in it; I will bring the one third through the

fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; and each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.' "' Behold, the day of the Lord is coming,..." Zech 13:8-14:1 These will be hot, fiery times indeed.

Finally, how about Japheth? Are the Jewish people "wide-spread" or scattered?

"Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own ways and deeds...So I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the countries;..." but "...I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them." Eze 36:17-27

Indeed, all three names of Noah's sons are very pertinent to the picture of the Jews in the last days.

But we might think, 'So what? Why is this of any importance?' The pictures and symbols we look at are irrelevant unless they teach us something.

What we learn here is that God had a foreknowledge of the Jewish people and their character long before they even existed as a people. In addition, He knows what they will face in the last days, and He will preserve them in the midst of the worst times the earth has ever known. He will bring them renown, bring them through the fire, and bring them back together in the last days of tribulation just as He brought these sons of Noah into the ark.

"The earth was corrupt (destroyed, decayed, ruined, perverted) before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth."

The word for flesh here refers to the male sex organ for man and animals. The picture here isn't

pretty at all. The creation was in the agonizing throws of a brutal masochistic death. Violence and sexual perversion were everywhere. Sounds like Hollywood to me! In fact, it sounds strikingly similar to our contemporary culture.

"And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch."

The word pitch comes from the word atonement -- a covering. We could say that the ark was covered inside and out with atonement and just how does one enter into the sheltering atonement of God? By accepting Jesus Christ's atoning death! Isn't that great!

But the ark serves also as a very important picture for us in these present times for it is a type of the Lord and in particular, His protection during the coming flood of tribulation.

Noah and his family entering the ark is a beautiful picture of the

Jews' salvation and preservation in these perilous days to come.

In the book of Revelation, we find that during the great tribulation Satan will send a flood of his own in an attempt to destroy the Jewish saints: *"Now when the dragon (Satan) saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman (Israel) who gave birth to the male Child (Jesus). But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time (three and a half years), from the presence of the serpent (the Antichrist). So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. (anti-Semitic lies?) But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."* Rev 12:13-17

"And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three

hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits."

Do you know that it took man all the way to the 1800's to rediscover that these dimensions are the perfect ones for this type of a nautical vessel? The British navy came to that conclusion and has built to these 'specs' since then.

"You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks."

This is quite interesting for we see that the ark had three decks. We'll examine this more in chapter seven.

"And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. 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. And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. Of the birds after their

kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive. And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather it to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them."

I like the way this passage emphasizes the male and female and specifically a one to one ratio. This is significant for remember that in those days, the demons or demon-possessed men were taking many, many wives and all flesh had corrupted God's principles of relationship. Noah, in a time when it was the norm to have multiple mates was faithful to just one as were his sons.

In our own day, the norm is also to have multiple sexual relationships, beginning in early teens on up. It is increasingly rare for a man and a woman to be faithful to each other and build their singular relationship. In fact, the most recent stats I know of say that the average marriage in the US is now lasting just 6 - 7 years.

God, in starting over, is again emphasizing the soundness of the

one-to-one-for-life relationship even over the repopulation of the planet. Certainly, if I were in God's 'shoes' and were concerned about repopulating, I'd of had Noah take for himself several ladies aboard - that would have been the logical thing to do. But the Lord is beautifully exalting this fundamental principle of relationship and we would do well to take heed.

It's also a testimony to Noah's wife in the sense that she stood by her husband. She could have written him off as loony - 'one brick short'. I mean this was more than an extra nine holes of golf or a hobby fixation. This took 120 years! Noah evidently stood alone, but his wife stood with him.

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

The key words here are "did" and "all". Noah was a man of action and obedience. Too many folks too often claim to be "waiting on the Lord" when God has already spoken. Some are waiting for thunder in the heavens to ring out His directions while their Bibles gather dust on the nightstand.

Faith without works is dead. Noah is a hero of faith because he did all God said. *“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.”* (Heb 11:7)

Christian faith is expressed in many ways, most especially through love, but it is never a matter of pretending or lethargy. Faith and works go hand in hand. What if Noah just told everyone of God’s coming judgment but never built the ark? What if he started the ark but then got bored? What if he got discouraged for lack of converts and just gave up? What if he figured putting pitch on the all the ark was just too much?

Obedience that is incomplete is not obedience. Thank the Lord Noah was completely obedient!