Worldwide Wickedness
Genesis 6:1-10
SS Lesson for 10/28/2018

Devotional Scripture: Rom 1:21-32

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Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary
Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

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Introduction

Overview and Key Verse of the Lesson

The lesson describes the extent of Worldwide Wickedness on the earth. The study’s aim is to understand that God’s patience with sinners eventually reaches an end. The study’s application is to commit ourselves to deal with sin quickly before it builds to a crisis.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Key Verse: Gen 6:5

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

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

6:1-4. Many have suggested that the sons of God were the godly line of Seth and the daughters of men were the Cainites. But this does not do justice to the terminology or the context. Others view the “sons of God” as angels (as in Job 1:6), who cohabited with women on earth. This, however, conflicts with Matthew 22:30. The incident is one of hubris, the proud overstepping of bounds. Here it applies to “the sons of God,” a lusty, powerful lot striving for fame and fertility. They were probably powerful rulers who were controlled (indwelt) by fallen angels. It may be that fallen angels left their habitation and inhabited bodies of human despots and warriors, the mighty ones of the earth. It is known from Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Daniel 10:13 that great kings of the earth have “princes” ruling behind them—their power is demonic. It is no surprise that in Ugaritic literature (as well as other nations’ literature), kings are described as divine, half-divine, or demigods. Pagans revered these great leaders. Many mythological traditions describe them as being the offspring of the gods themselves. In fact bn lm (“sons of the gods”) in Ugaritic is used of members of the pantheon as well as great kings of the earth. In the Ugaritic legend of the Dawn, the chief god of the pantheon, El, seduced two human women. This union of a god with human women produced Šhr (“Dawn”) and Šlm (“Dusk”) who seem to have become goddesses representing Venus. Thus for the pagans, gods had their origin in copulation between gods and humans. Any superhuman individual in a myth or any mythological or actual giant would suggest a divine origin to the pagans.

Genesis 6:1-4, then, describes how corrupt the world got when this violation was rampant. It is also a polemic against the pagan belief that giants (Nephilim; cf. Num. 13:32-33) and men of renown (Gen. 6:4) were of divine origin, and that immortality was achieved by immorality. The Canaanite cult (and most cults in the ancient Near East) included fertility rites involving sympathetic magic, based on the assumption that people are supernaturally affected through an object which represents them. Israel was warned to resist this because it was completely corrupt and erroneous. The passage, then, refutes pagan beliefs by declaring the truth. The sons of God were not divine; they were demon-controlled. Their marrying as many women as they wished (possibly this is the origin of harems) was to satisfy their base instincts. They were just another low order of creatures, though powerful and demon-influenced. Children of these marriages, despite pagan ideas, were not god-kings. Though heroes and “men of renown,” they were flesh; and they died, in due course, like all members of the human race. When God judges the world—as He was about to—no giant, no deity, no human has any power against Him. God simply allots one’s days and brings his end.

6:5-8. God’s words concerning the human race are filled with pathos. People’s wickedness was great, and every inclination (better, “plan,” yēṣer) of their hearts was only evil continually (cf. 8:21, “every indication of his heart is evil from childhood”). God had made man by design (yāṣar, “to form by design”; 2:7), but man had taken that capacity given to him and produced evil alone. There is hardly a stronger statement in the Bible about the sin of mankind. This passage gives insight into Jesus’ explanation that
“before the Flood people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage” (Matt. 24:38)—seemingly a harmless statement until its context is studied. In addition man was “corrupt” and “full of violence” (Gen. 6:11, 13). The wordplays in verses 5-8 are striking. God “repented” (KJV) that He had made man because the sin of the race filled Him with pain. The words “repented,” “pain,” and “made” go back to chapters 3 and 5. Lamech longed for comfort (nāḥam), from the painful toil under the curse (5:29). Now God “repented” (nāḥam was grieved, NIV) that He had made man because human sin pained Him (6:6). This is why pain was brought into the world—God was grieved with sin. But now God, rather than comforting man, “repented” after making him. This gave an ironic twist to Lamech’s words. God determined to destroy them all. (“Repented” does not suggest that God changed His mind, for He is changeless [Mal. 3:6]. Instead, it means that God was sorrowful.) Even though swift judgment would fall because God’s Spirit would not always shield (dām; “shield” is better than NIV’s “contend with,” Gen. 6:3) mankind, the judgment would be delayed 120 years (v. 3). During this time Noah was “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5). Noah was a recipient of God’s grace and therefore was spared from the judgment (in contrast with those who aspired to immortality). In the time of Moses, Israel would know they were chosen of God and should walk in righteousness. They, as God’s people, would meet the Nephilim, the Anakites (Num. 13:33), and the Rephaites (Deut. 2:11; 3:13; Josh. 12:4) when they entered the land. But Israel should not fear them as demigods. God would judge the corrupt world for its idolatry and fornication. And in the latter day the wicked will suddenly be swept away by judgment when God will establish His theocratic kingdom of blessing (Matt. 24:36-39).

God judged the wicked with a severe and catastrophic judgment in order to start life over again with a worshipful covenant. In the midst of the Flood, in which the sovereign Lord of Creation destroyed the world Noah, God’s servant and a recipient of grace, sailed through to the “new creation” and worshiped God. Why would God bring such a Flood? There are several reasons: (1) God is sovereign over all creation and frequently uses nature to judge mankind. (2) The Flood was the most effective way of purging the world. It would wash it clean so that not a trace of the wicked could be found. The dove would not find a place “to set its feet” (8:6-9). (3) The Flood was used by God to start a “new creation.” The first Creation with Adam is paralleled here by the second with Noah. Much as the dry land appeared from the receding waters (1:9), so here the waters abated until the ark came to rest on Ararat (8:4). When Noah was finished with the ark God commissioned him to be fruitful and multiply (9:1) and to have dominion over the earth (9:2), just as He had told Adam (1:26, 28). Noah planted a garden (9:20), whereas God planted a garden for Adam and Eve (2:8). But sin had tarnished the race. Adam and Noah are contrasted: whereas Adam’s nakedness was a sign of righteousness (2:25), Noah’s was one of degradation (9:21) and he ended up cursing his grandson Canaan (9:25-27).

The motifs in 6:9-8:22 are significant. First, God is shown to be the Judge of the whole earth. In a word He made distinctions between the righteous and the unrighteous, the clean and the unclean. What was clean was for God. A second motif is that God made provision for the recipients of His grace. Thus the warning is that those who claim to be grace-receivers should walk with God in righteousness, being separate from sinners. A third motif had significance for Israel. As God judged the world in Noah’s day and brought Noah through the Flood, so He judged the wicked Egyptians and brought Israel through the waters of the Red Sea to worship and serve Him. Instructions for that worship were distinctly spelled out in Leviticus. It is not surprising that many terms used here (Gen. 6:9-8:22) also appear in Leviticus. It was expedient that that generation of sinners die so that all others might be warned of the coming wrath of God. However, Noah escaped through the judgment to a new age; catastrophe does not interrupt God’s program. The Flood narrative points up God’s power and freedom over His creation. The Flood reveals God’s deadly anger over sin. The Flood shows that God’s gracious redemption is meaningful in light of judgment, and that His grace is not to be taken lightly. The cause of God’s judgment is stressed—the monstrous acts of sin performed in their habitual courses. In this the Genesis Flood is distinct from pagan accounts (e.g., Atrahasis and Gilgamesh); the Babylonian Gilgamesh account explained that the gods brought the Flood because of noise humans made. So basically chapters 6-9 answer the question. What is the end of man? Can he get away with pursuing life immorally and enjoying the pleasures of this world with reckless abandon? Is this life final or preparatory? God’s judgment makes the answer clear. But the expense seems so great. This judgment appears harsh. No word about the terror of the lost is mentioned, though Noah must have felt it. The Flood shows the extent to which God will go to help bring about holiness and rest on the earth. It is here that the godly find encouragement—in God’s plan for good to triumph ultimately over evil. Only one other event shows that holiness among people is the object for which God will sacrifice everything else—the crucifixion of His Son. The narrative divides into three sections: the commission to Noah to build the ark and preserve life (6:9-7:5), the destruction of all flesh outside the ark by water (7:6-24), and the sacrificial worship by Noah after the Flood (chap. 8).
6:9-13. In contrast with the reason for the Flood in the Babylonian account (the caprice of the gods because of man’s noise), the biblical record presents the Flood as a distinctly moral judgment. The human race had become so corrupt (vv. 11-12) and full of violence (vv. 11, 13) that God’s wrath would destroy all flesh, except Noah, who walked with God (v. 9), and his family (v. 18).

Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

One of my least favorite tasks is disciplining the children in my life. Although it is a necessary part of molding them into godly people, I do not enjoy it. However, I know that when I allow bad behavior to slip by, I am not doing them any favors. There are times when their behavior is just downright inexcusable. It hurts me most when their behavior is something they know is wrong. When they know something is bad and do it anyway, punishing them is twice as painful. I grieve not only for their behavior but also for their wayward tendency. When they do something even though they know it is wrong, my heart grieves.

Knowing how I grieve, I can only wonder about how saddened God was in Noah’s time. Generations after Eden, the world was a far cry from paradise. Apostasy was widespread, and people did not care about their sin. Their behavior was sinful to the point of being intolerable. Remember that these were Adam and Eve's descendants. They were not necessarily people who were ignorant of right and wrong. Many of them had probably been raised with some understanding of God. Certainly they had a conscience to guide them. However, like wayward children, they chose to turn away from what they knew was right. All of us have done something we know is wrong at some point in our lives. None of us can honestly say that we have never sinned. But there is a difference between us and the people of Noah’s time, and it is an obvious one. While we who are believers generally attempt to live righteous lives, the people of Noah's time did not. Doing what was right in God’s eyes was not at all important to them. They simply did not care about the absence of righteousness in their actions. These people were wicked to the core. Scripture has much to say about people like this. We are told that wicked people have no future (Ps. 37:38). Such people are considered worthless because of their sinful path (cf. Rom. 3:12). Their behavior breaks God’s heart (Gen. 6:6). Our God is incredibly patient. Scripture tells us that He is not going back on His promise of Christ’s return (2 Pet. 3:3-10). He is rather giving ample time for every person to repent. He desires that people be saved, not destroyed. However, God will reach the end of His patience. We learn that God will demonstrate anger toward those who are rebellious (Rom. 2:8). As we see in this week’s lesson, unrepentant people face only judgment and destruction. What happened was tragic, even more so because it was not inevitable. Had the earth's inhabitants repented, they would have been spared. Their choices broke God's heart and caused the destruction of what He once considered good (cf. Gen.1). God demolished the world and started fresh. There is a valuable lesson here. We need to remember that we can only continue so far in rebellion before God will give us over to it. If we persist even after the Spirit's repeated warnings, we risk a potential hardening of soul. When we do that, we are in great danger. If there is something He is talking to you about, do not delay. Repent while there is still time.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

**Man’s Wickedness (Gen 6:1-4)**

1 Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, 2 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. 3 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." 4 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.

**Unequally yoked intermarriage (1-2)**

*Unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Cor 6:14)*

14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?
Unequally yoked with foreign mates (Neh 13:23-26)
23 Moreover, in those days I saw men of Judah who had married women from Ashdod, Ammon and Moab. 24 Half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod or the language of one of the other peoples, and did not know how to speak the language of Judah. 25 I rebuked them and called curses down on them. I beat some of the men and pulled out their hair. I made them take an oath in God's name and said: "You are not to give your daughters in marriage to their sons, nor are you to take their daughters in marriage for your sons or for yourselves. 26 Was it not because of marriages like these that Solomon king of Israel sinned? Among the many nations there was no king like him. He was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel, but even he was led into sin by foreign women.

Unequally yoked to worshipers of foreign gods (Mal 2:11)
11 Judah has broken faith. A detestable thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem: Judah has desecrated the sanctuary the Lord loves, by marrying the daughter of a foreign god.

Unequally yoked with mates who do not share same taught morals (Mal 2:14-15)
14 You ask, "Why?" It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. 15 Has not [the Lord] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

Consequence of God’s limitation of age (3)

Limited because of trouble and life passing away quickly (Ps 90:10)
10 The length of our days is seventy years — or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.

Limited and covered with shame (Ps 89:45)
45 You have cut short the days of his youth; you have covered him with a mantle of shame. Selah

Limited due to lack of strength (Ps 102:23)
23 In the course of my life he broke my strength; he cut short my days.

Limited because of being wicked (Prov 10:27)
27 The fear of the Lord adds length to life, but the years of the wicked are cut short.

Limited for the sake of the elect (Matt 24:22)
22 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

Seeking other’s praise (4)

Praise from man because of loving it (John 12:43)
43 for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

Praise from man because of being a hypocrite (Matt 6:2)
2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

Praise from man by doing things for them to see (Matt 23:5)
5 "Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long;

Praise from man trying to justify themselves (Luke 16:15)
15 He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight."
Praise from man that keeps one from believing in God (John 5:44)

44 How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?

**God’s Judgment (Gen 6:5-7)**

5 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.
6 And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.
7 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.”

**God sees man’s wickedness (5)**

**God sees wickedness of detestable practices (Ezek 6:11-13)**

11 "This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Strike your hands together and stamp your feet and cry out "Alas!" because of all the wicked and detestable practices of the house of Israel, for they will fall by the sword, famine and plague. 12 He that is far away will die of the plague, and he that is near will fall by the sword, and he that survives and is spared will die of famine. So will I spend my wrath upon them. 13 And they will know that I am the Lord, when their people lie slain among their idols around their altars, on every high hill and on all the mountaintops, under every spreading tree and every leafy oak-places where they offered fragrant incense to all their idols.

**God sees wickedness that deserves destruction (Ps 94:23)**

23 He will repay them for their sins and destroy them for their wickedness; the Lord our God will destroy them.

**God sees wickedness that reaps trouble (Prov 22:8)**

8 He who sows wickedness reaps trouble, and the rod of his fury will be destroyed.

**God sees wickedness of forsaking Him (Jer 2:19)**

19 Your wickedness will punish you; your backsliding will rebuke you. Consider then and realize how evil and bitter it is for you when you forsake the Lord your God and have no awe of me," declares the Lord, the Lord Almighty.

**God Spirit is grieved (6-7)**

**God’s grief over man’s going astray (Ps 95:10)**

10 For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways."

**God’s grief over man’s rebellion (Isa 63:9-10)**

9 In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. 10 Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them.

**God’s grief doesn’t extend to His taking pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11)**

11 Say to them, ’As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?’

**God’s grief over man’s grieving the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30)**

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
God's is grieved over evil (Ps 5:4)
4 You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell.

God is grieved that man shortens his days because of wickedness (Ps 37:13)
13 but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he knows their day is coming.

God’s Solution (Gen 6:8-9)
8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.
9 This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations, Noah walked with God.
10 And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

God’s grace (8)

God's grace is a gift (Eph 2:8)
8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—

God's grace provides salvation to all men (Titus 2:11)
11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

God's grace is a reason to rejoice and have hope (Rom 5:1-2)
1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

God's grace overflows (Rom 5:15)
15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!

There is a remnant chosen for God's grace (Rom 11:5)
5 So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.

Man’s faith (9-10)

Faith in the power of God (John 11:14-15)
14 So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, 15 and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

Faith in the word of God (John 20:30-31)
30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Faith in God's indwelling presence (Exod 4:4-5)
4 Then the Lord said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. 5 "This," said the Lord, "is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob — has appeared to you."

Faith in Jesus as the Son of God (John 19:34-35)
34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. 35 The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.
Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Concluding Thoughts from Bob Deffinbaugh

Does God Change His Mind?

While verses 1-4 highlight the angelic invasion in the beginning of a new super-race, verses 5-7 serve notice that mankind in general was deserving of God’s destructive intervention into history—the flood. But it is here that we come upon a very serious problem, for it would almost appear that God changed His mind, as though the creation of man was a colossal error on His part. Let us, then, address the question, “Does God change His mind?” Several factors must be considered.

First, God is immutable, unchanging in His person, His perfections, His purposes, and His promises.

God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent; has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? (Numbers 23:19).

And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind, for He is not a man that He should change His mind (I Samuel 15:29, cf. also Psalm 33:11; 102:26-28; Hebrews 1:11-12; Malachi 3:6; Romans 11:29; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17).

Second, there are passages in which God “appears” to change His mind.

And the Lord said to Moses, ‘I have seen this people, and behold, they are an obstinate people. Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them, and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation. So the Lord changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people (Exodus 32:9-10,14).

When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God repented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it (Jonah 3:10).

The Lord changed His mind about this. ‘It shall not be,’ said the Lord. The Lord changed His mind about this. ‘This too shall not be,’ said the Lord God (Amos 7:3,6).

Third, in those cases where God “appears” to change His mind, one or more of these considerations may apply:

a. The expression, “God repented” is an anthropomorphism, that is, a description of God which likens God’s actions to man’s. How else can man understand then by thinking of God in human terms and comparisons? God’s ‘change of mind’ may only be the way it looks from man’s perspective. In both Genesis 22 (cf. verses 2, 11-12) and Exodus 32, that which God proposed was a test. In both cases, His eternal purpose did not change.

b. In cases where either judgment or blessing are promised, there may be an implied or stated condition. The message preached by Jonah to the Ninevites was one such instance:

Then Jonah began to go through the city one day’s walk; and he cried out and said, ‘Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown.’ Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them. When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat on the ashes. And he issued a proclamation and it said, ‘In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water. But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands. Who knows, God may turn and relent, and withdraw His burning anger so that we shall not perish?’ (Jonah 3:4-9).

What the Ninevites hoped for Jonah knew for a fact. They cried for mercy and forgiveness in case God might hear and forgive. When the Ninevites repented and God relented, Jonah was hopping mad:

But it greatly displeased Jonah, and he became angry. And he prayed to the Lord and said, ‘Please Lord, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore, in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that Thou art a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity.’ (Jonah 4:1,2).
Jonah knew God to be loving and forgiving. The message he preached implied one exception. If Nineveh repented, God would forgive them. This is what Jeremiah had written, saying,

At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy it; if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it. Or at another moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up or to plant it; if it does evil in My sight by not obeying My voice, then I will think better of the good with which I had promised to bless it (Jeremiah 18:7-10).

c. While God’s decree cannot be altered, we must grant that God is free to act as He chooses. While God’s program may change His purposes do not, “For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Romans 11:29).

God promised to bring His people into the land of Canaan. Due to their unbelief the first generation did not possess the land, but the second generation did. When Jesus came He offered Himself to Israel as the Messiah. Her rejection has made possible the offer of the gospel to the Gentiles. Nevertheless, when God’s purposes for the Gentiles have been accomplished, God will once again pour out His grace and salvation upon the Jews. God’s program changes, but not His purposes (cf. Romans 9-11).

d. While God’s will (His decree) cannot and does not change, He is free to change His emotions. Genesis 6:6-7 describes the response of God to human sin. Grief is love’s response to sin. God is no stoic; He is a person Who rejoices in men’s salvation and obedience, and Who grieves at unbelief and disobedience. While the purpose of God for mankind never changed, His attitude did. Surely a Holy God must feel differently about sin than about obedience. That is the point of verses 6 and 7. God is grieved about man’s sin and its consequences. But God will accomplish His purposes regardless. While such a state was ordained from eternity past, God could never rejoice in it, but only regret man’s wickedness and willfulness.

A similar illustration is the emotional response of our Lord in the garden of Gethsemane (cf. Matthew 26:36ff). The Lord Jesus had in eternity past, purposed to go to the cross to purchase man’s salvation. Yet when the moment for His agony drew near He dreaded it. His purpose did not change, but His emotions did.

The Meaning of Genesis 6 for Christians Today

While the New Testament has much more to say about the activities of Satan and his demons, few of us seem to take our spiritual warfare seriously. We really believe that the church can operate on human strength and wisdom alone, or with a little help from God. We often attempt to live the spiritual life in the power of the flesh. We urge people to rededicate their lives and redouble their efforts, but we fail to remind them that our only strength is that which God supplies.

The battle today between the sons of Satan and the sons of God (in the New Testament sense—John 1:12; Romans 8:14,19) is even more intense than it was in the days of old. Satan’s doom is sealed, and his days are numbered (cf. Matthew 8:29). Let us, then, put on the spiritual armor by which God equips us for the spiritual warfare of which we are a part (Ephesians 6:10-20).

Second, let us learn that Satan attacks us through similar instruments today. I am not aware of any instances in our times when fallen angelic beings have invaded the earth in human form to further Satan’s cause. Nevertheless Satan still works through men.

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

Just as Satan sought to corrupt men by disclosing himself (or rather, his angels) in the form of superior human beings, so he works through ‘angels of light’ today. We are inclined to suppose that Satan works most often and most effectively through the reprobate. We almost expect to find Satan in the pathetic demonic or in the hopeless derelict. It is easy to attribute such tragedy to Satan. But Satan’s best work and, in my estimation, his most frequent work is through those seemingly moral, devout, and pious talking men who stand behind the pulpit or sit on the governing board and talk about salvation in terms of society rather than souls, and by means of works rather than faith. Satan continues to advance his cause through men who are not what they appear to be.

Finally, notice that Satan does his best work in the very areas where men and women place their hope of salvation. When the angel-men proposed to the daughters of men they appeared to be the most promising
fathers. If these creatures were immortal, then would their offspring not be so also? Was this the way God was going to overrule the fall and the curse? So it must have seemed to these women.

That is precisely what Satan does today. Oh, he is not above promoting himself through atheism or other ‘ism’s,’ but he finds great success in the arena of religion. He wears his most pious expression and uses religious terminology. He does not seek to abolish religion only to abort it by cutting out its essential element, faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ as the substitute for sinful men. He will readily join any religious cause so long as this ingredient is omitted, or distorted, or lost in a maze of legalism or libertinism. Watch out, my friend, for Satan in the realm of religion. What better way to sidetrack souls and to blind the minds of men (II Corinthians 4:4)?

Where is your hope for immortality? Is it in your offspring? That way did not work for Cain. Is it in your work? Do you wish to build an empire or to erect a monument to your name? It will not last. All of these things perished in the flood of God’s judgment. Only faith in the God of the Bible and, specifically, faith in the Son He has sent will give you immortality and liberate you from the curse. The only way to become a son of God is through the Son of God.

Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me’ (John 14:6).

(Adapted from URL: https://bible.org/seriespage/sons-god-daughters-men-genesis-61-8)

**Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary**

1. Believers build families on a shared faith in God (Gen. 6:1-2)
2. Be encouraged and remember that God will not allow human wickedness to go unchecked forever (vs. 3)
3. Satan seeks to defeat God's people by tempting them to conform to the world (vs. 4)
4. God sees all, and God knows all (vs. 5)
5. In times of grace when we see God's patience, we must still remember that He is holy and will judge sin (vss. 6-7)
6. God's grace is a daily demonstration of His love for us (vs. 8)