

What Precipitates the Flood

If you're keeping an outline this morning. It is the lead-in to the flood judgment. That is the outline for this morning, the lead-in to the flood judgment.

It's really the kind of preface. It is what is going to set up what we are going to see shortly in the coming weeks as God destroys the earth with a cataclysmic flood. And the first point in this lead-in is we find a strange union incurs divine sanctions.

And a strange union incurs divine sanctions. This comes to us in verses one through four. And really the beginning here is beautiful poetic language.

The ESV reads, when man began to multiply. Really the original is, and it happened, that when man began to be numerous, it came about in the course of time. So we've said before, it's difficult to estimate exactly how many humans are on the earth at this time.

You should be thinking millions, not thousands. Perhaps even 10 millions, tens of millions at this time. And so we come and we read, very simply, that at this time, as the earth begins to team with humanity and the blessing that God gave in the garden and the command to be fruitful and multiplies to work itself out into the generations, people have had extremely long lifespans.

With that, the ability of women to have children for many years. So there's a great teaming of population. And then we read something somewhat unexpected.

We read in verse two that the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attracted. And immediately we have this interesting situation. There's clearly a contrast that Moses has in mind.

If he was referring to all humanity, he could have just said the sons of God and the daughters of God. If he was referring simply to kind of normal humanity, what we would expect is the sons of man and the daughters of man. And yet, confusingly in some ways, we see a contrast between those named here the sons of God and the daughters of man.

So the first interpretive question here, of course, is who are the sons of God? Who are the sons of God? It's a very unusual expression. Really, there's three main possibilities, okay? Here they are. Number one, it's possible that sons of God here refers to the lineage of Seth.

So if you remember, Seth's lineage called upon the name of the Lord. We saw that. That was how we ended chapter four in verse 26.

Seth has a son. His name is Anosh. At that time, people began to call upon the name of Yahweh.

They began to call upon the name of the Lord. So many faithful Bible teachers would say that what is happening here in Genesis 6 is you have Seth's godly lineage kind of getting

hoodwinked by some bad girls. They're looking over at Cain's line.

That's the daughters of man. They're attracted to their outer beauty, right? They're attracted to the wrong thing. Rather than staying to the virtuous family members in the line of Seth, they're marrying bad girls, and what's happening? Well, the godly line is being corrupted, okay? Kind of becomes a lesson.

Actually, I heard one pastor, young men, pay attention to this. Be aware. Maybe, okay, maybe.

I'll give it that as a possibility. I don't think that's actually what's happening here, primarily because it's just a weird way to express that. I think if Moses wanted to convey Seth's line is intermarried with Cain's line, there's like 50 better ways to say it than the sons of God marrying the daughters of men.

So that's kind of why I would say I don't think that's what is being taught here, although it is certainly possible, and if that's your view, guess what? It's okay, that's okay. Only one of us can be right. It's possible both of us are wrong, okay? But we both can't be right.

So that's view number one. View number two is that these are heroes from ancient history, okay? That the sons of God are heroes from ancient history. So where does that view come from? Well, in Psalm chapter two, David is referred to as the son of God.

He says, today you are my son, I have begotten you. David was a king, and in fact, in the ancient Near East, kings were often referred to as sons of God. And so in this view, what you have is you have tyrannical kings that are domineering, they're evil, they're very powerful.

They're marrying these women, and essentially they're just common women. So that's why they're called the daughters of men. Again, is it possible? Yes, I would say maybe even less possible.

I think it's not a very clear way of representing the text because then the daughters of man, it's really speaking of all of the females on earth, and the distinction then would kind of be powerful kings with common women, and it just doesn't really seem to do justice with the text. I think the key to understanding the passage, although this position is not without difficulty, is what one pastor termed the weirdest. Said, in fact, I think the best solution for understanding this passage also happens to be the weirdest, okay? The sons of God is utilized several times in the Old Testament, and in each time, it refers to angelic beings, okay? That expression is really kind of used somewhat technically in the Old Testament, sons of God, and it appears as describing angels.

I wanna run these through with you very quickly. If you remember, we get a little window into what was taking place when Satan came to assault Job. If you're writing down cross-references in Job chapter one, verse six, we read there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them, okay? So Job chapter one, verse six, would be indicating that the sons of God there was used as a term to describe or relate to

angelic creatures.

It's reiterated again in Job chapter two, verse one, where we read again, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. So Satan is, of course, called an angel of light by Paul in 2 Corinthians. He, of course, is a fallen angel.

He is among the sons of God at that time. So this would be recognizing that first two occurrences here of sons of God that we find outside of Genesis refer to Satan and those whom he is among, these sons of God. It occurs again, one more time, in the book of Job, and this one is maybe even a bit more explicit that sons of God, in fact, is being used in relation to angels.

In Job chapter 38, where God is challenging Job on whether or not Job was there at creation, he refers to created beings who were watching the creation of man, created beings who were created prior to day six. He asked Job in Job 38, verse four, were you there when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. So were you there when I built the earth? And he asked him, who determined its measurements? Surely you know, or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone? So he's describing there, Job, I just want to remind you that when I brought the earth into existence, you were nowhere to be found.

But there was someone there, and in verse seven, he says, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. So there were people there, not people in correct terminology, there were angels there. There were sons of God watching creation, sons of God rejoicing when God created the earth.

They're called the morning stars and the sons of God. This occurs one more time in a very familiar text for us. Daniel chapter three, when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are walking around in the fiery furnace.

You remember King Nebuchadnezzar says when he looks, saying, we threw three guys into the furnace, but what? I now see four men unbound walking in the midst of the fire and they are not hurt. And the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods, like a son of the gods, that same expression. Well, what was Nebuchadnezzar saying? Well, Nebuchadnezzar was a pagan king.

It's not like he has a specialty in identification, but he's looking and he's saying, three of these look like men and then one of them looks like a man, but that guy is probably what? Shining. Interestingly enough, Nebuchadnezzar says, I see four men, I'm identifying four men, three are normal, one of them is shining, one of them is bright, like a son of God. So son of God is used technically in the old Testament to refer to very often angelic beings.

Now, what probably comes to your mind immediately, and this is what would come to my mind, what in the world is happening? The Bible is not a book of fairy tales. We don't find secret

potions and unicorns, but there are also a lot of unbelievable things that we believe if we believe the Bible. We just read about a donkey who spoke, read about that in 2 Peter this morning.

All right, and an ax head that floats, and a little jar of oil and flour that just keep replenishing themselves day after day. And fire coming down from heaven, and massive seas being parted, and plagues coming at the voice of the Lord, and sick people being healed instantaneously, and dead people coming to life. I mean, the Bible is full of unbelievable stories from the natural man.

There are things that are supernatural that take place in scripture all the time. And so the question is really, what does the Bible reveal to us, and then do we take that as revealed truth? And so, although it seems far-fetched, I believe that if we just take the grammar itself to understand the sons of God, seeing the daughters of men were attractive, the best way to understand that would be that these are angels who are fallen. They're angels who are sinning, and they're sinning by cohabitating with humanity.

Now, was that actually angel and human, or was that human inhabited by really a demonic force like what we'd see in the New Testament? I don't know. If I had to guess, I'd probably say, I'd lean toward the idea that these are angels inhabiting humans. I mean, biologically, that one seems to make more sense to me.

But the scripture's not explaining that for us in detail. And so what we do know here is that the sons of God is used in that reference, seeing the daughters of men are attractive, and they took as wives any they chose. Now, if that was the only point that we had, I still think that it would be clear that that's most likely what's being stated, but there's also passages in the New Testament that I believe refer back to this instance and shed additional light for us, and even corroborate the view that these are, in fact, angels.

Turn with me first to Jude. New Testament, right before you get to Revelation. It's a little guy, so you can easily turn over it.

Jude's context here is talking about judgment. He's talking about error. He's talking about false teaching.

He's talking about things that have happened in history. And he says right here, beginning in verse four, for certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only master and Lord Jesus Christ. Now, I want to remind you.

So he's writing to them things that they already know ostensibly from the Old Testament. Okay, and this is important. I want to remind you, I want to give you some new information that you've never heard of before.

I want to remind you that although you once fully knew it that Jesus who saved a people out of

the land of Egypt afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, crossed the boundary. He has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day.

So why do I think that this is most likely speaking of Genesis chapter six? Well, a couple of reasons. Number one, Jude is reminding them of something that is already known. Most likely in the Old Testament, an account that they're familiar with.

Furthermore, angels coming down to cohabit with humans would certainly be off limits. Okay, that's crossing a boundary. That's the description here.

They did not stay within their position of authority, but they left their proper dwelling. Additionally, some people would say, well, we think that maybe Jude six, I almost called it Jude chapter six, Jude verse six refers to the angels falling initially. So this is kind of their initial fall where the angels rebel, they fall with Satan.

But the challenge with that is that we understand that at this time, you and I find ourselves in spiritual warfare, right? Ephesians six makes it clear that there are principalities and powers that are now at work. There's spiritual warfare taking place. We have the record of the gospels where demonic activity is flourishing.

Fallen angels are not locked away, but they are active. And yet we read here of these angelic beings who fell and what do we read? In verse six, they've been kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day. They're in the abyss, they're locked away right now.

These are angels who are not out roaming around as fallen angels. They're not demonic forces, they've been locked away. And in fact, if you remember when Jesus is dealing with demonic activity in Luke chapter eight, the demons are concerned and what do they shout? They say, don't send us away into the abyss.

Why? Because right now we have free reign and we don't want what happened to those angels to happen to us. So I believe that it's clear Jude is talking about a situation that has taken place in history that the readers would have been aware of. Furthermore, he's talking about fallen angels that now as a punishment end up locked up, which by definition then is not merely the angels who have fallen, but still have for this season free reign on earth.

If you notice the next verse, verse seven, then switches to Sodom and Gomorrah, which is speaking of sexual immorality and unnatural desire. And so tuck that away in your pocket for just a minute. Right here we have whatever these angels did in the same idea, the same paragraph relating to not only sexual immorality, but strange or defiling behavior.

Really what took place in Sodom, homosexuality was not merely immorality, which immorality is wrong. Male and female immorality is wrong. But homosexuality has the additional characteristic that it's against nature.

It's unnatural. It's a further degradation. And so here in Jude, we're seeing whatever these angels did was crossing a boundary.

And now it's also situated side by side with the degrading sin that was against nature that took place in Sodom and Gomorrah. I want you to keep that in your mind as we turn now to 2 Peter. So turn back a few pages to 2 Peter chapter two.

Peter, of course, is writing to people who are surrounded, not difficult for us to relate here to, people who are surrounded, surrounding the church saying that judgment is not coming. Okay, people who are comfortable, comfortable in their sin and denying that judgment is coming. And so he says in verse three, in their greed, these false teachers will exploit you with false words.

Their condemnation from long ago is not idle and their destruction is not asleep. What's he saying? The day is coming. The destruction is coming for these false teachers.

Peter, what is the logic now that you're going to reason from? And so now he uses case law from the Old Testament to demonstrate his point that destruction is in fact coming from the false teachers. Verse four, four, four, if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment. So does that sound like what Jude is talking about? Absolutely.

It's lining up. It's the same idea here. God locking away certain angels until judgment.

If God did not spare them when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment. Verse five, interesting. What is connected to this? If he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.

And so now we're seeing that God is not sparing angels. And then connected to that idea is, but he does spare Noah. He doesn't spare the angels.

He doesn't spare the ungodly, but he does spare Noah. I believe those go together as a unit of thought. And then somewhat unsurprisingly, now if you're tracking the logic, we find Sodom and Gomorrah again, connected.

Verse six, if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes, he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly. And if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the central conduct of the wicked. For as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard.

Then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment. And especially those who, interesting, indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Let's think very clearly now, you have God talking

about, through Peter, judging the angels, locking them away, yet preserving Noah.

Pouring out judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah, yet preserving Lot. What connects these two? Well, the idea that there is a strange defilement taking place in Sodom and Gomorrah, it was homosexuality. In the case of what was taking place in Genesis six, it was angels that were not keeping their proper abode, but crossing the boundary, crossing the boundary to cohabit with humanity.

So, turn back to Genesis chapter six. If you're totally weirded out, I get it. It's very weird, but I think it's what's happening here.

The question is why? Why? I mean, here it's interesting, it says that they took as their wives any they chose. So they see that they are attractive, that's the stated reason in the text. In other words, they desired to cross that line and then take for themselves wives.

When you read took wives as they chose, it doesn't necessarily indicate like a forced marriage, that was just the language. I mean, even on the altar, we say things like, I take you to be, they took wives. This was their choice.

What their choice was based on was, they found them to be attractive. Now in that it's then postulated many different ideas, some of which are probably true, we just don't know. Certainly possible that these fallen angels wanted to bring greater corruption to humanity.

I think that that's a fair assumption, understanding how demonic forces work. And so how they were looking at humanity there was the desire to bring greater evil on the earth through this procreative act. There's some that would postulate that they actually wanted to corrupt humanity by mixing humanity with the supernatural thereby corrupting the messianic line.

A little bit of a harder time supporting that view, mainly because as we read about God's judgment, he doesn't really speak about the need to purge the human lines that are now mixed with spiritual lines. And furthermore, you'd have now a hybrid creature that's part angel, part man. And the Bible really doesn't ever speak of that.

And so I think that those are views that are conjectures. I don't think those are good views to necessarily promote or teach others. If you wanna hold that view, I guess that's fine.

It's just not really derived from the text. But what we see here is that the only stated reason was that these sons of God saw the daughters of man and they desired them, wanted to cross the boundary. And as they did that, the Lord then says in verse three, my spirit shall not abide in man forever for he is flesh.

His days shall be 120 years. So we're assuming the angels are dealt with by being relegated to outer punishment and they're being chained up until the day of judgment. But as God is looking on the earth now, he says, I'm gonna sanction humanity.

Why? Well, because wickedness is multiplying on the earth. He's saying no longer am I going to continue to essentially put up with man, I'm going to now put a cap. And the language could go one of two ways here.

Either I'm not gonna let him live individually beyond 120 years, or I'm gonna wipe humanity out with a flood in 120 years. I think that's probably what is being spoken of here, that judgment is coming, that mankind as a whole, the human race is gonna be wiped out except for one family in 120 years. Part of why I think that is when you get off the boat, people aren't immediately dying under 120.

They're living beyond that. But it is possible that this is merely the indication that lifespans are gonna be shortened. And much like when God said, when you eat of the fruit in that day, you will surely die, death didn't come immediately to Adam, it just entered into his life.

That God here is saying mankind's lifespan will be shortened. I'm not gonna make that immediate, but that's kind of what we're working towards. He's gonna get off the boat, things are gonna begin to get shorter and shorter and shorter and eventually no one's gonna live beyond 120.

It really could go either way in the language, either way in the timetable. So what do we have so far? Well, we have this very bizarre situation where the sons of God that I believe are most likely angels see that the daughters of man are attractive, they take them as their wives, they begin to cohabit. The Lord looks upon the earth and he says, enough is enough, I'm done.

I'm not going to abide this forever. And so either I'm going to destroy the earth in 120 years or I'm gonna shorten lifespan, no one's gonna live beyond 120 years. Both of those essentially are true.

And then Moses writes in verse four, just to muddy the waters a little bit more for us. The Nephilim were on the earth in those days. And also afterward when the sons of God came into the daughters of man and they bore children to them, these were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

Now, most of you probably have been taught or learned or conceived that the Nephilim are in fact, the offspring of whatever union took place here between the sons of God and the daughters of man. I too typically would hold that position or held it before studying this closely. And this passage comes up often as what's known as a problem passage.

It's not because we have a problem with it per se, but it's because it's a problem to interpret. I'm in seminary, I took a class on hermeneutics, science of Bible interpretation. One of the assignments was to take a problem passage and interpret it.

And guess what? Genesis six, four was one of those problem passages. Who are the Nephilim? Well, here's the ultimate problem. Moses' audience knew who the Nephilim were.

And so we don't. Because he decided not to write a whole lot of additional information about them. And if you're writing to someone and they know who you're talking about, and you know who you're talking about, you don't provide a lot of explanation, you just provide the name.

So we have a people here called the Nephilim. And most of us tend to think the Nephilim are the offspring. I would say grammatically, I don't think that's the best way to understand this.

Look at the language very carefully. The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, that's a timestamp. And also afterward, timestamp, when, timestamp, the sons of God came into the daughters of man and they bore children to them.

So why are the Nephilim here? Well, Moses is giving us an idea of the time range. Like we could say when the Goths were on the earth. Well, when were the Goths on the earth? Well, first century AD to about the eighth century, the Goths were on the earth.

So Moses is saying, hey, the Nephilim were here when this activity took place. And also they were here afterwards when this situation happened. So the Nephilim then would be in distinction to this procreative act where new offspring come as a result of angels not keeping their boundaries.

The Nephilim are referred to one other time in scripture. It's when you have the unfaithful spies in Numbers chapter 13. So they spy out the land of Canaan.

And then what happens? They say, we were there and we looked out upon the inhabitants. They're great in height. There we saw the Nephilim and we seemed like grasshoppers.

So here's always the challenge when the Bible records the testimony of someone who's unfaithful is it's an accurate record of what was actually said, but you kind of have to consider the source a little bit. So what was the source here? Well, they're saying we're grasshoppers. It's doing the math.

It's actually fascinating. A grasshopper is 100 times tall. I'm sorry, humans are 100 times taller than grasshoppers.

Okay, by weight, we weigh the average human about 150,000 grasshoppers. That's our weight. Okay, so are the spies exaggerating? They're just a bit, right? They're exaggerating just a bit to say that compared to these giants, they're like grasshoppers.

But what does it indicate? Well, it indicates that there's some kind of folklore relating to the Nephilim, that there are known people and they're very large because the spies are stating this and the implication is that those who hear it are thinking, oh yeah, the Nephilim, they're giants. We know about the giants. We know about the Nephilim.

Even if they were exaggerating, they're using a reference that the children of Israel would have understood. They would have been familiar with that name, with that people group. So that's

how we relate that the Nephilim were tall people, that they were giants.

Certainly read of giants in scripture, the sons of Anak. We read of Goliath, of course, the most famous. But I think the view then that comes really to view the Nephilim as gigantic offspring coming from angels and humans procreating is not coming from the scripture itself, but from extra biblical writings that kind of make their way into Christian tradition.

Look at the text itself. There's nothing that would indicate kind of a superhuman race being produced by the cohabitation of angels and humans that's resulting in super giants or race of super giants. Rather, they bear children, somewhat normal children, and these are, Moses says, the mighty men who are of old the men of renown.

The best conjecture here then, which I say conjecture because that's what it is, is that these demons were likely trying to create a strong breed of people. You can think about it almost like someone would do with animal husbandry. We'll read about Jacob later in Genesis, taking the flocks to breed them together to make strong flocks.

But these men were known as the mighty men, the men of renown. So what happens? Well, there's a sanction here. Life is shortened on the earth or the flood is coming as a judgment.

There are sanctions that are issued as a judgment of what is taking place. And we begin to get to the heart of the passage in verse five and this brings us to our second point on our lead in to the flood judgment. The first point, of course, is that a strange union incurs divine sanctions.

Our second lead in is a sinful race arouses divine displeasure. A sinful race arouses divine displeasure. Then the Lord saw, verse five, that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

If you don't know this verse in your Bible, I would encourage you to mark it. This is a key verse. It's a key anthropological verse.

It's a key verse to understand the human condition. Very often people talk about what is wrong with society and all kinds of factors are postulated to attempt to identify the problems that we see in society and a corresponding solution to deal with it. I don't know about you, but I can't even count all of the times I've heard that someone had a good heart and then they just got in with the wrong crowd.

Or maybe their heart was in the right place. They just keep making bad choices. Or maybe they just needed more time to kind of heal or reform themselves or be educated.

What we get in Genesis 6, 5 is the human heart given time on earth apart from divine intervention. See, man does not fix himself. I mean, these long lifespans that we've seen in genealogies, if there was any opportunity to reform yourself, to make yourself better, to get rid of your bad habits, to kind of morally clean things up, surely having hundreds of years to do it would be enough time.

What do we read? Time apart from divine intervention doesn't fix anything. It only gets worse. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth.

And we're gonna be talking about this as we look at the flood judgment. It is unimaginable what the evil looked like on the earth in that time. And the corruption comes from within.

Look at the words. Every intention of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually. Surely.

I mean, if a mere human wrote this, we would say you have an exaggeration problem. We don't use words like every and only and continually. Surely it's not every intention.

Surely it's not only evil. Surely it's not continually. That sounds very dramatic.

It's exactly the nature of the human heart apart from divine intervention. It's hard to even imagine what this would have looked like. Every imaginable aberration that you can think of.

The earth was a violent place. It was a corrupt and dark place. You imagine the unrestrained human flesh, generation upon generation sinning against one another.

And the result in verse six we read is that the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth. Yahweh regretted that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him to his heart. This is an anthropomorphism.

It's where we use human language or in this case, Moses uses human language to describe God. It's very helpful in understanding what we need to understand about God. And yet it's possible to have a misunderstanding.

Let me tell you what this does not mean. It does not regret in the way that you and I regret. We might say things like, I really regret not taking those last two classes spring term of my senior year and never finishing my degree.

I regret that. What do we mean? Well, as I look back now with better information, I would do it differently. Or perhaps saying something like, I really regret not starting my retirement plan 10 years earlier because it would have been really beneficial in the way that I would have done it.

It would have been beneficial in compounding interest. The idea that now I have a new realization that I did not have then. And God does not discover anything.

He's not discovering now how bad mankind is and then regretting his decision to create man. God is not impotent, he's not learning. He's not lacking in wisdom.

He doesn't ever change. Rather, what's being conveyed is God's emotion, if you will, His disposition toward sin. One commentator writes, God's regret means that action must be taken, not that a great cosmic mistake has been made.

Whereas another commentator said, God is not a dispassionate accountant. He's not merely

saying, man is messed up and I need to go judge him and kind of execute the judgment, but I'm not personally bothered by it. God is grieved and He is offended by sin.

There's passion here. It is an expression of God's holiness and His glory to punish iniquity. God hates what is bad because He loves what is good.

He hates what is false because He loves what is true. He hates unrighteousness because He loves righteousness. And so the Lord is grieved because He's looking at humanity and He's saying, I hate what is happening right now.

I'm opposed to it. So in verse 7, the Lord rises up to take action. He says, I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I've made them.

I'm grieved that I made them. Picture here is God is the one who created. He created all of creation for a purpose.

It was to attest to His glory. In one sense, creation is not fulfilling the purpose for which He created it. But in the ultimate sense, yes, of course.

There's nothing that could ever get in the way of or stop the ultimate purpose of God from coming about. But in terms of His revealed purpose for creation, it was to bring Him glory by worshiping Him and that is not taking place. And so He says, I am going to blot out.

I'm going to blot out. The same language that's used in 2 Kings chapter 1, 21 verse 13, to wipe off a dish. Picturing it a whiteboard with dry erase markers.

I don't know if your family is anything like mine, but occasionally I've made the mistake of writing something that I didn't want erased on the dry erase board. I went to find someone else wanted to use it before I could take a picture of it. My very important information got erased.

It got wiped away. That's the idea here. God says, I'm going to wipe man off the earth.

I'm going to erase humanity, millions of people. I'm going to erase them off the face of the earth. I'm going to wipe them away.

Is that not staggering? I was just thinking about how significant it's been in our little congregation. We've seen death. It's tragic.

Every time someone has died here, we felt it. We felt the loss. Can you imagine if all the names of all the people in the room right now are up on the TV screen? We've said, all right, tomorrow they're all getting wiped away.

That'd be astounding amount of grief in our hearts. Yet the Lord, who is not man-centered but God-centered, is grieved by humanity's sin. And he says, that's what I'm going to do.

I'm going to wipe away and we're going to start over. Verse 8. Come to our third and final lead-in in the flood judgment. Solitary man finds divine favor.

Solitary man finds divine favor. But in contrast, the exception, Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. Noah's not going to be the only one preserved.

There will be seven others. But the point here is that the patriarch, the head of this household, Noah, is singled out. And look at the precision of the language.

It's not that Noah curried favor in the eyes of the Lord. It's not that Noah purchased favor from God or he earned favor in the eyes of God. He found it.

This past weekend at family camp, we talked about the grammar of the gospel. It's very consistent and specific. That we do not save ourselves, but God saves us.

You understand grace is found or it is received, but it is never merited or earned. That's the point. And so when you and I read verse eight, Noah deserved to be wiped off the face of the earth just as much as everyone else.

He said, Noah did not deserve. Noah did not deserve to be preserved. He did not deserve favor, rather he found it.

Noah's a testimony to God's grace to sinful humanity. Ultimately, this of course comes to us through Jesus Christ. Paul would say in Ephesians 2, for by grace you have been saved through faith.

It is a gift of God. It's not your own doing. It's not the result of works.

Why? So that no man can boast. And so the story of the flood on the one hand testifies to God's justice in punishing the wicked. And it also attests to his grace and his mercy in preserving Noah.

Listen, if you're in Christ, the only reason why you will not be swept away in the flood of God's judgment when Jesus returns is because he was gracious to you. Because you're getting what you don't deserve to magnify his own glory and to magnify his own grace. We're going to have a phenomenal time as we continue through Genesis 6 and we see Noah's faith and his obedience.

It's pretty remarkable the kind of trust he exercised against all odds in believing God, being severely outnumbered. If you've got questions about the Nephilim, if you've got questions about the sons of God or the daughters of men, you can ask Joshua about all of those and he'll be happy to meet with you this week. Seriously, you can email me or call me.

I don't mind. I'm happy to talk to you about those positions. But I would just encourage you this morning to just leave this passage by marveling at the grace of God against the backdrop of his perfect justice.

Let me pray as we prepare for communion. Father in heaven, it is a scary thing to recognize how much you hate sin because we see it in ourselves day by day by day. And so we confess this morning as we confess ever and always that were it not for the righteousness of Jesus Christ, we would be at odds with you and you would be just to send us into eternal condemnation.

Lord, I thank you for Genesis chapter 6 verse 8, Lord, for you showing favor to a man who did not deserve it, but who you were pleased to rescue. Lord, we thank you for your rescue operation. We thank you for the Lord Jesus and his sacrifice on our behalf.

We thank you that you saw fit to call us, to call us to be your people, Lord, and to forgive the debt that we could have never paid. I pray that you would exalt yourself among us as we partake of the Lord's supper now in Jesus' name, amen.