

Judgement

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Date: 16 February 2014

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[0:00] Open up your copy of the Scriptures to Genesis chapter 6. We're just going to cover the first eight verses of Genesis chapter 6 together with me as we read God's Word.

Genesis 6, beginning in verse 1, Moses writes, When man began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were attractive, and they took as their wives any they chose.

Then the Lord said, My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh, and his days shall be 120 years. The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man, and they bore children to them.

These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown. The Lord saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

The Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, 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 have made them.

[1:39] But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. Father, please, we ask, take your word, apply it to our hearts. In Christ's name, Amen.

Over the last several weeks, really since we were in chapter 3, so for about five weeks now, we have been mired in sin. And I don't mean that literally, although that may, this is really literally for a lot of us.

But we have been really stuck in looking at what the Bible has to say in these first few chapters of Genesis about sin, about the reality of sin, about what sin is like.

And so, as we spent time in Genesis chapter 3, we saw the origin of sin and how sin came into the world and entered into humanity and impacted us. We saw the beginning of what we might call a cosmic battle between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman as they are described there in Genesis chapter 3.

And I have said repeatedly, I have said over and over that that seed of the woman, that one who we are told would be wounded by the serpent and yet would at the same time crush the head of the serpent, that that seed is none other than Jesus Christ Himself, who is called in the New Testament not only the Son of God, the second Adam, but the seed of Abraham.

[2:59] So that we see the beginnings of that war, we see the entrance of sin into the world, and we're given a glimpse, we're given a hope for the future, that there would be a seed who would come and set all things right.

And indeed, He has come, He has defeated the serpent, He has provided a way for our sins to be forgiven, a way for the curse to be removed from us.

But we've not only seen the origin of sin, we've also seen the depth of sin. When we saw Cain kill his brother Abel in chapter 4, just after they'd been expelled from the garden, the first generation after that, murder is on the scene.

A few generations after that, in the line of Cain, there's a man named Lamech who's even more violent than Cain was himself, and polygamists, and all sorts of other things. We see, illustrated for us in chapter 4, the depth of depravity, that it goes to the core of who we are, and it expresses itself in everything that we do, and in every facet of our lives.

But not just the depth of depravity, we've also seen the universality of sin and depravity. As we looked in chapter 5 and we followed the genealogy of Adam and Eve through their son, Seth, who replaced Abel, we saw death come for every generation but one.

[4:21] We see that the effects of sin, when Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, God had promised Adam, in the day that you eat of the tree, you'll die. And death set in spiritually upon Adam and Eve in the day that they ate of the fruit, and eventually they died physically, and every descendant that they had except for Enoch, died over and over.

We heard that refrain last week, and he died, and he died, and he died, so that we see that death is a universal experience of mankind. You cannot avoid it.

It comes for all of us because all of us are born in the line of Adam with a fallen sinful nature, and all of us sin in the course of our lives.

All of us deserve death. Sin is universal, and the punishment that comes for sin is universal. And now we're going to see all three of those sort of themes around sin.

We're going to see all three of them emphasized in these first eight chapters of chapter 6, as well as a strong emphasis upon God's response to our sin.

[5:24] We're going to see these things in these short eight verses. We're going to see all of those themes sort of summed up before we begin next week to see God's actual judgment fall into the world.

And you can see how these verses are tied to the first five chapters, not only because they simply come after the first five chapters, but because chapter 6, verse 1 reminds us of the context in which these things take place.

We're told that when man began to multiply on the face of the land, that's an important statement. It means that God's original command to Adam and Eve in the garden to be fruitful and multiply and subdue the earth or the land, it means that at least a part of that is being carried out by some of Adam's descendants.

It means that mankind is spreading, that mankind is multiplying. It means, essentially, that in some sense God's blessing is continuing to follow man, even in man's sinfulness.

We saw that even in the line of wicked Cain, whom the New Testament tells us was of the evil one, that even from his line things like music came forth. Workers of metal first came from Cain's line so they were able to forge things out of metal and make tools and instruments.

[6:42] The first cities were built by Cain's descendants. All of these things coming out of this wicked, fallen family line so that even in the midst of sin we see God's grace and chapter 6 begins on this note of God's blessing and grace as man is indeed multiplying and spreading across the earth so that we're supposed to remember as we read the story of the flood that it's not just some isolated story.

I know that's the way that we usually learn it in Sunday school and in other Bible studies. We learn about Noah and the flood and it's just sort of its own sort of isolated story that we tell isolated in it by itself and we don't always connect it to the rest of this book but verse 1 will remind us connect it.

Keep it connected. Remember that what we're talking about here in chapter 6 is a continuation of this narrativeness of the fallenness and sinfulness of mankind.

So we're going to run into a couple of difficulties in this text. We're going to run into some things some places where it's somewhat difficult to interpret and I'll give you a couple of options and tell you what I prefer but I don't want you to miss the big picture because of those things.

The big picture is man is sinful. Man is fallen. Sin goes to the depths of who he is and it reaches out into every descendant of Adam's heart.

[8:02] Don't forget that and don't forget where sin had its origin in the garden. So let's continue on because we've run into probably the biggest difficulty in this in this whole passage in verse 2.

Start back again in verse 1 though. We're told that when man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive and they took as their wives any they chose.

So the first issue we have to deal with right off the bat is who are the sons of God and who are the daughters of men? This is something that has tripped up interpreters of the Bible for hundreds of years.

Who are these sons of God? What are they? Well there have been two primary answers to that question and they're not difficult to remember. One group of interpreters says that the sons of God are human beings and the other group of interpreters says that the sons of God are angels fallen angels to be more specific.

So that among those who argue that the sons of God are human beings the primary interpretation that you're going to find is this that the sons of God are the godly descendants of Seth.

[9:18] We saw Seth's line traced in chapter 5 and we are told that the sons of God are none other than this line that we've just seen traced and all the other children that were born to them.

That's who the sons of God are and then on the other hand the daughters of men are of the line of Cain. And so what is being proposed in this interpretation is that the problem here in these first few verses is that the godly men from the line of Seth are marrying into the ungodly family of Cain.

And what you're dealing with here is a clash between the people of God and those who have rejected God. Which makes sense in the context because in chapter 4 we have the genealogy of Cain and in chapter 5 we have the genealogy of Seth and in fact at the very beginning of that genealogy we are told that when Seth began to have children it was at that time that men began to call upon the Lord.

So that you do have a great contrast between between these two lines of descent from Adam. You have the line of Cain in which we see illustrated for us the depth of human depravity.

You have the line of Seth in which people call out to the Lord and we have Enoch in the middle of that line who is the only one who doesn't die who ascends into heaven giving us a glimpse of hope for life beyond death.

[10:43] So it makes sense of the context. Moreover it makes sense because throughout the Old Testament we see this problem of God's people intermarrying with others people who worship false gods and that always creates all kinds of havoc in the midst of God's people.

Whenever they marry outside the nation of Israel and they bring in these foreign wives with their false gods it always creates all sorts of problems. And even when you arrive in the New Testament there are indications given that Christians are not to intermarry with non-Christians because that creates all sorts of problems in the home.

So the interpretation makes sense in the context of Genesis and you can connect it to some broader themes. And if that's the correct interpretation then the main point being made there is that the war that was begun in the garden between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman is taking place in chapter 6 by means of the seed of Cain and the seed of Seth.

The descendants of Cain and the descendants of Seth and Satan is in effect waging war upon God's people by means of trying to corrupt the godly line of Seth by bringing in the ungodly line of Cain into it.

That would be the main point being made there is that that war continues and it's being played out on this stage as godly people are intermarrying with ungodly in Satan's attempt to prevent the seed of the woman from ever coming onto the scene.

[12:09] Because if you can wipe out the godly seed then you can never have the one singular seed who would overturn what Satan did in the garden.

So that's interpretation number one and those are its strengths. Now I'll give you interpretation number two and tell you why I think it may be the right interpretation. The interpretation number two sounds stranger.

It sounds a little bit more bizarre which is why a lot of people kind of back off from it. But interpretation number two argues that these sons of God are in fact fallen angels and that the daughters of men are simply human women that are taken as wives and that these fallen angels enter into the world obviously in physical masculine bodies and take these women as their wives.

Now there are a couple of arguments in favor of that particular interpretation. They run like this that the term sons of God when used in the Old Testament everywhere else is only used in reference to angelic beings.

The phrase sons of God is always everywhere else used in reference to angelic beings. Now there aren't a lot of places that this occurs but there are a handful and I'll show you two of them if you'll hold your place in Genesis chapter 6 and turn over to the book of Job.

[13:32] Job is right before the Psalms so if you run into the Psalms you've gone a little bit too far. In Job chapter 1 we have the setup for the entire story of Job of this man named Job.

And in chapter 1 verse 6 we read this There was a day when the sons of God so there it is the exact same phrase There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord and Satan also came among them.

So we have here this picture of some sort of heavenly scene some sort of heavenly court in the opening chapter of Job in which angelic beings called the sons of God come along with Satan and enter into God's court and what happens after that is a conversation between Satan and God about Job.

Look down again one more time in Job where this phrase occurs chapter 2 verse 1 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 the same scene the same kind of picture happening a second time angelic beings probably fallen angels in the service of Satan come along with Satan present themselves before the Lord and a discussion ensues between Satan and God.

[14:53] God so that this phrase itself sons of God in the plural everywhere else in the Old Testament is clearly angelic beings and perhaps even here in Job fallen angels.

So just based upon the terminology itself if you were reading this you would be inclined initially to think in Genesis chapter 6 that we may in fact be looking at some sort of interplay between angels fallen angels and human.

That's what the language would on the surface indicate. But the primary reason why I think that that's the correct interpretation doesn't have anything to do with the terminology chosen.

It has to do with the way that the New Testament writers reflect back on these events. So again hold your place in Genesis chapter 6 and I want you to turn all the way back to the end of your New Testament to the book of Jude right before Revelation.

I have to give some explanation before I simply read this verse in Jude. But Jude is going to launch into a discussion of fallen angels. But the background of Jude is that Jude is borrowing language from other Jewish writers.

[16:09] That's what you need to know. The book of Jude although it's one chapter and it's very short it contains some very confusing statements some very confusing terminology and part of the reason that it's confusing to us now living in the 21st century is because we're not as familiar with the types of writings that the original readers of this letter would have been familiar with.

Just like today sometimes in a sermon I'll make some reference to something happening in pop culture maybe to a television show or to a song or to a famous person or maybe some event that recently took place and if someone 2,000 years from now found a recording of my sermon there would be some references that were obscure to them because they don't know about these television shows or this person or this event that took place.

Same thing here there were Jewish writings that the people of the first century were familiar with outside of the Bible they're not scripture and Jude borrows the language of those Jewish writers in particular he's borrowing language from a book called First Enoch it's not a part of the Bible it doesn't belong in the Bible if you want to know why it doesn't belong in the Bible then come to Sunday school next week alright but it doesn't belong in there okay but Jude uses the language of First Enoch and later on he even quotes from that book showing that he's very familiar with the contents of that book so this language comes directly from First Enoch Jude verse 6 he says and the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority but left their proper dwelling he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day now when

Enoch uses these same sorts of terms when Enoch says something very similar Enoch is talking about the angels of Genesis chapter 6 that's how he interprets it that's how most Jews of the day interpreted Genesis chapter 6 and so Enoch interprets Genesis chapter 6 to be angels that's how he understands it well Jude borrows his language and Jude seems to agree with Enoch's basic interpretation of Genesis chapter 6 that these are indeed angels that have fallen and come and mixed with men now Jude's statement is that these angels did not stay within their own position of authority but they left the place where they were supposed to be and because of that God has judged them and now he's now holding them down in a place of gloomy darkness until the final judgment and so if in fact Jude is telling us that in Genesis chapter 6 these were angels who came down and intermarried with human women then Jude is also telling us that we need not worry about that happening all the time because God has judged those angels and they're being held they're being kept they're being imprisoned until the final judgment comes which is why we don't see this sort of thing repeated throughout the

Bible hold your place again in Genesis 6 don't lose your place but turn back a few pages to 2nd Peter where Peter does the same thing he borrows the language of first Enoch 2nd Peter chapter 2 verse 4 he gives us a little bit more information than Jude does for 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 if he did not spare the ancient world but preserve Noah a herald of righteousness with seven others when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly now pause right there this is really significant because Peter is doing what Jude did borrowing the language of first Enoch you even see some of the exact same words from Jude here in 2nd Peter but Peter also does something that Enoch does and he connects the event of the fall of the angels with the story of Noah in fact if you read through Enoch there's a connection between the fall of the angels

[20:18] Noah and then the next major sinful event that's mentioned is Sodom and Gomorrah that's fairly typical of some ancient Jewish writings when listing off these sinful events to list them in that sort of chronological order and you go with the angels mixing with the women in Genesis 6 the flood which follows right after that and then later on in the book of Genesis Sodom and Gomorrah that's a fairly typical sort of listing of sinful activities occurring in the book of Genesis and Peter is doing the same thing so it appears that both Peter and Jude inspired writers writing under the influence of the Holy Spirit it appears as if they also interpreted Genesis chapter 6 to be a reference to angelic beings having fallen and mixed with human women if that is the correct interpretation then the main point seems to me to be that this battle initiated in the Garden of Eden between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman is now continuing and Satan is continuing to try to prevent the seed from coming on the scene now he's trying to cut off the descent of man from

Adam and Eve by interjecting angels into the human line of descent now pause for a moment right there because whichever interpretation you adopt the main point remains the same right the continuation of the battle begun in the garden between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman so we don't need to make too much of the differences between these interpretations although they affect the way that you view angels although they affect the way that you view this particular story they do not affect the overarching themes and stories of Genesis which is our main point in this study the point here is that Satan has not stopped he will not stop in fact we spent an entire week looking at this theme of the seed promised in Genesis chapter 3 and we saw how throughout biblical history there has been an onslaught on the seed there's been a war against the seed so there's a war against the seed of Abraham when Abraham brings Hagar into the mix and there's a son born who's not from Sarah whom God said would bear the son that the promise would go through there's the war continues on when you have the people of Israel when you have the Hebrews in Egypt and the Pharaoh who was under the influence and power of Satan orders all the Hebrew baby boys to be killed there's always a war upon children because Satan is waging war against the seed of the woman we see it in the New

Testament taken up when Herod orders the slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem so regardless of how you interpret sons of God daughters of men the main point remains the same that this war is ongoing in Genesis chapter 6 and Satan is doing everything in his power to prevent the seed of the woman from coming into the world that I think is what we need to hang on to and see now in case you're wondering which of those interpretations has sort of a better pedigree in other words you want to know well who held to what interpretation if I can't decide just based upon what's here maybe I can add some weight to it depending on who holds to what view well it doesn't help either because almost all of the early church fathers interpreted this to be angels almost all of them almost all of the Jewish interpreters between the Old and New Testaments interpreted this to be angels if I've understood

Peter and Jude right of course that settles the debate but you could debate whether or not I've understood them correctly but outside of the Bible it seems that early on the weight was in favor of angels but then of course you have Augustine Martin Luther and John Calvin who all interpreted this to be human beings of the line of Seth so even if you take a different interpretation than I take on this I'm not going to get all that upset because men much smarter than me have taken the interpretation that you're going to take alright I want you to see that there's a cosmic battle at play here I want you to see that this battle is happening right here in Genesis chapter 6 that's key because remember the themes of the first five chapters specifically dealing with sin are being rehashed here in these opening verses chapter 6 and what we need to remember is that sin began in the garden when tempted by Satan

Adam Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit and as a consequence of that God has not only promised defeat for Satan but he has promised a means of redemption for his people through the promised seed who would reverse the curse extremely important for you to keep in mind as we walk through the rest of these verses so the sons of God and the daughters of men we are told that these sons of God took as their wives any that they chose that standard language for marrying it doesn't mean that they grabbed them and ran off with them okay this is the normal language used in Hebrew to describe marriage so they married any that they chose and then we read this in verse 3 the Lord said my spirit shall not abide in man forever for he is flesh his days shall be 120 years now that's remarkable because you might think that given the fact that it appears at least if I'm right in my interpretation that you have this odd event of these fallen angels coming and intermarrying with men you might think that

[26 : 20] God would immediately address that specific issue and yet he does not that's not where he goes first because the problem with the world today is not primarily a problem with Satan it's not primarily a problem with demons yes we wage a war against them but we lose battles in that war not because they are so powerful we lose battles because we are so sinful these things this event would not have been able to take place these angelic beings would not have been able to take wives had man not been weak in sin and so God says my spirit will not abide in man forever in other words I'm not I'm not going to put up with this forever I'm not going to just let all of these things happen I'm not just going to let man's sinfulness just run its course I'm going to intervene he says man's years will be 120 well that means one of two things and I honestly don't know which one it either means that he's going to limit the age of men to 120 years because up till now we have seen people live hundreds of years and of course after the flood men don't live that long human beings men and women we don't live that long the only difficulty with that interpretation is that people do continue to live more than 120 years after the flood in fact it takes a while you finally get to

Moses when you get to Moses Moses lived for 120 years and then he died and nobody else in the biblical record lives past 120 so if if God is saying that one of his judgments upon man is going to limit the length of man's life to 120 years then you have to say that it took a while for that to fully take effect and that's a possibility it also may mean that God is just simply saying that I'm going to bring the flood upon the earth in 120 years we know that Noah was 600 years old when the flood came the only other event that we know about Noah's age is that Noah was 500 when Shem Ham and Japheth were born we don't know how old Noah was when God first came to him and said I'm going to flood the earth we don't know how old Noah was when God said man's years would be limited to 120 so we don't know it could be that God said that 120 years before the flood and he just meant you got 120 years left and I'm wiping you all out or he might have meant nobody's going to live longer than 120 after a while

I don't know what it is but I know that God is bringing his judgment into the world and that we ought not to look at Satan's activity in the world and say it's all his fault we have nothing to do with it that doesn't happen in the garden of Eden God knows he knows who the instigator is he's all knowing he knows everything he's not been blind to the activity of Satan in the garden and yet he does not immediately address Satan he comes to Adam he comes to the one responsible and then he addresses Eve why because they're responsible for their sin no matter Satan's activity no matter the amount of temptation that he might pile upon you even if he were to send fallen angels into the world to intermix with human beings surely a wicked and terrible thing even if that were the case we could not in that instance turn around and say God don't blame us it's all Satan or it's all these demonic beings among us we cannot do that it doesn't happen in the garden it doesn't happen right here the full responsibility and weight for our sin always falls upon us we are responsible and that's the point being made here

I'm not going to put up with this forever I'm angry with man that's who he's angry with my spirit will not put up with will not abide with man forever there's going to be an end to this and then back to the weird stuff right verse 4 the Nephilim were on the earth in those days and also afterward when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them these were told were the mighty men who were of old the men of renown who are these Nephilim what is a Nephilim well most likely although it's difficult to tell most likely the word Nephilim comes from the Hebrew word for to fall and it means the fallen ones so these are the fallen ones the Nephilim the fallen ones were on the earth in those days what days well apparently the days in which man's wickedness was running wild and when the sons of God intermarried with the daughters of men that's when the Nephilim were on the earth and it tells us specifically when the sons of

God came into the daughters of men and they bore children to them third interpretive problem are the Nephilim the children of the marriages between the sons of God daughters of men is that who they are it doesn't say that in fact it's worded in a very strange way where that might be the intention of Moses and he may simply be saying that at the time when the sons of God and daughters of men were having children also around that same time you had Nephilim in the!

[31 : 49] Nephilim are the children you cannot tell from the way it's worded here not in Hebrew not in English you cannot tell and so you cannot be dogmatic on the matter I'm inclined to think that perhaps these Nephilim are something else because we're told that they were there at that time in those days and also afterward there are Nephilim in the world after the fall after the flood but God wipes out everyone other than Noah and his family so they couldn't have survived the flood if they're the product of fallen angels and women they couldn't have survived the flood God wiped everyone out and that sort of event doesn't occur at any other time in the Bible so I'm inclined to think that perhaps they're not but I don't!

know! we're told at the end these were the mighty men who are of old the men of renown these children of the sons of God and daughters of men children born of the mighty men of old who are these the mighty men of old I don't know who they are you can speculate and I don't think it hurts to speculate as long as you don't get rigid in your speculation a lot of interpreters have said that it's possible that these mighty men of old that that's where all of the that's where all of the tales of heroes of the past came that's that's why almost every culture has these stories about about these godlike figures who do all of these things that those stories themselves are rooted in the memory of these mighty men of old the stories are not true the!

stories something real mighty men who existed before the flood we don't know with any certainty there's a lot of strange things happening here in this passage but the strangeness goes away and we're sort of waking back up to reality when we finally get to verse 5 the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually now stop right there I said before that what we're seeing here is a summary of these three themes about sin the origin of sin and the battle between the seed of the serpent and the seed of woman we've seen that sons of God daughters of men no matter how you interpret it it's carrying forward that theme but now we're seeing the universality of sin and the depth of depravity here in this verse the wickedness of man is great in the earth remember verse one man began to multiply on the face of the land it's the same word earth land it's the same word and the point

I think being made here is that everywhere that man is all over the earth all over the land there's great wickedness it's there's no little hidden righteous tribe on some island in the world it's everywhere it's all over the earth it's great in the earth but then look at the depth of it how it's described every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually think about that it gets down to the core doesn't it when you're talking about the intention of the thoughts of the heart it doesn't get more personal than that you can't dig any deeper into the core of who we are than to use that kind of language the point here is not that man is doing every possible wicked thing that man could be doing we said that total depravity does not mean the doctrine of total depravity does not mean that we are all as evil as we could evil that's what it means so that you know we said that even

Hitler could have been worse than he was he could have been more evil than he was he wasn't as evil as he could be he didn't kick every puppy that he walked past right he would have been worse if he had done that but he didn't and that's true with everyone yet what's also true of everyone grace of God even when we do things that are externally considered good feed the poor help out the homeless do something kind for someone in need even when we do those sorts of things at the core of it is not a desire to honor and glorify God through it it's not a desire to reach out to those made in the image of God and honor God through that always no matter how externally good the deed may seem apart from God's saving and sanctifying grace everything that we do is rooted in sinful desires that's what total depravity means that's exactly what this passage is teaching us about humanity only evil all the time this is why the apostle

[37:31] Paul is able to make such universal statements there is no! one righteous not even one to which we would reply not true my neighbor just the other day for no reason came over and he mowed my yard just to be nice that was a good righteous thing to do that's that's sort of our initial reaction to a statement like that don't paint with such a broad brush Paul but Paul knows Genesis chapter 6 and he's quoting from the Psalms in Romans 3 when he says that there's no one righteous not even one not at the core of who we are ultimately he says there's nobody who does good not at the core of who we are this is who we are the wickedness of man was great in the earth and every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually and you ask yourself how how does God respond to that he created the world and he made it perfect it was very good at the end of creation and now here we are five chapters later and it's all evil everywhere everywhere that you look it's just wicked and evil and terrible things are happening and man's heart is corrupted how will

God respond to the corruption of his creation he responds in judgment the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him to his heart so the Lord said I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land he responds in judgment because this is who he is yes he is a God of love but he is a just judge he is a holy God Deuteronomy chapter 4 tells us that he is a consuming fire that's who he is that's what God is like you cannot separate God out into pieces and say well I'll take the part of God that's loving I'll take that you can't do that God is holy God is just his eyes are too pure to look upon sin that's who he is God responds to sin with anger he responds to sin with judgment turn over to the New

Testament if you would the gospel of Matthew Matthew chapter 25 Jesus himself gives us a glimpse of God's judgment upon sin one day in Matthew chapter 25 verse 31 Jesus says that when the son of man comes in his glory and all the angels with him he will sit on his glorious throne verse 32 before him will be gathered all the nations he's going to separate them it says he'll separate people one from another as a shepherd separates sheep from goats now look down to verse 41 where he addresses those that in the category of goat verse 41 he will say to those on his left depart from me you cursed into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels verse 46 and these will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life

God's holy righteous just response to sin is judgment that's how he responds to it and if he were not to do that we would not think of him as just we are created in the image of God and there is still written upon us sinful though we may be there is a longing for justice in the world that's that's why sometimes people riot when there's a verdict in a case that they don't like and they feel that there's been a great injustice done whether!

or not the injustice has been there is within us this longing for justice to be done in the world and when we feel that it hasn't been we are naturally outraged when we see things on the news and on television at times we'll feel the sickness in the pit of our stomach and a part of that is there because there's nothing we can do but it ought to be set right somebody ought to do something about a warlord in thousands of people there's something in us that says shouldn't something be done we all want justice done in the world unless of course the justice is done to us and those we love for our own law breaking then we want mercy but God is just and he is swift and he is indeed a consuming fire and were it not for verse 8 in this passage this sermon might end on a very negative note

[42 : 39] Genesis chapter 6 verse 8 but Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord grace he found grace he is a just judge and yet he is filled with mercy and grace even toward those who could rightly be said every intention of the thoughts of their heart are evil all the time in Ephesians chapter 2 the apostle Paul reminds us that at one time you all were dead in your transgressions and sins in which you once walked following the course of this world all of us he says all of us he said we lived in the passions of our flesh we carried out the desires of the body and the mind and he says that by nature all of us at one time by nature like the rest of humanity we were children of wrath but then he says but

God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead in trespasses made us alive together with Christ it is by grace you have been saved he raised us up seated us with Christ in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness toward us in Jesus Christ and then he says this for by grace you have been saved through faith and even that not of yourselves this just judge this consuming fire who cannot bear the sight of sin has sent the seed of the woman into the world to bear the penalty for our sins so that the apostle Paul might write you who were dead and deserving of wrath children of wrath you he has now made alive sheerly by his grace by nothing other than grace and mercy he has come to those who deserve wrath and he has made us alive he has rescued us judgment is coming

Jesus says that at the end of time things will be just as they were in the days of Noah in other words judgment is coming upon us as surely as it came upon the generation that lived in the days of Noah and we will survive that judgment only by God's grace only if you are among those who have trusted in the seed only if you are among those who have believed and been covered by his blood so that your sins have been judged and the wrath of God has been poured out on your sins on Jesus on the cross so that you might stand on judgment day on his right hand among the sheep and receive eternal life he's a just judge but he's full of mercy and grace and

Noah found favor in his eyes and we can too if we will but trust in Jesus let's pray father help us never to think about judgment and wrath and hell without our eyes turning to the gospel and let us never hear about the dangers inherent in the spiritual battle waging all around us without also hearing Jesus became sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in him let us not fear the coming judgment but trust fully that Jesus is able to save better than any boat ever built by man we pray all of these things in

Christ's name amen holy