

THE FLOOD AND THE CONQUEST

- A. Introduction: Many sincere Christians are troubled by events recorded in the Old Testament where God seems angry, vindictive, and arbitrary. The God of the Old Testament seems very different from Jesus.
1. We're discussing how this can't be the case since God doesn't change. The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament—the same yesterday, today, and forever. Mal 3:6; Heb 13:8; I Cor 10:4
 - a. To properly understand God's actions in the Old Testament, we must consider them in the context in which they were written and determine how the first readers would have heard and understood what we consider troubling events.
 - b. To that end, we are looking at principles of interpretation that will help us better understand what we read. We've discussed these points thus far.
 1. In the Hebrew language (the language of the Old Testament) causative verbs are often used in a permissive sense. God is said to do what He in fact only allows.
 2. One of God's primary purposes in the Old Testament was to reveal Himself to a world of idol worshippers as the only God. Therefore, He connected calamitous events to Himself which He did not cause so that men would realize that He is the only God and the greatest power.
 3. The Old Testament is primarily the history of the people group through whom Jesus came into this world. Although it is a record of real events, many of these events also foreshadow certain aspects of God's plan of salvation. I Cor 5:7
 - c. God's purposes are always redemptive. When we examine the troubling historical incidents in the Old Testament in the context in which they were written, we find that God worked to save rather than destroy as many people as possible.
 2. In the last lesson we looked at several New Testament references to some well known incidents in the Old Testament to help us understand how the first readers heard them. Jude 5-7; 11; II Pet 2:4-6
 - a. Both Peter and Jude referred to the generation of Israelites that was forced to wander for forty years in the wilderness and the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Jude also referred to a group of rebels who died when the ground opened up and swallowed them.
 1. The two apostles referenced these incidents in the context of false, ungodly teachers that were infiltrating churches and ensnaring believers with their heresies.
 2. Although the Old Testament events that Peter and Jude cited are historical events, they also picture the ultimate fate of the ungodly—those who reject God's offer of salvation through Jesus as the false teachers did.
 - b. Peter and Jude also referred to wicked angels who are currently chained up until in Hell and Peter referenced the flood of Noah. In this lesson we're going to look at both of these incidents and assess them according to the principles of interpretation that we've been discussing.
- B. Like the other examples Jude and Peter used, the reference to the angels and the flood of Noah underscore the future fate of all who reject Almighty God and His Son Jesus. But, the destructive flood of Noah's day brings up questions about how a loving God could do something like that.
1. Gen 6:1-4—To appreciate what happened we must go back to the days before Noah's flood. The sons of God took the daughters of men as wives and this union produced giants. The sons of God are angels.
 - a. When the Old Testament was translated into Greek (3rd and 2nd century BC, known as the Septuagint), sons of God was translated angels. More modern translations also render it angels or sons of Heaven (Moffatt; NAB).
 - b. The sons of God are first mentioned in Job, the earliest book of the Bible (Job 1:6; Job 2:1). God created a host of angelic beings before He created man and the Book of Job reports that the sons of God (or angels) rejoiced when God created the earth (Job 38:7).

1. The Hebrew word translated sons of God is *bene elohim*. If you know anything about Hebrew names for God (Jehovah, Yaweh), then you know that one of them is *Elohim*.
 2. But Old Testament writers also used this word for other beings who are not God, including gods and goddess of other nations (Judges 11:24; I Kings 11:33), demons (Deut 32:17), and deceased Samuel (I Sam 28:13).
 3. The term *elohim* indicates place of residence. *Elohim* means inhabitants of the spiritual or unseen world. The Bible informs us that some of the angels joined Lucifer (Satan) in a rebellion against God (lessons for another day). The sons of God mentioned in Gen 6:2 were fallen (rebel) angels.
- c. Jude 6 refers to angels who left their first estate (from a word that means beginning) and their own habitation (or residence): And angels did not keep—(care for, guard, and hold to) their own first place of power but abandoned their proper dwelling place (Amp); did not stay within the limits of authority God gave them but left the place where they belonged (NLT).
1. Jude directly connected their rebellion to sexual sin on a par with what resulted in Sodom and Gomorrah's destruction. Jude 7
 2. Both Jude and Peter point out that that these angels were cast down to Hell and confined until the Day of Judgment. II Pet 2:4
2. This union between fallen angels and human females produced giants. The Hebrew word translated giants is *nephilim*, from a word that means fallen. Some Bible translations use the Hebrew word in their translation: The *nephilim* were on the earth in those days, and also afterward (Gen 6:4ESV).
 - a. Strong's Concordance says of this word *nephilim*: These beings evidently appeared on earth in the ancient past when divine beings cohabited with women and the *nephilim* (mighty men and women of great fame) were their offspring.
 1. There is dispute among Bible scholars as to whether the angels could or did have intercourse with the women. Whether these angels did or could, it's clear that these giants came into being through supernatural activity involving fallen angels.
 2. We have a number of Old Testament examples where angels appeared in the form of men (Gen 18:1-8; Gen 19:10-11). We now know that flesh can be corrupted through DNA (genome) manipulation. The point is that these fallen angels corrupted human flesh.
 3. These aren't crazy theories. This is supported by the original Hebrew text and affirmed by following generations. The belief in a giant race produced through intercourse between angels and women was prevalent among the Israelites and the Middle East, down to later century Jews (including Josephus, noted Jewish historian in Jesus' day) and the early Christians.
 - b. Gen 6:4—These offspring of angel-human unions became mighty men of renown. Mighty comes from a word meaning powerful, a warrior, a tyrant. Renown means conspicuous position, fame.
 1. Unger's Bible Dictionary defines giants (*nephilim*) as unnatural offspring produced by union between humans and angels. It states that the giants were exceedingly wicked and violent.
 2. This is exactly what the Bible narrative states. Following the appearance of the *nephilim* there was a proliferation of violence and great wickedness in the earth. Gen 6:5
 3. This information is relevant to our present topic because what happens next (a catastrophic flood) raises the question: How could a loving God allow a flood of epic proportion that wiped out everyone?
 - a. Whatever happened between the sons of God and the daughters of men, radical action on the part of God became necessary. In the context of union between the sons of God and the daughters of men, Gen 6:12 says that all flesh was corrupted (spoiled, ruined, perverted).
 1. The Bible informs us that fallen angels are unredeemable (lessons for another time). Their offspring were half human and half fallen angel. These creatures were not fully human. The human bloodline was being corrupted in a potentially unredeemable way.

2. Gen 6:9—Noah was perfect or blameless in his generation. This no doubt refers to his character, but it also refers to the fact that his bloodline had not yet been polluted.
 - A. This is critical to redemption because Jesus will come through Noah’s line (Luke 3:36; Gen 5:3-29). If his bloodline is corrupted, the plan of redemption will be thwarted.
 - B. There are a lot of things in the Old Testament that can’t be fully explained at this point because we don’t have all the details. Remember, this is redemptive history. The writers didn’t record and explain every detail. They recorded events and people that convey redemptive information.
 - b. When we find events in the Old Testament that trouble us, we need to look for redemptive points. God wasn’t working to destroy people. His aim was and is to save as many as He can. II Pet 3:9
 1. The earth was corrupt and filled with violence. Was everyone’s bloodline corrupt? Probably not. It was common in the Old Testament for writers to use sweeping generalizations not intended to be precise, but to make a point. There were people who could be redeemed.
 2. God didn’t act immediately, He waited 120 years. People saw Noah working on the Ark, some possibly working for him. He preached righteousness during this period. Gen 6:3; II Pet 2:5
 - A. Enoch preached during this period and suddenly disappeared, a testimony of deliverance from the destruction that comes from refusing God. Gen 5:21-24; Heb 11:5; Jude 14-15
 - B. Enoch’s son, Methuselah, lived longer than anyone else in the Bible (969 years) and his name means: after him, the flood.
 3. People who actually knew Adam were alive during Noah’s lifetime. They could have heard Adam talk about God, the Garden of Eden, and the world before sin. Methuselah (Noah’s grandfather) was alive during the last 243 years of Adam’s life. Adam’s grandson, Enos, died when Noah was 98. Noah’s father, Lamech, was alive during the last 50 years of Adam’s life.
 - c. How many deathbed confessions were there among people hanging from treetops as the floodwaters rose? We’ll find out when we get to Heaven.
- C. Let’s talk for a moment about the conquest of Canaan. God delivered Israel from Egyptian slavery and brought them back to Canaan. That generation refused to enter and was sent back into the wilderness. When they died off, their grown children were directed back to Canaan to conquer and settle it.
1. Before Israel crossed the Jordan River and entered Canaan, Moses directed them to utterly destroy them.
 - a. Destroy is a word that means the complete consecration of things or people to the Lord, either by destroying them or giving them as an offering. Deut 7:2
 - b. When they reached Jericho, the first city they battled, they killed (destroyed, same Hebrew word) all the men and women (young and old) as well as all the animals. Josh 6:21
 1. How could a loving God commission this? It has to do with the presence of the *nephilim*. No original *nephilim* survived the flood. They are imprisoned in the underworld (II Pet 2:4; Jude 6). But, others reappeared after the flood.
 2. There were *nephilim* on earth both before and after the flood. Gen 6:4—When the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men can be translate “whenever” suggesting that there was a repeat of pre-flood activity.
 2. Num 13:33—You may recall that when Israel reached Canaan forty years earlier, spies were sent into the land. The spies reported seeing giants (*nephilim*), the sons of Anak which come of giants. The Anakims were descended from *nephilim* and were scattered throughout Canaan.
 - a. Num 13:32—The spies reported that all the people that they saw “were huge” (NLT). It is common in the Old Testament for writers to use sweeping generalizations not intended to be precise, but to make a point. We say: It cost a gazillion dollars when we mean something is very expensive.
 - b. The language in the original text indicates the spies reported that they saw unusually large people

everywhere they went, among other tribes, such as the Amalekites, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, and Canaanites (Num 13:29). Those bloodlines had to be wiped out (Deut 7:1-2).

3. We could do a more lengthy study of the presence of giants in Canaan (the Bible has a number of references), but time doesn't permit. Consider just a few examples.
 - a. When Israel approached Canaan to enter the land, they travelled on the east side of the Jordan River. As they moved north, Israel passed through various tribal lands, some of which were under the dominion of *nephilim* bloodlines. Not all of them were unusually tall, although they were connected to giants. Deut 2:8-12; 17:23
 1. Deut 2:26-37—Israel requested permission from Sihon, the Amorite king of Heshbon to pass through his land on their way to Canaan. Amos 2:9 tells us that he was unusually tall. Sihon refused to let Israel pass through their land and a battle ensued. Israel was victorious and destroyed everyone—men, women, and children.
 2. Deut 3:1-11—Israel moved on to Og, the king of Bashan and destroyed him and his people. Og was the last giant in the area. He had a huge bed (13 feet by 6 feet) that was still around when this text was written.
 - b. After defeating Jericho Israel moved on to the portion of the land spied out forty years earlier.
 1. Joshua first went south into the hill country of Judea. He targeted areas where the spies had seen giants, the sons of Anakim, to destroy the bloodline. Josh 8:26; 10:28; 35; 40; etc.
 2. Then Joshua went north. Josh 11:21-23 makes it clear that he was after the Anakims. Some Anakims were left in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod (Philistine cities). The bloodline survived down to King David's day.
 - A. Goliath was from Gath, a remnant of the Anakim (I Sam 17:4). Two Philistine giants are mentioned in II Sam 21:16-20, one with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot.
 - B. Goliath is the only one we have measurements for: 6 cubits and a span. There is some dispute as to the length of a span and a cubit—6 feet 6 inches to 9 feet 9 inches. Six and a half feet was extremely tall for that time—a giant. The average height in the day of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) was about 5 feet.
 4. Were any people killed who were not descended from Anakim? It's likely. In this fallen world people die unfairly in warfare. But the point is that none of this was arbitrary slaughter by a group of people who served a vindictive, angry God. It was preservation of the redemptive line through which Jesus was to come into this world.
 - a. Deut 20:11-18—The general rule given to Israel was to take captives, except from among the seven nations of Canaan—Hittites Amorites, Canaanites Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusties—the tribes with *nephilim* bloodline.
 1. There are instances of non-*nephilim* people being spared, such as Rahab in Jericho (Josh 6:17) and the Gibeonites who pretended to come from far away and tricked Israel (Josh 9).
 2. Both are examples of fallen humans who were spared through surrendering to God.
 - b. Always remember that the natural people of the land were not innocent. All were guilty of sin before a holy God—just like us. Their culture was particularly debased.
 1. Archeological records show their goddesses with serpents wrapped around them in vile sexual postures. Their temples were centers of vice with sodomite priests and prostitute priestesses. They had sex with animals and burned children alive on their altars.
 2. Yet God was patient with them. He gave predictive warnings of what awaited them (removal from the land) through Noah (Gen 9:22-27) and Abraham (Gen 15:13-16).
- D. Conclusion: Hopefully, you see more clearly than ever that God is good and good means good—Old Testament and New. More next week!