

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 5/12/2024
Genesis 6:1-8 “When the Family Ignores God”^{**1}
Series: *The Christian Family*

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Main Idea: In Genesis 6:1-8, we find out what happens when the family ignores God. There are two disastrous consequences. It affects the family (1-4), and the future (5-8).

- I. When we disregard God, it affects the family (1-4).
 - A. Marriage is degraded (1-3).
 1. People marry the wrong people.
 2. People marry for the wrong reasons.
 - B. Values are degraded (4).
 1. In man's eyes the Nephilim were heroes.
 2. In God's eyes, they were *fallen ones*.
- II. When we disregard God, it affects the future (5-8).
 - A. We see God's holiness (5).
 1. He notices sinful actions.
 2. He notices sinful hearts.
 - B. We see God's passion for His glory (6).
 - C. We see God's justice (7).
 1. This is God's world.
 2. God will do as He pleases with His world.
 - D. We see God's grace (8).

Make It Personal: We have two options.

1. Disregard the Lord and life gets bizarre.
2. Live by grace and enjoy His favor.

Mothers Day recognition (at beginning of service, organized by Douglas)

We thank God for the family at WBC, hence this current series. There's so much we can learn about the Christian family by looking carefully at the first family. We've been in Genesis and considered the first marriage, the first sin, the first excuse, the first sacrifice, the first parents and children, the first family divide, and the first genealogy. Today we move beyond the *firsts* in a message entitled, “When the Family Ignores God.”

Scripture Reading: Genesis 6:1-8

So we begin with a question. Why Genesis 6:1-8 on Mother's Day? Maybe Proverbs 31, or Ephesians 6, but Genesis 6? This is certainly not a pleasant text, nor an easy text to interpret. Bible scholars have debated its meaning for centuries. Who are the "sons of God," and why did they inter-marry with the "daughters of man"? And what did God mean when He said His Spirit would not “abide in man” [NIV says "contend with man"] forever? And who are the Nephilim (AV "giants")? And what was it that grieved the Lord so much that He determined to wipe mankind from the face of the earth?

Without question, Genesis 6:1-8 is hard to understand. When you read it, it seems almost *bizarre*. And in my estimation, that's the point. And that's why this is a perfect place to go for Mother's Day in 2024 in the world in which we live.

When we leave God out of life, out of family, and out of society, this is what happens. Life gets messy, crazy, bizarre. In essence, this is the point of Genesis 6:1-8. God wants us to know what happens when the family ignores Him, that there are consequences, and there is grace too.

^{**}Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

¹ For a previous look at this passage, see the message preached at WBC on 5/8/2000.

Genesis 6 describes what happened to people who lived a long time ago, but there's so much here for us. God wants us to know that when we disregard Him, there will be two disastrous consequences. Ignoring God affects the *family* (1-4), and the *future* (5-8).

I. When we disregard God, it affects the family (1-4).

Verse 1 begins, "When man began to multiply on the face of the land." Stop there. Remember the context. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and the first two chapters of Genesis tell us how He did it.

Then in chapter three, Adam and Eve disobeyed God and brought the judgment of God upon themselves, their descendants, and the world. The fruit of their fateful choice begins to show up in chapter four when their firstborn son, Cain, killed his brother, Abel. In time, God gave Adam and Eve another son, named Seth.

These two sons represented two types of people that emerged on the planet. Cain was a self-centered, godless man whose lineage is presented in chapter four.

On the other hand, Seth, who likewise entered the world as sinner, experienced sovereign grace that produced a change. We read about this change in Genesis 4:26, "To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD."

So there's man-centered Cain, whose descendants we meet in chapter four. Then there's God-centered Seth, a God-fearing man whose descendants we see in chapter five.

Then time passed, and civilization developed. Mankind increased in number on the earth. How many people were there? Assuming that each family had six children, and allowing 100 years for each generation, the population of the world at the time of Noah would have been 235,000,000 people.

But it wasn't just the world's population that increased. Wickedness increased, too. And it showed up in a very tangible way, in the breakdown of the family.

When we ignore God, it affects the family, and it does so in two destructive ways. It was true in that pre-flood world as it is in ours.

A. Marriage is degraded (1-3). "When men began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, ² the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. ³ Then the LORD said, 'My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.'" ²

As time passed and as the world's population increased, some peculiar marriages began to take place. The "sons of God" began to notice the beauty of "the daughters of man." And they married them.

What's going on? It's time to address the question, "Just who are the 'sons of God' and 'daughters of man'?" There are three common interpretations by Bible scholars.

FIRST, there's a view that says these are ancient kings who said they descended from the gods.

SECOND, SOME SUGGEST THE "SONS OF GOD" REFERS TO *ANGELS*. The Hebrew phrase is used this way in the Old Testament. For instance Job 1:6 reads, "One day the angels [the Hebrew literally reads, "the sons of God"] came to present themselves before the

² NIV "When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. Then the LORD said, 'My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years.'"

LORD, and Satan came also with them." Again we read in Job 2:1, "On another day the angels [again in the Hebrew, "sons of God"] came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him."

Satan is a fallen angel. Here he is mentioned in context with other angelic beings called "sons of God." The term "son" doesn't always refer to physical offspring, but can depict a member of a group. For instance, the *sons of the prophets* referred, not to biological descendants, but to members of a prophetic guild (as in 2 Kings 2:3; 4:1). In Job "sons of God" could refer to angelic members of some divine council.

Another pertinent text is Psalm 29:1, "Ascribe to the LORD, O mighty ones, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength." "Mighty ones" is literally "sons of God," and here the psalmist seems to be calling the angels to praise and worship God.

The New Testament sheds light on what happened to the fallen angels. 1 Peter 3:19-20 says that Christ "went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built." Some believe these "spirits" are synonymous with the "sons of God" in Genesis 6.

Furthermore, 2 Peter 2:4 gives this information, "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment." This could be referring to the "sons of God" in Genesis 6.

But there's a problem. There's no mention about judging angels in Genesis 6, so we are going beyond the text to insist that 2 Peter 2:4 and Genesis 6 refer to the same event.³

Then there is Jude 6 which says, "And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home--these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day." Jude says that at some point in history, angels rebelled against God and forfeited their home in heaven. But is that event synonymous with what happened in Genesis 6?

Those who hold the "angel view" propose that "the sons of God" were fallen angels or demons who somehow took women for wives. One proponent explains, "Most likely this stratagem was carried out by means of a technique akin to the demon-possession common in the times of Christ. The men whose bodies were possessed were evidently thereby made so attractive to women that they could take any they chose as wives. These 'sons of God' thus controlled not only the men whose bodies they had acquired for their own usage, but also the wives they took to themselves, and then all the children they bore."⁴

We do know that in the gospels, we see the craving of demons for a body. But a statement by Jesus in Luke 20:34-36 renders a challenge for "angel view". "The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection of the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage...for they are like the angels." Jesus seems to indicate that angels do not marry.

A THIRD VIEW IS THAT "SONS OF GOD" REFERS TO *HUMAN BEINGS*, SPECIFICALLY *GODLY MEN*.⁵ For instance, in Deuteronomy 14:1 Moses says to the people of Israel, "You are the children [literally, "sons"] of the LORD your God." Isaiah 43:6 quotes God as saying, "Bring my sons from afar." In Hosea 1:10 the people of Israel are called "the

³ Youngblood, p. 94

⁴Henry Morris, *The Beginning of the World*, p. 93.

⁵G. Aalders, pp. 153-4; Youngblood, p. 96. This is the view of Augustine, Luther, and Calvin.

sons of the living God." Interestingly, Luke traces Jesus' human ancestry back to, "Adam, the son of God (in Luke 3:37)."

In light of the flow of Genesis, I lean towards the latter view. If the first four verses of Genesis 6 pertained to angels, then we have an unexplained interruption in the narrative. There's been no mention of angels to this point in Genesis. But if "sons of God" refers to human beings, namely *godly* men, men like Seth and his lineage, the account flows right out of the background of Genesis 4-5.

Here's the short of what's happening. In verses 1-3 we're seeing God's image-bearers degrade marriage. How? The same way it's happening in our day.

1. *People marry the wrong people.* In Genesis 6, who marries whom? The "sons of God" marry the "daughters of man." Who are the sons of God? Perhaps, angels. But perhaps, they're the descendants of Seth whose line was just given in chapter 5, the God-fearing people on the planet.

And who did these God-fearing men marry? Not the daughters of *God*, but the "daughters of *man*." What's going on here? The Sethites of Genesis 5 are now marrying the Cainites of Genesis 4. Is that a problem? It's always a problem when God's holy people begin to mix with the world.

How many types of people are there in the world? Only two. There are people like Seth and people like Cain, people who know and fear the Lord, and people who don't.

We're beginning to see a problem that God confronts throughout the Bible. People like Seth are not to marry people like Cain. Why not? Because God who is holy commands His people to be holy and distinct.

Why would that be? Is it because people like Seth are better than people like Cain? Not at all. It's because He has a gracious plan, which He made known in Genesis 3:15, and it involves Seth's line. He's going to send the Deliverer into the world through the descendants of people like Seth.

Satan hates this plan, and his strategy is to attack this plan. How? Here's one of his best tactics. He convinces people who believe in the Deliverer to marry people who do not believe in the Deliverer. When that happens, the result is a divided home, a home where one spouse's allegiance is to God, and the other spouse's allegiance isn't.

In my judgment, this is what happened in Genesis 6. People married the wrong people. But there's more to it. It's not just wrong people, but for wrong reasons.

2. *People marry for the wrong reasons.* Answer this. On what basis did the sons of God chose to marry the daughters of man? The text tells us. It was when they (in the NIV) "saw that the daughters of man were *beautiful*."

Do you see the red flag? Is physical attraction the proper basis for choosing a life-mate? What's going on here? People are marrying on the basis of the physical with no regard for the spiritual.

Jesus actually described this breakdown in Luke 17:26-27. "Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all."

Don't miss that. They were eating, drinking, and marrying. Are those sinful actions? Not necessarily. But here they are. Why? 1 Timothy 4:4 tells us, "For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving."

And that's what is missing here. Eating, drinking, and marrying are totally horizontal activities. There is no thanksgiving, no looking up. God is absent from their thinking.

It's a tragedy when ungodly people do this. But it's far worse when God's people do it, when they marry the wrong people and for the wrong reasons.

It's not a new problem. Four hundred years ago commentator Matthew Henry gave this warning, "If we profess to be the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, we must not marry without his consent. He will never give his blessing, if we prefer beauty, wit, wealth, or worldly honours, to faith and holiness."⁶

Young people, listen carefully. Please do not make beauty, wit, wealth, or worldly honors the basis for choosing a life-mate. Resolve today that you will make faith and holiness the non-negotiables for choosing your future husband or wife. In fact, I'd like to offer you a challenge. Make this your dating standard. Refuse to date a person who does not give evidence of faith in Christ and holiness of life.

"But," you say, "this guy makes my heart flip! Surely, he's Mr. Right for me!" Listen. Your heart will stop flipping. Just ask any married person in this room. If you make physical attraction the primary basis for who you date and marry, you are heading down a dangerous path.

Yet on the other hand, if instead of ignoring God, you seek His will, you'll never regret it. Proverbs 31:30 says it so well. "Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised."

So what was God's assessment of the intermarrying in Genesis 6? He tells us in verse 3 (as the KJV puts it), "My Spirit will not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."

It's hard to translate and interpret this verse. The verb "abide" in the ESV can be understood in a variety of ways (NIV says "contend"). The idea seems to be that man has now passed the point of no return with God. It's as if God is saying He must now take His Spirit away from this degraded generation.

He pronounces a judgment, or is it an act of grace, or both? He says at the end of verse 3, "His days shall be 120 years." Is God saying from this point on man's lifespan will be shortened, from 900 plus years to 120 years? Possibly. Moses who is writing this lived 120 years. Shorter lives to curb the spreading evil.

There's another possible interpretation. God may be saying that the judgment He's just mentioned will not happen immediately, but delayed 120 years, when the flood hits.

In either case, there's both judgment and grace here. Judgment must come whenever people ignore God. But God is giving people time to repent, for as 2 Peter 3:9 explains, "The Lord is... patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

Yet there's more. When we ignore God, it's not just marriage that is degraded.

B. Values are degraded (4). Verse 4 explains how it happened in the Genesis 6 world, "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 [NIV says "the heroes of old"] who were of old, the men of renown."

⁶ Henry, M., & Scott, T. (1997). [*Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*](#) (Ge 6:1). Logos Research Systems.

Who were the Nephilim? The KJV calls them "giants" based on the LXX rendering of the verse. *Nephilim* is the Hebrew word. It appears again in Numbers 13, in the report the spies gave after their trip to explore the Promised Land.

Listen to Numbers 13:31-33, "'We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are.' So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, 'The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. ³³ And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.'"

Apparently, the Nephilim were people of great size and strength. Notice carefully that the Genesis text doesn't say the Nephilim were the offspring of the sons of God and daughters of men. Rather, it says that the Nephilim were on the earth at the same time that the sons of God and daughters of man were having their own children.

And what was true of the Nephilim according to the end of verse 4? There's a contrast here, don't miss it, a contrast of values.

1. *In man's eyes the Nephilim were heroes.* They were "mighty men," "men of renown". Do you see what's happening in the pre-flood world? Their heroes were the people who were the biggest, the strongest, the savviest, the shrewdest. Might makes right, whoever carries the biggest stick wins.

Who are the heroes of our generation? I see the Nephilim on my television as I scan through the channels. They're making \$75,000 every time they swing a bat. They're pulling in millions for Nike endorsements. They're on Wall Street. In man's eyes the Nephilim were heroes. But here's the contrast.

2. *In God's eyes, they were fallen ones.* That's right. The Hebrew word *nephilim* means "fallen ones." Isn't that interesting? In man's eyes they're heroes. In God's eyes they're sinners heading for judgment.

In fact, it's possible that the term "mighty men" [Hebrew *gebura*, NIV "heroes"] actually means "warrior", even "violent men," indicating the Nephilim were not only powerful, but that they used their power to injure other image bearers of God. One Bible scholar suggests we might think of the Nephilim as the "pre-Flood Mafia."⁷

Do you see what's happening here? The Genesis 6 world is becoming increasingly wicked and violent, and the heroes of the day are the most wicked and violent. Matthew Henry rightly observed, "The wickedness of a people is great indeed, when noted sinners are men renowned among them."⁸

Friends, this is what happens when a society loses reverence for God. Marriage is degraded, and so are values.

Moms and dads, what do you value most, and what are you teaching your children to value most? We cannot be passive. Again and again we read commands like these in the New Testament. "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him," says 1 John 2:15. And this in Romans 12:2, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind."

We are a *saved* people. Think about that word. *Saved* indicates that God has rescued us from something that was leading to our eternal destruction. Through the work of His Son, God has saved us from sin, from Satan's dominion, and from a condemned world

⁷James Grier, tape on Genesis 3-6.

⁸[*Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*](#) (Ge 6:1). Logos Research Systems.

system. But He didn't just save us from something, but to something. He has given us a brand new set of values. His values. We now have the capacity to seek first His kingdom and righteousness.

So there's a difference between what we value as saved people and what our neighbors value who need to be saved. It shows up in parenting, for instance. Susannah Wesley is a good example (she was the mother of John and Charles Wesley). Listen to her "Rules For Raising Children." This was her parenting approach in the 1700s:

1. Subdue self-will in a child and thus work together with God to save his soul.
2. Teach him to pray as soon as he can speak.
3. Give him nothing he cries for and only what is good for him if he asks for it politely.
4. To prevent lying, punish no fault which is freely confessed, but never allow a rebellious, sinful act to go unnoticed.
5. Commend and reward good behavior.
6. Strictly observe all promises you have made to your child.

Her approach to parenting is quite different from the permissive "let the child find his own way in life" mentality that prevails these days. And like Susannah, we have to decide every day, are we going to live by God's values, or the world's? Who are our heroes going to be?

This brings us to the second disastrous consequence. When we disregard God, it affects the family (1-4), and the future (5-8).

II. When we disregard God, it affects the future (5-8).

Genesis 6 puts the spotlight on God in verses 5-8, revealing four of His attributes.

A. We see God's holiness (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."

Back in verse 2 we were told that the sons of God saw. Now we're told that the LORD saw. Don't miss that. God sees what is happening in His world. And what stands out to Him? Two things according to verse 5.

1. *He notices sinful actions.* In this case, He saw the "wickedness of man." What wickedness? The ungodly marriages. The ungodly values. The violence. The choice of the wrong heroes. God notices sinful actions. But not just actions.

2. *He notices sinful hearts.* God can see what we cannot see. God sees the heart. We sometimes use this reality to justify ourselves, saying things like, "Well, maybe I shouldn't have done what I did, but God knows my heart."

Indeed, He does. And what is His assessment of the human heart? Verse 5 tells us. God saw that "every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time."

I was once sharing Christ with someone who had messed up his life big time by his sinful choices. And as he was asking for help he quickly began to justify himself, and said, "Oh, I've got problems, but I'm a basically a good person."

He's not alone. Sinners always tend to cling to their own façade of goodness. I can relate, can't you? When confronted with our sin, we'd rather rationalize than repent.

Is there hope for depraved sinners? Praise God, there is! But not until we agree with God's assessment. *Every inclination. Only evil. All the time.* That's what's true of us from birth. All of us. We enter this world as depraved sinners.

This is what makes the cross so astounding. On the cross, Jesus, the perfect God-man, endured the penalty of sin in the place of every person that would ever repent and believe on Him.

But we see a second attribute in Genesis 6. In addition to God's holiness...

B. We see God's passion for His glory (6). “And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.”⁹

Isn't God sovereign? Yes. And doesn't God have a sovereign plan? Yes. And hasn't God decreed everything that will happen, so that He's not surprised by anything? Yes. Then why is God grieving here?

It's because the Sovereign One is not an impersonal force, as in Deism, but a living and personal being. And far from being stoical, He is passionate about His glory. Since He formed this world to function with Him at the center, sin offends and grieves Him.

What God saw in Genesis 6 filled God's heart with pain. He had created mankind to glorify Him and enjoy Him, but now mankind is doing neither. So now we see God doing what mankind should have been doing, grieving over sin!

“God saw man's wickedness as one injured and wronged by it,” says Matthew Henry. “He saw it as a tender father sees the folly and stubbornness of a rebellious and disobedient child, which grieves him, and makes him wish he had been childless.”¹⁰

This is God, beloved. He is holy and passionate about His glory. And this brings us to His third attribute, seen in verse 7.

C. We see God's justice (7). “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.’”

The KJV actually renders the Hebrew, “For it *repenteth* me that I have made them.” Is God saying He made a mistake? Did He have regrets? Certainly not. God is perfect in all that He is and does, and He cannot change. But neither is He fatalistic, unfeeling, and steel-hearted. He is caring and personal...and *just*.

“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?” asks Abraham in Genesis 18:25. And the answer? Yes, indeed. God always does what is just and right.

But what about the terrible flooding in south Brazil last week and all that loss of property and life? Is God just when He allows such events? Yes. Friends, as we consider God's justice, we must do so with two other two realities in mind.

1. *This is God's world.* Look at those words in verse 7, “Whom I have created,” says God. “All things are from Him, through Him, and to Him. To Him be the glory forever,” says Romans 11:36.

2. *God will do as He pleases with His world.* Does not the Potter have the right to do whatever He wants with His clay? Indeed, He does, says Romans 9. And here the Potter says, “I formed You for my glory but You have filled My heart with pain. Therefore I will remove you from the face of the earth.”

The skeptic says, “I thought God was loving.” He is. But He's also just, and though God loves the sinner He judges his sin.

Is there hope for the condemned sinner? Yes, because of a fourth attribute.

⁹ NIV “The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain.”

¹⁰ [Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary](#) (Ge 6:1). Logos Research Systems.

D. We see God's grace (8). “But Noah found favor [or "grace"] in the eyes of the LORD.” Amazing. In a world where “every intention” of every human being was “only evil continually,” here the pattern breaks. Here is a man who found favor with God.

As V. P. Hamilton put it, “Divine favor is not something Noah wins; it is something he finds.”¹¹ What a beautiful word *grace* is! And here we see it for the first time in the Bible.

Grace is God giving the sinner what he desperately needs and does not deserve. And don't miss the biblical order. First, Noah "found grace" (in verse 8). And then, Noah was a "righteous man" (in verse 9). “God's good-will towards Noah produced this good work in him,” says Matthew Henry.¹²

Apart from God's saving grace no sinner becomes righteous. But when a sinner experiences God's grace, the sinner becomes a new creation, to the praise of the Giver of grace!

Someone has said, "When a person works an eight-hour day and receives a fair day's pay for his time, that is a wage. When a person competes with an opponent and receives a trophy for his performance, that is a prize. When a person receives appropriate recognition for his long service or high achievements, that is an award. But when a person is not capable of earning a wage, can win no prize, and deserves no award--yet receives such a gift anyway--that is a good picture of God's unmerited favor. This is what we mean when we talk about the grace of God."¹³

These remarks by Ray Stedman are worth pondering carefully:

Remember the Christian who saw a drunkard staggering down the street wallowing in his own vomit, and turned to his friend to say, 'There but for the grace of God go I.'

We can all say that. What has kept us? What has brought us to the truth? Was it any goodness on our part? No, it is God's grace. It is that he loved us and called us, he wooed us and won us, seeking us out and, through many influences upon us, bringing us at last to see that the age in which we live is an age under the bondage of a lie. He has opened our eyes, partially at least, to the truth, till we have turned to the Lord Jesus and rested under the grace of God.¹⁴

Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. But wait. Keep reading the story, and we see that Noah is a sinner too, and he gets drunk and exposes himself in his tent.

How can God pardon a sinner, like Noah, like you and me, and still be just? How does He extend grace to sinners and still maintain His justice?

We see the answer in the following pages. You know the story. God sent a flood to wash the world clean of all the evil. He starts over with Noah, sort of a new Adam, who like Adam had three sons mentioned by name. But He did something else. He gave something to the world right after the flood that answers our question.

The rainbow. It's not coincidental that society has tried to hijack the rainbow. The rainbow is God's own answer to the question as to how He can be just *and* gracious. Listen to commentator Dru Johnson:

¹¹ Hamilton, V. P. (1995). [Genesis](#). *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* (Vol. 3, p. 16). Baker.

¹² [Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary](#) (Ge 6:8). Logos Research Systems.

¹³G.W. Knight, *Clip-Art Features for Church Newsletters*, p. 53

¹⁴ <https://www.raystedman.org/old-testament/genesis/signs-of-collapse>

“How does he assure humanity? God uses a weapon of war—a bow—as a sign, which seems odd unless we consider the context. Remember that in a wedding, we ask, “What sign do you bring of your love and commitment?” The answer in my wedding was, “This ring.” However, in the covenant with Noah and creation, the sign God brings is a bow. Biblical Hebrew doesn’t have a word for “rainbow”; hence the sign is just “a bow in the heavens” (think *bow* and arrow). The rainbow then has multiple points of contact with God’s covenant with Noah. Unlike my wedding ring, which acts as my culture’s marriage symbol, the signs of biblical covenants have a direct connection to the content of the covenant. The bow in the sky could represent the weapon of water now being pointed away from earth and toward God or just a resting of the weapon, as if it were a gun hung on a rack. God uses this bow—a weapon hung in the sky that occurs only with the rains—as a sign of His promises to the dirtlings and other living creatures. His violence has ended. His weapon is stowed, its violent end pointed away from the earth.”¹⁵

And I would add, the bow is pointed right towards Himself. God makes it clear that He Himself will take the punishment that must be paid to satisfy His justice. And this He does centuries later when He Himself pays sin’s penalty on the cross.

Make It Personal: We have two options.

1. *Disregard the Lord and life gets bizarre.* It certainly did in Genesis 6. Listen again to Matthew Henry, “When wickedness is become general, ruin is not far off; while there is a remnant of praying people in a nation, to empty the measure as it fills, judgments may be long kept off; but when all hands are at work to pull down the fences, by sin, and none stand in the gap to make up the breach, what can be expected but a flood of wrath?”¹⁶

2. *Live by grace and enjoy His favor.* Noah cherished the grace of God. Do you?

Closing Song: #536 “*Happy the Home When God Is There*” (all four verses)

Communion

Closing charge: Let the redeemed of the Lord...SAY SO.

¹⁵ Johnson, D. (2018). [The Universal Story: Genesis 1–11](#) (C. G. Bartholomew, D. Beldman, D. Mangum, J. Wilcox, & D. Thevenaz, Eds.; p. 72). Lexham Press; St. George’s Centre.

¹⁶ [Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary](#) (Ge 6:8). Logos Research Systems.