God's Judgement and Grace

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[0:00] Our scripture lesson this morning is taken from Genesis chapter 6 verses 1 through 8.! You can please follow with me as I read. 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 attracted, 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. His days shall be one hundred and twenty years. The nymphilem 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. 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.
And 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 the birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.
But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. Amen. Amen. Well, good morning.
[1:41] Good morning. You know, I see a lot of young people here, or perhaps I should say younger people here.

And I don't know how many of you know that before there was Michael, that is Michael Jordan, there was Mikey.
There was Mikey. Now, Mikey, this was really an interesting account, because we used it quite a bit in our family. I'm from a huge family. There were ten of us.
And there was this commercial about Mikey. There were these three brothers, and they were around sitting at the table, two of them, the eldest of the three.
They were together, perhaps ten and nine, say, and the youngest was maybe five. And these two brothers, they had a bowl of cereal that their mother apparently had given to them, but they had never tried the cereal before.
[2:58] And they refused to try the cereal, and they were like, you know, I'm not going to try this. I'm not going to do this. And they say, you know, ah, why don't we let Mikey try it? So he eats everything, right?

So they gave the cereal to Mikey. And Mikey consumed this thing. I mean, he was delighted to eat it. And this morning, I feel a lot like Mikey.
You know, I feel that my big brothers have given me a bowl of cereal. You know, because when I consider, when I consider this passage that we come to, and I consider all of the men in this church who could have preached this message, Lord of mercy.
I think about Dr. Gadet, Pastor Morse, Brother Tim, Brother Ed, and the list goes on.
And, you know, lots of men. But thanks God, thank God anyway, here we are this morning. Why don't we take a moment to pray.
[4:17] to pray. Father, how grateful we are that we're here this morning. How grateful we are, oh Lord, that we can pause and hear from you.

And Lord, that's the desire of our hearts, to hear from you. To hear from you. Lord, cause your word to come alive in our hearts, to transform our lives.
Cause those, oh Lord, who are in darkness to see the light. And cause those of us who walk in the light, Lord, to do so even with greater purpose and intentionality.
Only you can do that, oh Lord. And so we ask that you would favor us. In the name of Jesus, we pray. And all God's people say, Amen.
The verses that were just read in your hearing are some of the most profound and they offer some of the most difficult questions in all of the Bible and hence in human history.

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[5:42] I think that their best approach with humility, within context and with a sense of perspective. It is amazing to me when we consider these verses in Genesis chapter 6 that from these verses we can actually preach the gospel.

That we can talk about Christian living that is appropriate to us today. And today we can be inspired by these words that we find in Genesis chapter 6.
We can even be corrected by these words from Genesis chapter 6. We continue in our study in the book of Genesis and up to this point Moses the author the lawgiver has been building a case to show the increasing sinfulness of man and God's response.
He starts with Eve's unbelievable disobedience. Then he proceeds to Adam's attempted cover-up Cain's cold-blooded murder and Lamisha's blatant pride.
having observed that the earth was growing in population rather than setting out the sin of any specific person at this point he has gotten his lenses to the entire world.
[7:45] As Moses sets out man's inclination sin or perhaps it's better to say man's sin nature it is important for him to do two things to show that God is not unaware of what is happening in man's life and to show that God's very nature compels him to act.

Scripture teaches us that God hates sin. Indeed Psalm 5 verse 4 says you are not a God who delights in wickedness evil may not dwell with you.
But why does God hate sin? Why does he hate sin? God hates sin because he is holy. He hates sin because sin separates us from him.
He hates sin because sin causes us to look to ourselves and others and not to him. He hates sin because sin is of the devil.
He hates sin because sin destroys us. He hates sin because sin evidences the fact that we have placed priority on the temporal rather than the eternal.
[9:28] He hates sin because it is deceitful, it is blinding, and it is enslaving. the passage that provides the context for today's message is short, but it is rich.

Rightly understood, I believe it causes us to see several of God's attributes.
values. We see in these few verses God is righteous, that he's just, that he's compassionate, that he's omnipresent, that he's omniscient, that he is immutable, and that he is sovereign.
It also raises some really profound questions like where does evil come from? who are the sons of God?
Does God change his mind? Does he ever regret things? Does he know the future? Does he play favorites? Is God fully just or just partly just?
[10:48] And there is no way that we're going to answer all of those questions. But the essence of the passage is this. In response man's depravity, our sovereign God executes retributive justice and he extends marvelous grace.

I'm going to say that again. The essence of the verses that were just read is this. In response to man's depravity, our sovereign God executes retributive justice and he extends marvelous grace.
Therefore, we will consider these verses under two headings. God's retributive justice and God's marvelous grace.
And as we do, we're going to ramble through these verses. justice. I'm going to take them one at a time, but we'll be doing some rambling. Let's consider the very first one, God's retributive justice.
What do we mean by that when we say retributive justice? It's real simple. All we mean is that God's going to pay violators of the law precisely what they deserve.
[12:18] no mercy, no grace. I think it would be helpful for us to consider as we contemplate this section, perhaps it would be helpful to consider it under two subheadings.

What did God see? What did God the judge see? And what did he do? That is, what was the evidence?
What did he see? What was the sentencing? What did he pronounce? What did he see?
What did he see? Well, Moses does not expressly use the word, the Lord saw, at the very outset. the fact he uses those words firstly in verse 5 of chapter 6. It need hardly be said that God is making a judgment based on what he saw.
[13:31] That must be obvious. But take a look at what Moses says in these verses. Moses says in verse 5.

In verse 5, Moses said, the Lord saw that the wickedness, the Lord saw. Those three words, it's easy for us to whistle past those words, the Lord saw.

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God sees and he knows everything. we ought to take a pause and consider those words together. The Lord saw, God saw. The one who is all-powerful, he saw.
The one who judges the world, he saw. But what do these words mean to you personally?
When you see these words, the Lord saw. saw. What do I mean to you personally? The Lord saw. They tell me that he is omnipresent.
[14:46] He's everywhere and he is omniscient. He knows everything. Those words remind us that God is not distant from or unmindful of his creation.

That's what these words tell me. He's not distant from you. He's not distant from me. He's not unmindful of us. The Lord saw. The Lord sees.
The Lord is indeed seeing. Each of us would do well to interact with those words.
The Lord saw regularly as they give us an awareness of the fact that nothing we do escapes the all-seeing eyes of our God.
First, he did see. He saw. He saw. He saw. He saw their actions.
[15:53] But what were some of the specific things that the Lord saw. In verses 1 and 2, he saw that the sanctity, the importance, the holiness of marriage was being taken for granted.

What's really going on here? Let's take a look at what he saw. He saw that when man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, this is what he saw.
The sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attracted and they took as their wives any they chose.
Now, I got to tell you, this is loaded, this is really deep stuff here. Going into the deep end.
And I don't know that we really need to put both feet in this morning. How many of you know? We can just tip our toe in.
[17:13] Because as Pastor mentioned, this is some cold weather this morning. But the question, theologians have pondered this question for such a long time.

Who are these sons of God being referenced here? And the debate continues. And I got to tell you, I am just an observer to this debate.
I am an observer. Now, let me share with you what some of the thoughts are real quickly. Some people say that these sons of God were descendants of Seth.
And these sons of God they say that these were people who were generally obedient to the Lord. And the daughters of man they were not.
They were descendants of Cain. Others say that these descendants of God were angels. And some take it even further and say that they were demonic angels.
[18:24] Others say that these descendants of God were descendants of Lamech. And they say that Lamech his line basically were leaders in the community.

And as leaders they were expected to represent our God. They were expected to oversee the community. But I truly I must tell you I've studied this and I have not drawn a conclusion myself. So I don't want to mislead you in any way. But I think we can draw some things out of this that are quite appropriate and beyond dispute.
What do we see here? We see here that God observed that these men were basing decisions about marriage on what they saw.
Not based on the relationship that these women might have had with God himself. They were not basing things on character or spirituality but only on what they saw.
[19:45] That's the first thing. And the second thing that is beyond dispute is we see that they were taking as many as they wanted. As many as they wanted.

God was displeased with the actions of these men which was based on lust.
It was polygamous and had no regard for differences in belief. But what else did God see?
The Bible tells us in these verses the Lord saw that wickedness was everywhere.
It was everywhere. And it characterized everything that man did. Ken Hudges in describing man's state wrote their depravity was not a temporary state.
[21:06] There were no relentings, no repentances, no hesitations. Lust was their medium, violence their method.

This was total inveterate depravity. God was evil. was evil and conniving.
Everyone was evil. Everyone was conniving. Everyone was self-interested. Everyone was untrustworthy. Everyone was backbiting.
Everyone. And the list goes on and on and on. Total depravity. There was just evil.

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Evil. What did God see? He saw everything. The Bible tells us in these short verses that he saw man's heart.
[22:19] See, God did not see just the actions of man, but he saw man's heart. He saw man's motives. He saw his intentions.

He saw his desires, his thoughts, his inclinations. God saw and he sees and he is seeing man's heart.
Yes, God not only judges us based on our actions, on what we do, but also what is in our hearts. First Chronicles 38 and 9 says, the Lord searches all hearts and understands every plan and every thought.
you. But perhaps you are sitting here and you think, well, you know, I am not a bad person.
[23:31] I'm almost perfect because generally, you know, I don't do anything that's real sinful. what about your heart? What's in your heart?

Is there jealousy in your heart? Is there pride in your heart? Is there envy? Is there lust? unforgiveness in your heart?
Now listen, if we were going to end right here, we would all be finished. That would be it for us. But I'm not through yet. So just hang in there.
Hang in there. This is not a guilt trip. Just hang in there. Adam lived perfectly with God, but after sinning, he condemned all of us to a sinful nature.
We are inclined to sin. Our desires are naturally against God. One hymn writer wrote, dark is the stain we cannot hide.
[24:44] What can avail to wash it away? dark is the stain. We cannot hide the stain of sin in our hearts. You can't do it, and I can't do it.

If you're like me, you're asking the question, well, things worse than than they are now, I think, you know, that's a reasonable question.
Things worse then than they are now. Could that possibly be true? I believe, this is just my view, I don't think it is possible that things were worse then than they are now.
Because man, let me tell you, man is imaginative, man is inventive, creative. We have found a thousand more ways to sin.
sin. And every day we find more ways to sin. We find more ways to be evil. I want to encourage us a little bit here, though, even before we get to verse 8.
[26:01] And to do so, I want to borrow some words from R.C. Sproul. This is what R.C. says. He says, evil is not good.

But thank God there is evil. Thank God there is evil. He went on to say that evil cannot exist outside of the providential will of God.
See, because were it not for evil, we wouldn't have grace. And here is what we know about God and his providence.
If you read Romans chapter 8 and verse 28, you find these words that all things work together for good. And if that's true, it must be true for evil too.
That even evil works together for your good and for my good. God uses these things. Now you say, why did he do it? And where did evil come from? But listen, you're asking the wrong fellow.
[27:09] Ask Pastor Morris when he preaches next week. That's his job. Above my pay grade.
After observing all these things, after seeing the evidence, after weighing the evidence, what did God do?

Oh, well, I told you we were going to get into some deep water here. What did God do? Let's take a look at it. God sees all of these things, and in verse 6 it says, and the Lord regretted, the Lord regretted, that he had made man on the earth, and look at this one, and it grieved him to his heart.
verse 7. So the Lord said, I'll blot out man, whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things, birds of the heavens.
Then he says, for I am sorry that I made man. Did you see those words? Did you see the words regretted? Did you see the word grieved?
And did you see the word sorry? These words, these human conditions or emotions being used to describe God, that he regretted, that he was grieved and he was sorry.
[28:53] Those words seem to suggest that God really wasn't sure that there was some uncertainty with him.

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They suggest that he was somehow surprised by man's sin. And this immutable God changed his mind. When we read those verses, it almost seems as if God had to do it over again, he would not have done it that way.
How do we square that view with a sovereign all-knowing God? How do we do that?
Some hard stuff. As I thought about that, I thought about my father. father, my father was a police officer, and he was the toughest hombre in time, at least we thought so.
He was a tough dude, but he was also a very sentimental guy, which we couldn't understand, at least I couldn't understand it.
[30:14] one Saturday, remember I told you we were from a large family, 10 of us, and one Saturday, he must have asked us to do something.

I don't recall what it was he asked us to do, must have been cleaning the yard or something, and we didn't do it. And my father decided that he would beat all of us, except the eldest girl, he would not touch her, Lord of mercy.
And he took us one by one, and he beat us, and then he started to cry. And I was like, what is going on here?
You know, what's going on? He beat me and he cried. And I'm thinking here, perhaps, I'm wondering if this is perhaps the sense of what is happening here.
God having created man, having decided to administer this necessary punishment, really grieves over it.
[31:36] Not in the sense that he wouldn't do it again. I'm sure my father had to do it again, because he felt it was good for us. He needed us to understand that having been told to do something, we needed to follow his instructions.

But I want to refer you to Scripture, because perhaps you are not persuaded by that illustration. When we talk about these verses, yes, these are some really, when you think about them, they're some deep verses.
God regretted. God was sorrowful. There's some deep verses. 1 Samuel chapter 15.
1 Samuel chapter 15. We find an interesting account in 1 Samuel. chapter 15.
We see this word regret used three times. It's interesting how it's used. And the first time we encountered the word regret, the author says that the Lord says that he regretted it.
[33:06] Appointing Saul to regret it. And then he goes on a few verses later and says in the same chapter he says the Lord says he is a God who does not regret.

He is not man. He's not like man and he does not regret. And then a few verses after that it says again that he regrets. But my point is here's what I want us to understand.
I want us to understand that when we think about scripture and when we think about this in particular we gotta pull these things together. And we know from teaching we know that God is sovereign.
We know that he's gotta be sovereign. We know that he is he knows everything. Nothing escapes it. Someone has said that if there is one grain of sand that exists that he doesn't know about he can't be God.
He knows the past and he knows the future. So we gotta put these things into perspective. And you know listen don't believe for one moment that the English language is a perfect language.
[34:26] Sometimes words don't have the kind of the meaning that we would wish to convey or to portray. But no not for one moment did God does God mean here that he would have changed his mind that he wished he did not make man as he did.

This was all a part of God's sovereign plan. But what did God do?
What did he do? God administered retributive justice. We gotta go back to Genesis the early remember when God says to man he says you can eat everything.
You can eat from all of these trees but not this one. because the day you do so you shall surely die. He didn't say the year or the century.
He says the day you do so you will surely die. God had every right to administer justice over his creation.
[35:48] That's precisely what he did. And he begins this justice in verse 3 of this chapter look at what he says in verse 3.

In verse 3 the Lord says my spirit shall not abide in man forever. My spirit shall not abide in man forever.

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Now these verses to help us understand these verses I think it's best for us to look at and to consider Romans chapter 1 Romans chapter 1 verse 18 in particular and 24.
Now as you turn to it I think it would be useful for us to remember or to be mindful of the fact that the spirit of the Lord was present yes from the very beginning.
The spirit of the Lord was active in the affairs of man and God says you know man is so wicked my spirit will not always abide with man.
[37:09] I'm not going to put up with this all the time. And in Romans chapter 1 verse 18 we find these words by the apostle Paul for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth and in verse 24 Paul writes therefore God gave them up in the lust of their hearts to impurity to the disordering of their bodies among themselves the point is here that what Paul is teaching is that God contends with us for a while for a long while as a matter of fact but there comes a point as we see here in this verse when God decides to judge these wicked people God says I'm not going to contend with you forever I'm not going to contend with you forever my spirit will not be with you forever and so the sin that you commit the grave sin that you commit will become even more grave your evil deeds will become even more evil and content with you forever!

And then that's not enough judging these people God says I will blot out in verse seven I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land man animals creeping things birds of the heaven God says I'm going to blot it out that's a strong word I'm going to blot it out I'm going to wipe it out so that it's no more somebody tells you they're going to blot you out listen they tell you I'm going to blot you wipe you out you're going to be no more persona non grata but here
God said I'm going to blot it out I've created man but I'm going to blot him out why because he is evil just God who just years earlier few years earlier hundreds of years earlier looked at his creation and declared that it was good now he looks at it and sees evil and says I'm going to blot it out this God this immutable God listen this is the same God you and I pray to in the morning this is the same God you and I read about in Romans the same God he has not changed the same God who hates sin in Genesis chapter 6 is the same God who hates sin today again
I'm not trying to cause fear at all I just want to tell us the truth that it's the same God it's the same God we worship today and he says about them I'm going to blot it out I'm going to wipe it out because I hate it God doesn't just destroy man he says I'm going to destroy everything that I have created and remember he had a right to do that then aren't you glad that the story doesn't end there the last verse in this section says but nor found favor in the eyes of the
Lord which leads me to my second and final point God's marvelous grace grace if the account had ended at verse seven you wouldn't be hearing this message today however despite God's anger he demonstrated another of his attributes compassion compassion there are two evidences of grace I want to draw your attention to in these eight verses the first is and perhaps it might have been overlooked by some is found in verse three found in verse three the
[42:45] Lord says my spirit shall not abide in man forever for he is flesh his days shall be 120 years now his days shall be 120 years and some people have taken that to mean that the Lord says that man will live for 120 years because as we learned last week men were living for 500 and 800 years and some have taken this to mean that perhaps the Lord is saying here that he's going to reduce the age that men would live to 120 years but the challenge with that is we see that after the flood some people did in fact live for more than 120 years

I think that a more faithful understanding reading of this clause would be that what God was saying is that he was going to give man another 120 years to repent to get his act together man had God had condemned man but he was going to forbear God of forbearance he was going to forbear for another 120 years going to give man 120 years to repent mercy shown to man and then we see in verse 8 that Noah is going to be the exception in verse 9 of
Genesis 6 which we will cover next week we learn that Noah was a righteous man but the question must be asked that did Noah what did Noah do to be regarded as righteous what did he do what set Noah apart I think that's a reasonable question there are all these I don't know millions of people passing on the earth and Noah and his family they were the only ones what was different about him was Noah's righteousness was it his own was was he special was his righteousness his own I don't think so Noah was no different from anyone else when you consider the totality of scripture and you drop

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Noah inside there and you say what okay let's see what the scriptures say about righteousness about man and about sin and so let's examine Noah within that context how then do we read this and we got to conclude that Noah was not righteous in and of himself the apostle Paul tells us in Romans chapter 7 verse 18 Noah it is no longer
Noah was no different Noah was no different Noah was he had a sin nature just like you and me and all of the others who were condemned by God Noah's righteousness was God enabled was God enabled then perhaps you're asking another deep question perhaps you're asking well why was Noah granted the gift of righteousness and no one else was ow hard question again I don't know the Bible doesn't say the Bible doesn't answer that specific question the grace extended to Noah and his family though this is where you and I can rejoice the grace extended to
[48:06] Noah and his family reminds us that God always has a remnant somewhere in fact in Romans 11 verse 5 commenting about Jewish believers Paul writes so too at the present time there's a remnant chosen by grace chosen by grace Noah and his family was saved out of the flood by grace Lot and his daughters a remnant again was saved from destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by grace God assured Elijah that a remnant of 7000 did not bow to bear why chosen by grace chosen by grace remnant chosen by grace so you and I listen sometimes it's we gotta get used to this we gotta get used to this but we are going to have to stand as a church in this dark world alone a remnant chosen by

God why we'll get an answer when we get to heaven chosen by grace a remnant remnant Noah just a just a small family I wanna encourage us sometimes you gotta stand alone and being alone doesn't mean that you're wrong that gotta be an encouragement to somebody being alone doesn't mean that you are wrong being alone maybe you just like no maybe everybody says that you are wrong but you know that deep down inside you're right and you're standing just like no maybe that's true in your office place maybe that's true at school maybe that's true in your neighborhood you're you're standing all by yourself as we conclude when we said that the righteous
God extended grace to Noah as he does to those of us who believe that was only part of the story that's not the full story the full story is that God did exact retributive justice only not on us only not on us but on Jesus Christ for all whom he elected for salvation yes someone did in fact pay the price it was Jesus see God didn't change his mind he's immutable remember and there is a price to pay for sin we did not escape
God's retributive justice Jesus paid it all perhaps we wonder how it is that God does not exact justice on the earth as he did before in Noah's day surely the sins committed today are far more severe and more frequent all our righteousness today as yesterday is like filthy rides but how many of you know that God has appointed a day for judgment we shall not escape although the time seems long so how are we to respond to these obscure verses in Genesis chapter 6 that unveil in raw fashion man's sinfulness and God's utter discuss which leads to justice and grace how are we to respond if you are an unbeliever repent if you are a believer respond with gratitude because of grace and more grace but for
Jesus you and I would face the same consequence as those in Noah's day Jesus is the embodiment of God's grace someone has said that in Jesus justice is not violated but it's satisfied grace and grace is not in spite of justice but grace is because of it because of Christ we can join the songwriter who penned the song Marvelous Grace which so appropriately and biblically summarized the believer's grace listen to the words of the song which we will sing in a moment marvelous grace of our loving
[54:36] Lord grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt yonder on Calvary's mount our poor there where the blood of the lamb was filled grace grace God's grace grace that will pardon and cleanse within grace grace God's grace grace that is greater than all our sin dark is the stain that we cannot hide what can avail to wash it away look look there is flowing a crimson tide whiter than snow you may be today marvelous infinite matchless grace freely bestow on all who believe all who are longing to see his face will you this moment his grace receive

Father we thank you that we are not condemned we thank you for the work we thank you for the righteousness that was imputed to us thank you that it is a finished walk thank you Lord to be and our enemies Lord that we are sons and daughters because of Jesus thank you for grace thank you for grace Lord we pray that not one will leave this place not knowing and understanding this grace that is so marvelous to us that has been so freely bestowed on us in Jesus name
Amen

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