

The Sorrow and Solemnity of God

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[0 : 00] We're in Genesis 6. Excuse me. We're in Genesis 6. And let's see if I can get... Can you wake me up there, Nolan?

Sometimes these... There we go. The sorrow and solemnity of God. The sorrow and solemnity of God. Now, for those of you who are visiting, you're kind of jumping in to the middle of what I've done in the last few sermons getting us to this point as we've gone verse by verse through Genesis 6 together.

So I'm going to ask you to turn there if I haven't already. Genesis 6. I'll begin reading in verse 1 to march us into the context of what I'll be talking about this morning.

Moses is writing here and he writes, Now it came about, not haphazardly, but as a way of information. Now I'm letting you know what happened.

When men began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful and they took wives for themselves whomever they chose.

[1 : 15] Then the Lord said, My spirit shall not strive with man forever because he also is flesh. Nevertheless, 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 men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men of old, men of renown.

Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The Lord then was sorry that he had made man on the earth and he was grieved in his heart.

The Lord said, I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky for I am sorry that I have made them.

And then there's verse 8. But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

[2 : 32] In terms of the sorrow and solemnity of God, we are taking a deep dive as it were into these verses to see what they reveal to us about the heart, the character, and the actions of Almighty God as He deals with sin.

God does not play games with sin. So this is what we're going to take a look at this morning. Now I want you to notice with me as I see if this will go up here.

Yep. In Genesis 1.31, God says, And God saw all. Now I've given you a couple of sermons on just that to this point.

And God saw all that He had made and behold, it was very good. But then we have this next. Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

In chapter 1, verse 31, God observed what He made and evaluated it all as very good. But then in chapter 6, verse 5, God observed what mankind had made and evaluated it all as utterly evil.

[4 : 08] What happened? This is the question that begs for us now as we look into what this passage reveals to us about the character of God and how God acts against sin.

This is a very, very critical text for understanding these issues in theology. What happened?

In six days, God made the universe to be very good by His measure. That would include mankind. Male and female was part of His announcement, this is very good.

Well, after about a thousand years or so from that time of people living and building on the earth which God had made for mankind, male and female, man's efforts brought humanity to utter ruin and earned mankind this terrible appraisal from their Creator.

Look at what God says again. Every, notice how absolute this is, every intent of the thoughts of His heart or her heart was only evil continually.

[5 : 35] Now the earth was corrupt before God. Did you hear what He said? The earth. All that is in the earth in the way of mankind, wherever they are found in the earth, not in one little locale, but across the globe where mankind is found.

There is this corruption for all flesh had corrupted their own way upon the earth.

What an indictment, friends. It is inescapable for us to see in that indictment the seriousness of what God is dealing with and the sorrow that He feels.

That's why I've titled this message The Sorrow and Solemnity of God. And we'll dig into that and explain what all of that means. The question then that I want to bring to you as you think about this with me is this.

What is the basis? What is the standard, as it were, for God's appraisal of man's heart being entirely, continually evil and of living as a society in constant corruption?

[6 : 53] You say, Jeff, can it really be that bad? Well, I'm doing my best to impress on you what the Scripture's plainly saying. Yes! It is this bad at this time.

It is horrible. Horrible. And so we have to ask ourselves, well, what's the basis for that appraisal that God's making of mankind's heart in this way?

What is God basing this on? Well, I want you to see it so that there's no question in your mind about the accuracy of what God is doing here. Here's the basis for God's appraisal of mankind.

Here it is. Number one, His own holy character. If we stopped right there, that'd be enough, wouldn't it? Alright? Secondly, God's own sovereignty as Creator.

And then finally, God's own purpose for mankind. God gets to decide because He's the potter who made the clay. He gets to decide what the clay's purpose is.

[7 : 54] He made mankind for a purpose. When you make something with your hands or fix something or fashion something, typically you're doing it for a purpose. He made us for a purpose.

And so He gets to evaluate whether or not we're serving that purpose. And that's what He's doing. That's exactly what He's doing. Together then, these three things serve as the standard for God's evaluation of mankind as being entirely corrupt.

Now look, we've taken a couple of messages to this point to carefully work through the first five verses of chapter 6. Last week, I just did verse 5.

And it was a very, very critically important verse for understanding the doctrine of man's depravity, the darkness of our hearts and our need for a Savior.

The reason is, in terms of studying this so carefully, the reason is, these verses give us God's reason, rationale for bringing the great flood on the earth.

[9 : 04] The better we understand the issue that God is facing in His evaluation of what's going on, the better able we are to step back and better understand why God brought such catastrophic judgment.

judgment. So that we don't shrink the judgment, but we allow the judgment to tell us what it is, what it represents.

Now what I'm doing now is I'm attacking liberalism that says and wants to shrink the fact that this was a localized flood. This wasn't a global flood, it was a localized event.

No, it wasn't. The Scripture makes plain the reality that that is not the case. This was something much, much, much more. And we have to understand why a global interpretation of the flood is important to the context and doing justice to the context of God's punishment.

The issue is great. It is not a small matter. The interpretation that I have put forward of these first four verses in particular for those of you who might not have been here for this.

[10 : 22] These first four verses can be somewhat enigmatic, somewhat puzzling to us, mysterious to us. So we took time in a couple of sermons to try and unpack all of that and me lay it out before you.

And so those of you who have been here you know the interpretation that I have put forward of these verses. Who are these sons of God? What is this stuff going on with them marrying and why is that an issue?

Why is God saying that as a result of what happened in the first two verses of chapter 6 His Spirit isn't going to strive with man and now there's this 120 year thing and then who are these Nephilim?

And what is all this about Nephilim and mighty men and all that? What does that have to do with this verse? Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually so the Lord was sorry that He'd made man on the earth and He was grieved in His heart.

What does it mean for God to be sorry? Why would He come to the place of saying I will blot out? Well, again the interpretation that I've put forward in these first few verses of chapter 6 is that the sons of God refer to demons or fallen angels.

[11 : 43] These demonic spirits lusted after beautiful daughters of men so that they left their appointed realm to take possession of men so that they could have immoral relations with these women, these daughters of men.

This is an unprecedented reality at this time in human history. Now there are at least two other ways or views to understand these verses so that each of the three major views of this particular section of Scripture have both their pros and cons.

Even the interpretation I've put forward to you has its strengths and its weaknesses. I think the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses and far outweigh the strength of the arguments of the other views.

And so here's the clincher for me. In terms of looking at this there was one final element that caused me to choose the view that I just recounted to you in summation in which I'm teaching. You know I like to land. It's very rare that I'll come into the pulpit and say it could be this or this or that or that or that. That is rare. I want to land.

[13 : 00] And when I was out in seminary at the Master's Seminary and we were those those profs and John MacArthur himself when we were in chapel he would tell us land gentlemen land bring it in and land it.

You know kind of thing. Don't leave them circling in the air. And I said okay alright now sometimes to land I've got to give you a couple of options and tell you this one's not a hill for me to die on because there's enough evidence from Scripture to suggest it could be either or I don't know why God didn't make it definitive but that's up to him.

Right? This is a case where I've landed and now I'm going to tell you why. I landed on the demonic view based on the context of the passage.

Context is king. The context emphasizes the nature of an unprecedented evil infecting all of society. You've seen that in the language of the text to this point. Now there seems to be more going on here in our text than ungodly lustful men acting immorally with equally wicked women.

[14 : 09] We see that all around us. That's been happening since mankind fell into sin. Now look I think the very nature of the demonic possession explanation helps account for two important elements or aspects of this unique time in human history.

I think everything about the wording of this text suggests to us this is a unique unprecedented unparalleled time in human history and so God is going to take an unprecedented unparalleled response to it.

Have we had a global flood since the first one? No. That ought to tell us something shouldn't it? That ought to suggest something to us. So again the nature of the demonic possession explanation helps us to account for two important elements or aspects in this unique time in human history. The first of these two aspects that I think helps support the demonic explanation from the context is this. It is the terrible depth of wickedness corruption and violence the passage describes.

This is evil on a scale never seen before or since. Now I'll pause there and say except for and even then it was this one was more localized than I'm about to explain to you.

[15 : 44] The only time we see in scripture where there is a paralleled kind of account of this kind of demonic activity expressed in scripture is when?

When? When? Sodom and Gomorrah? There was destruction in Sodom and Gomorrah and that's coming but there's an even greater one. It's when Jesus was walking the earth and Satan unleashed his hounds of hell on Christ.

The demonic activity that's described during Jesus' ministry is unprecedented. He had to fight demons tooth and nail. The disciples had to fight demon possession tooth and nail.

That's the only other time I know of in scripture where demonic activity is brought to the fore in the way that is similar to what we see here. In Sodom and Gomorrah we were told that there was great immorality and lasciviousness among the people and so God took them out.

Yes. But when did we see an expressed account of demonic during Jesus' ministry? Because Satan knew what was at stake. Remember friends, what is Satan trying to do in unleashing this demonic activity on humankind?

[16:59] What's he trying to do with the daughters of men? Stop it. Infect them. He wants to corrupt the godly line. Remember, he doesn't know which woman is going to bear Messiah and he doesn't know when.

So he got right on it, didn't he? I'll know what I'll do. I'll unleash my hounds from hell and we'll just infect all of the women and we'll try to corrupt all of them and there won't be any godly bloodline. That's what he's trying to do, according to scripture. So when he met Jesus, he realized, I better put a stop to this or I'm in deep trouble. And of course, we know how that one turned out. Alright, so I've given you one. It's the terrible depth context of this being an unprecedented reality of demonic activity. Here's another one. It's the terrible destruction that God brings in response to this corruption.

In other words, this is also a destruction on a scale never seen before or since. Again, we could make the argument that as the flood was a destructor of mankind, the cross was a destructor of sin and death on a scale that we've never seen before or since.

[18:18] Right? Amen. Right. So we allow the cross of Jesus to dictate to us and define for us the nature of the problem.

If this is what it took to solve the problem, what does that tell us about the problem? If the flood was God's answer to the problem, what does that tell us about the problem?

And we've never seen a flood since. And God said, I'll never do that again. We're going to see in a little while how He's going to pass judgment on all of humanity at the end time.

We'll see that in just a little while in the scripture. It won't be a flood. What will it be? A fire. You know it. That's right. That's right. So all of this now brings us to the final points of the little outline that I'm working from in Genesis 6, 1 through 8.

The first point that I gave you a few sermons ago, and this is all online, you can see it all online, bring it up in our section there and it'll show you the sermons and you can pick through.

[19:24] Also remember, when you pull up our sermons to listen online, there's a place where you can go and click and download all these slides as you listen.

Now I don't always cue you in the sermon that I'm putting slides up, you'll have to just kind of work through that yourself. But here's the first point, it's the sinfulness of society, and we did that in verses 1 through 4.

Then we really slowed down and I paused and we dealt with what we called the sagacity of God in Genesis 6, 5. We've looked at that verse several times already this morning.

Now I want to explain this real quickly for those who weren't here and then we'll move on to the other points. The sagacity of God is not some fancy way for me to alliterate my sermons.

Listen, it speaks to the issue that's here in the text. Sagacity is the quality of being wise, discerning, and sound in judgment. So when we apply this to God, it means that God looks on mankind and makes an assessment that is perfect.

[20:28] His sagacity toward mankind in this instance is absolutely spot on. There is no margin of error in His judgment against mankind.

None whatsoever. And so God is able to look on mankind with the deepest understanding and makes an error-free judgment of man's, look at this now, inner heart condition.

I want you to notice from verse 5 that while God is looking out and saw the wickedness of man was great, I told you last week that was the behavioral iniquity that was evident to everybody, right?

It was common to everybody. But God went beyond that. God does this. He does something you can't do and I can't do. God then goes beyond what is visible to us in terms of the actions and He looks into the attitudes.

attitudes, the attitudes of your heart and my heart. That is the power of Almighty God to assess the issue of mankind perfectly.

[21:41] He sees right into the very root of what causes you to speak and do what you speak and do. And He's perfect and spot on every single time.

That was last week. I made a big deal of that. Spent a lot of time talking about God seeing our heart. So with verse 5 we have the main idea that God's assessment is indeed tragic.

It's tragic because it's true. There's no squirming out of it. It's true. And now we come to look at verse 6.

The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth and He was grieved in His heart. And so we'll ask this.

How is this verse, verse 6, related to the context? How can we understand the flow of thought that Moses is presenting to the children of Israel here in this verse?

[22 : 40] And here's the answer. Verse 6 shows us how God is assessing the situation. It shows us His evaluation, His sagacious assessment.

understanding of mankind and how that assessment is affecting Him. I see into your heart. I see what you are, who you are.

I see why you do what you do. And now He's letting us know, and here is how what I see in you is affecting me. That's a beautiful thing God does, as hard and tragic as it is to see.

We need to know what God sees. We need our God to tell us the truth about ourselves, not necessarily what you want to hear or I want to hear. Jeff, you are such an awesome guy.

I know, thanks God. But Jeff, you're such a worm, and if it wasn't for Jesus, you'd be nothing and you'd be headed to hell. Lord, yes, I know.

[23 : 47] Thank you for Jesus. Thank you for grace. Thank you for hope. Thank you for forgiveness. See, that's what it does. It doesn't exalt us. It exalts Jesus. That's what's happening in our text.

God is being exalted as He looks into the heart of mankind and says, here's what I see. And now I'm constrained to do something about it because I'm a just and holy God.

And my holy wrath has to be appeased or I'm capricious and wishy-washy. And He's not any of those things. So God's conclusions about mankind's condition brought grief to God's heart.

The Scripture doesn't hide that. In this case, God's sagacity, His all-wise, perfect, all-knowing understanding and wisdom about what He's seeing, led to His sorrow.

It broke His heart. God is not rejoicing. Oh, good. Now I get to kill some people. You're confusing God with Hamas.

[24 : 55] God's grief toward us. God's grief toward us is pure.

So we don't get to the point where God is acting in this sagacious way in His assessment, and then we start looking at how God feels about it, and now we kind of back up and say, well, maybe He's a little off on that part.

His feeling about it, the grief that He feels is perfectly matched by the sagacity of what He sees going on in us. So we have a pure God acting in a pure way across the spectrum of His judgment. There's no part of His judgment that's weak, erred. Folks, we can trust God to tell us the truth, as hard as it might be to hear it.

Because that's what we need. We need a God who loves us enough to tell us the truth, and then point us to His solution about what He reveals to us.

[26 : 07] That's what we need. Well, would you have ever thought we could go to this place in the Bible and hear all that? But that's exactly what it is. Is the gospel in Genesis chapter 6?

Yes! You hear it right here. But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. That is the grace of God that any human being would find favor in God's sight.

That's the work of the Lord. Alright, now look. Here's where this takes us when we talk about God's grief. Here's where it takes us. The sinfulness of society led to this sagacity, this wise assessment of God on society, and that assessment then brought us to the place of the sorrow of God in Genesis 6.

The sorrow of God. The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. Now look, friends, while the grief of God is pure, the guilt of mankind is grave, and we have to put those side by side.

God is deeply grieved as He sees the grave condition of people. So this is not a grandpa God up there sitting around waiting to thump people, zap people.

[27 : 36] Don't see the Lord that way. We're being told this is breaking His heart. So God's grief issues from His uncorrupted character.

And this is where we have to begin in our understanding of what it means for God to grieve. What does it mean for God to grieve? Well, as with God seeing, God saw, God's sorrow is an example of Moses' use of what we would say would be human emotions.

He's assigning human emotions to God so that we can better understand what's going on in our God that would bring Him to the place of this flood event.

He wants to help convey God's activity in relating to man. And so He assigns these emotions. God does not really have a heart that can be grieved, does He?

Because He's Spirit, isn't He? Alright? So look, I want to put this up here for you because it's a weird word that we just don't throw around very often. I probably could ask you when was the last time you used the word I'm going to put up here?

[28 : 47] You say, what? What is that? Alright, look. This is what theologians refer to as an anthropopathism. When's the last time you used that in a sentence?

Anthropopathism simply means this. It's a way of applying human emotions or characteristics to God in order to convey a certain reality about the Lord's relationship to mankind.

That's the whole point. Or about how God deals with man. So what is an anthropomorphism?

You've heard that one? Probably less likely you've heard this one.

An anthropomorphism is a way of ascribing to God some aspect of humanity to further elucidate what God's doing in His relationship with people. And anthropopathism zeroes more in on the emotional aspect of what God is feeling or experiencing toward people.

Moses is trying to help us understand that we have a God who feels. Isn't that something? We have a God who feels. And He feels things deeply.

[30 : 01] That's what this is all about in terms of His sorrow. So, when we read in verse 6 that God regretted, I'm not sure what your text actually has there as a word, when God regretted, when it says God was grieved about making man.

Moses is not saying that God made a mistake. That's how we think about it, right? Oh, I regret doing that. That was so bonehead of me. Ugh.

No, that's not what this is. It's not that God was realizing that He never should have made man in the first place. I blew it. Why didn't I think of that?

Why didn't I see this coming? I'm God. How did I miss that? Isn't that so dumb? So, we know the text cannot mean that.

We already disregard that because that attacks what aspect of God's character? Something that we can't duplicate, that we can't take on from Him. His omniscience.

[31 : 09] That He knows all things before they ever happen. In full. So, we know it can't be that. Well, then what does this mean about God? Here it is. I'm going to put this up here for you.

God's sorrow and grief refer to God's displeasure with mankind from which God will now change His behavior toward man.

God is responding then to mankind's disobedience. He's responding to it. It's breaking His heart. And now He's got to act in judgment because justice must be served.

He cannot look away from sin and go, well, that's okay. I'll just pretend like I didn't see that one. Mulligan. No. That's not how God operates in the spiritual world.

So, we're saying this. God's displeasure reflects His holiness in relationship to sin. One of the things that we see happening in this text is we're being shown sin and then we're being shown how it contrasts with the holiness of Almighty God based on what He's saying and doing.

[32 : 20] That's exactly what we're supposed to see. Now, look. You say, Jeff, what is that supposed to do? How does that information help me? I'll tell you how. It's supposed to teach you to hate your sin.

It's supposed to teach you that your sin is not only the enemy of God, it's your enemy. Because it wants to snatch you away from the wisdom and love of Almighty God.

It wants to put you in charge. God with a little g. and in that kind of pursuit, the devil knows that you're in complete ruin.

It's just a matter of time. That's a train heading for a bad, bad wreck. A terrible derailment. This is what it's supposed to teach us and show us about ourselves and it's supposed to make us want to run to God.

God this displeasure that God is showing reflects His sovereignty in His relationship to man. If it reflects His holiness in relationship to sin, it shows us His sovereignty in relationship to man.

[33 : 25] We can trust a sovereign God. He's getting it right. God is God. God is judge. God is jury over the affairs of men. I make a terrible God, judge and jury.

My dad used to tell me when I was a young man and I had enough time on the earth to mature a little bit and start to come into my own and figure out who Jeff is and that kind of thing.

I remember my dad sitting down with me one day at a very low time in my life and looking at me with compassion and he said this to me. He said, Jeff Jackson, you are your own worst enemy. Well, I kind of already knew that and that I could do some really dumb and undiscerning things. And at this time in my life, I wasn't a Christian. But what my dad meant was when you suffer and fail and show weakness, you are merciless against yourself.

Merciless. Now, I'm going to shock you and tell you what that is. You know where that's coming from in me? Pride. Pride.

[34 : 38] Pride. It sounds like you're low. Yeah. You know why I'm low in that regard? Because somehow inside of me, I think I ought to be able to do better than that.

Aren't you something? And pride tells me, nope. You see, that's not a godly view of me, is it? I have never forgotten that moment in my dad's life because my dad wasn't a believer at that time.

So I blew a lot of what my dad said off. That one got me. And I couldn't squirm out of it.

Now we need to do something with that reality. And I think I can take you to a couple of places in scripture rather quickly and just show you some examples from the Bible, biblical illustrations of what I'm talking about in God's relationship right now in terms of this displeasure that we see in this text reflects God's holiness in relationship to sin.

It also reflects, this displeasure reflects his sovereignty in relationship to man. God gets to judge and say. All right, now I want to take you to a couple of examples of where this happens in the Bible.

[35 : 56] The first one is in 1 Samuel. So just start flipping past Genesis and Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy and keep going.

You'll pass Ruth and you'll come to 1 and 2 Samuel. 1 Samuel chapter 15. And I'm just going to start reading now.

You follow along as best you can in your text with me. then Samuel said to Saul. Right? We all know who Saul was.

Saul was a man who God had looked on and said we will make him king of Israel as the people cried out for a king.

And so God said okay I'll give you what you want and we'll see how that works out kind of thing. So Samuel said Samuel was a prophet of God so he has sent Samuel to do this with Saul.

[36 : 57] the Lord sent me Samuel said to anoint you as king over his people his people over Israel now therefore listen to the words of the Lord that is so critical because we're going to see he doesn't do it.

Thus says the Lord of hosts I will punish Amalek for what he did that is as a nation to Israel how Amalek set himself against Israel on the way while Israel was coming up from Egypt.

So while Israel was wandering in the desert and coming up from Egypt Amalek attacked Israel and put a hurt on him. Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all.

Do you see that language? Utterly destroy all that he has. Do not spare him but put to death both man and woman child and infant ox and sheep camel and donkey.

In other words here's how that reads if it breathes kill it. Then Saul summoned the people and numbered them in Telayim 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men of Judah.

[38 : 11] And Saul came to the city of Amalek he set an ambush in the valley he said to the Kenites go and depart go down from among the Amalekites so that I do not destroy you with them for you you Kenites showed kindness to the sons of Israel when they came out of Egypt so the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites Saul then defeated them in battle from Havilah as you go to Shur which is east of Egypt he captured Agag the king of the Amalekites alive and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword scripture will tell us later he did not actually do that he did not actually these people are going to rise up and do a lot of damage later to the south but notice verse 9 Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep the oxen fatlings lambs and all that was good and they were not willing to destroy them utterly this is not ignorance naivete this is willful rebellion but everything despised and worthless that they destroyed then the word of the Lord came to

Samuel saying I regret that I have made Saul king for he has turned back from following me and has not carried out my commands and Samuel was distressed And look at Samuel's reaction he

cried out to the Lord all night long it broke his heart and then it made him angry righteous indignation so Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul and it was told Samuel saying Saul has come to Carmel and behold what has Saul done he set up a monument to God no to himself then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal Samuel came to Saul he finally found him caught up with him and Saul runs up to Samuel and says hey blessed are you of the Lord I've carried out all the commandments of God no and Samuel said really what then is this bleeding of the sheep I hear in my ears and lowing of oxen which I hear you gotta love the way the Bible brings this stuff out and Saul said they oh boy they who's he throwing under the bus here the people they have brought them from the Amalekites for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen what a low life to sacrifice to the Lord your God but the rest we we have utterly destroyed you see that you see what's going on he is such a worm then Samuel said to Saul wait and let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night and he said to him okay speak so Samuel said is it not true though you were little in your own eyes you were made the head of the tribes of Israel and the Lord anointed you king over Israel and the Lord sent you on a mission and said go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites and fight against them until they are exterminated why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord you rushed upon the spoil and did what was evil in the sight of the Lord the picture here is a throng of people seeing the treasure! and just descending on it in a mob they're just grabbing stuff that's the picture then Saul said to Samuel I did obey the voice of the Lord and went on the mission on which the Lord sent me and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites look when God tells you something I would strongly suggest that you not try to get into some verbal battle with Jesus that's not a good look and it won't end well but the people took some here he is again the people took some of the spoil!

[42 : 32] sheep and oxen and choices things devoted to destruction to sacrifice isn't that good oh Lord we just did this because we want to worship you it's so good that God sees into the heart and he knows that's not right so Samuel said!

sacrifice is as in obeying the voice of the Lord to obey is better than sacrifice in other words to heed rather than the fat of rams what he's saying is I would rather have heart obedience than lip service any day for now notice these three words for rebellion is as the sin of divination witchcraft insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry idol worship because you have rejected the word of the Lord he's also rejected you from being king so we have rebellion insubordination and rejection in Saul's heart then Saul said to Samuel notice I have sin you think I have indeed transgressed the command of the Lord and your words because I feared the people and listened to their voice therefore please pardon my sin and return with me that I may worship the

Lord but Samuel said to Saul I will not return with you for you have rejected the word of the Lord now notice and the Lord has rejected you from being king what came first he rejected God and God says now I relent and you will not I'm going to change my behavior toward you because of how you behave toward me that's that's what relent not I made a mistake go down to verse 29 also the glory of Israel will not lie the glory of Israel is another way of exclaiming God the God the God of Israel will not lie or change his mind for he is not a man that he should change his mind and then over in verse 35 Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of Saul's death for Samuel grieved over Saul and the Lord regretted that he had made

Saul king over Israel in other words the Lord changed his behavior toward this man that was destined to be king of Israel it's very important that we understand this scripture is helping us to better understand what we are seeing then in Genesis 6 in several places Samuel explains why God is displeased with Saul and what God did about it in verse 11 God is taking this action against Saul in verse 11 I regret I turn back you didn't do what I said and then he goes on to give his reasons for this response toward Saul and Samuel plainly tells Saul what God's rejection of him is based on in verse 26 that I read for you so what do we have here it is let me put it up here on the screen for you Saul disobeyed God and proved unfaithful to be king so in response to Saul's rejection and unfaithfulness the Lord changed his behavior towards Saul and rejected him you see the same thing going on in Genesis 6 these people have decided to rebel and reject against the Lord and so now God is going to act in judgment based on what he's seeing in their lives let me give you one other one just real quickly it's Jeremiah 18 so you're going past Psalms you're going past Proverbs past Isaiah and you come to the big book of Jeremiah Jeremiah chapter 18 and while you're turning there I'll start reading for the sake of time this is the word which came to

Jeremiah the prophet from the Lord saying arise and go down to the potter's house and there I will announce my words to you so Jeremiah says I obeyed I went down to the potter's house and there he was the potter was sitting there making something on the wheel but the vessel that the potter was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter so what did he do he remade it so he was working this thing on the wheel as it went around and he is fashioning it and something happened and he smushed it all and did it again got it formed and started making it again that's the potter's prerogative isn't it verse 5 then the word of the

[47 : 32] Lord came to me saying can I not O house of Israel deal with you as the potter does declares the Lord behold like the clay in the potter's hand so were you in my hand O house of Israel at one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot pull down or destroy if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil I will relent concerning the calamity I plan to bring on it you have that in the scriptures don't you concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up or to plant there's your sovereignty folks this is a sovereign God acting with people as individuals families and nations then in verse 10 if it does evil in my sight by not obeying my voice then I will think better of the good with which I had promised to bless it think better is relent same thing in verse 8 if that nation spoken turns from its evil

I will relent I will think better of concerning the calamity so now verse 11 speak to the men of Judah and against the inhabitants of Jerusalem saying thus says the Lord behold I'm fashioning calamity against you and devising a plan against you so turn back there's the heart of your God oh turn back each of you from his evil way and reform repent your ways and your deeds verse 12 but they will say it's hopeless we are going to follow our own plans and each of us will act according to the stubbornness of his evil heart verse 15!

people have forgotten me they burn incense to worthless gods and they stumbled from their ways from the ancient paths to walk in by paths not on a highway that I've made for them that's sad isn't it it's very sad and here's what we're dealing with I wanted to do this with you because the word relent in Jeremiah 18 verses 8 and 10 is the same word used in Genesis 6:6 translated as sorry or regretted so this is an exact parallel to what we're seeing in Genesis 6 God is not sorry that he made man as if God thinks that he made a big mistake in making mankind God isn't grieved in a way that portrays him as vulnerable or weak or unwise or capricious or somebody who's reckless God just went out and did this stuff without really thinking about it and got down the road a little bit and looked back in hindsight like we do and went man I should have zigged instead of zagged there no here here's what we are saying God's sorrow and grief are evidence of his holiness and his sovereignty and his relationship to mankind God's sorrow and grief are real but they're not human sin they are put in human terms to convey to us the fact that God is not indifferent to human sin he cares for his creation his creation's unrepentant sin affects God and so God chooses to relate to them based on what they're doing this is where the gospel really shines folks because what do we talk about with the gospel God gives us what we don't deserve he doesn't treat us in the way that we're supposed to be treated or we deserve to be treated the cross nullifies all that and says no the cross is about

God giving you what you don't deserve I'm not going to treat you like you deserve I'm going to treat you like my son I'm going to love you like I love my son you're my son and my daughter that's how I see you in my son what a hope what a beautiful beautiful reality mankind is seeking a life apart from that relationship with the Lord so that this demonic possession and pervasive immorality that we see going on they're destroying the last hope of mankind as they reject God and turn inwards that is always a bad bad place to be so look folks in the context the children of Israel need to see this age old struggle with sin in its true light that's what Moses is saying all this for back to Genesis 6 that's why he's saying all this

[52 : 38] I'm laying before you the ugly nature of what it is to turn your back on God and try to do this thing your own way it's not going to end well sin has a very destructive influence and it was all introduced into human life through the disobedience of Adam and Eve and so now we see that disobedience compounded over this time period where the people multiplying on the earth as God said yes they are and as they multiplied so did sin until now they're so corrupt that God only has one alternative in mind every single person needs to know the truth about sin's origins they need to understand its deadly impact on each individual life sin will rob you of your life and it will help you destroy your kids just by you being selfish it'll wreck your marriage it'll wreck this church friends look

God is not indifferent to our sin thank you Lord and now finally I want you to see this the solemnity of God this is the second response to men and women plunging themselves deeper and deeper into sin and I'll move quickly through this as we look at this in verse 7 the Lord the Lord said I will blot out man whom I've created from the face of the land from man to animals to creeping things to birds of the sky for I am sorry that I have made them this is another example I told you there was a parallel passage in Samuel and Jeremiah this is God saying I'm going to kill everything that breathes it's all going to die the judgment of God is deserved the judgment of God is deserved alright what do I mean by solemnity solemnity refers to God's serious attitude and actions toward man's sin God takes sin so seriously and this verse is expressing just how much because God hates sin and must deal with it according to his holy nature God's solemnity brings about God's sentence this is all he can do because he's a holy God I will blot out man whom I created from the face of the land that should send chills down our spines the word I will blot out is one word in Hebrew it's one word it has a strong connotation of to wipe out to wipe out to exterminate to obliterate or as my translation says to blot out and this this conveys this phrase conveys I will blot out twin concepts about God that we need to see the first is this God's patience has a limit that's a truth from scripture God's patience has a limit and so what are we dealing with in this in terms of how it relates that limit relates to these people it's common grace for hundreds of years God's been long suffering with mankind living in this evil way he sent Noah to preach the gospel he sent Enoch to preach the gospel these people are hearing the truth they're hearing the truth of their need for God to forgive them God has promised a deliverer somewhere out in the future look to God to provide this deliverer from you no they won't have it his common grace is his undeserved favor shown to all these unbelievers as he sustains them in life the only reason they're breathing is because God's given them grace favor but as I preached a couple of sermons ago God has fixed a time for this grace to end what is it 120 years he's saying from 120 years from now as Noah begins to make the ark 120 years from now it's going to end and the patience is going to run out and judgment is going to come I explained all that when we went through it uncommon judgment uncommon judgment never before this time never since this time in history has mankind's degree of wickedness brought such a universal act of judgment so God's degree of response I said this to you earlier as I was explaining the cross God's degree of response gives evidence to mankind's degree of sinfulness let the punishment fit the crime I will blot out it also tells us this about God number two God's punishment is absolute these are the theological underpinnings of what we believe about a sovereign God it makes the gospel all the more glorious when we realize these things about our God and yet he has shown us mercy he had to punish Jesus Christ to death on the cross in our place in order to pay the penalty that we we deserve for our sin God's punishment is absolute and so we had to punish his son he couldn't overlook our sin somebody had to pay the price so he sent his son to pay the price for us as Jesus hung on the cross being tortured to death to pay the penalty for sin it was [58 : 23] Jeff Jackson's sin he was paying for not his own he had no sin and so God's punishment is absolute it's absolute in its scope what do I mean the entire earth this is what the text says folks we don't have to do fancy gymnastics here the Hebrew means what the Hebrew means the entire earth will soon fall under the just judgment of God's wrath this is going to be a global flood and then in its severity his punishment is absolute in its severity no one who is unrepentant will escape no one you'll remember I'm not going to go there and read it for the sake of time I want to move to this last point and do it quickly with you but 2nd Peter 2nd Peter 3 3-9 it's up here on the screen that's the passage where Peter describes that in the last days God is going to destroy the earth with fire and then remake it so if we reflect on what the

Lord has told these people in Genesis 6-3 the Lord was going to give them 120 years to repent while Noah was building the ark roughly about that time after this God's judgment comes so God prescribed this 120 years before Noah ever started working on the ark now one other quick note about the consequences of sin and what it can have on others I want you to think about this in mankind's rebellion mankind's rebellion brought God's promise of destruction on creation the creation suffered because of man's sin and lack of stewardship people aren't stewarding the earth they're living in selfish rebellion so what happened all the birds the creatures the plants all that's going to die in the flood all of it now I look at that and I think the nature of sin is that it negatively affects everything and everyone around us listen to me please beloved listen to me there is no such thing as secret sin in the sense of how it affects other people it does not affect them in secret you

may do it in secret but God sees it and as you do it it has a negative impact on you as a person and in those ways that sin is going to be used by your enemy to negatively impact and corrode other people around you remember the last sermon

I preached sin is corrosive and pervasive it's gangrous it's cancerous it's infectious in the sense that as we sin in our own heart and take sin in and don't repent and live in that what we would think is it's not hurting anybody it's I'm just doing it nobody knows there's no such thing as that that's a lie because it's taking you out of the fight and it's rendering your heart so selfish you're not going to be useful to God in the lives of others finally the salvation of God which is verse eight but Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord I'm going to be quick here because I'm going to do a lot more with this as we move out of six do more with six and into seven be a lot more to say about this look the grace of God is undeserved but freely given here's where we see the gospel Noah's salvation shows the holy favor of the Lord which produces a high fear of the Lord Noah had a high and holy regard for God because Noah was saved God had worked in his heart and out of his heart he had he Noah didn't want to sin because he didn't want to grieve God that's a great way to live but the Lord mercifully gives us his promise of rebirth and blessing Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord he's going to punish everybody else but Noah found favor these are the words of evaluation from God that bring hope holiness and healing amen amen what did Noah find in God what did he find in him he found favor and forgiveness which he couldn't earn and he didn't deserve you say well it's because Noah was such a great guy not like all these other people the only reason that Noah's a great guy and not like the other people is because God has saved him and is working in his life that's the difference God is the difference Noah trusted God so in this passage God's saving favor is given to Noah so that Noah's life and godly lineage is being kept in the promise of God sending a redeemer Noah is looking forward in faith that God's going to send that deliverer to them so here's the verse I want to end with and you might not have thought of this one as a way of summing all of this up but I thought it to be very appropriate and the angel said to her

Mary do not be afraid Mary for you have found favor with God and behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall name him Jesus he will be great and will be called the son of the most high and the Lord will give him the throne of his father David there's your promise and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever and his kingdom will have no end that's powerful isn't it God keeping his promises will you bow your hearts and heads with me in prayer dear father these matters are so deep and beautiful and wonderful and to the degree that your servant Jeff has been able to expound them with care and clarity I pray that you would bless your word by the spirit and use it in the hearts of your people that they would be fed well led to green pasture and clear water sound doctrine that will exalt you in their hearts that will edify and build them up in their souls so so that they will think the thoughts of God they will speak the words of God and they will live in the attitude of their heart that truth to honor you thank you for your goodness and grace dear Lord and thank you for these blessed souls who've come this morning may you continue to enlighten the eyes of our understanding that we will walk with you in the same way that Noah did in your great and loving favor that you have shed in our hearts through Jesus

[65 : 21] Christ our Savior it's in his name we pray amen amen