

GENESIS 6:1-22 | HORROR STORY

This guide is designed to be used for community group discussions, but can easily be adapted for personal reflection and application.

ENGAGE (15 MINUTES)

Real Biblical community involves people “doing life together.” As much as we can, we want to create an atmosphere where people get to know one another, and feel comfortable sharing the ups, downs, and in-betweens of life. So take some time for people to get acquainted. A possible icebreaker question: Share a high and a low from the previous week. Or, rate your week 1-10. Or, make up one of your own.

REFLECTION AND STUDY (30-35 MINUTES)

The flood story in Genesis is decidedly not a children’s story. We often think of it that way because children’s books latch onto the story to teach children the names of animals. But when you look closely at the Biblical account, this is a disturbing text. We learn about the increase of sin and the judgment of God.

Read Genesis 6:1-22

- 1.) What does this passage teach you about sin (see especially verse 5)?
- 2.) How does God respond to sin? What should our attitude be toward sin?
- 3.) Why is it hard to talk about the judgment of God? Should we talk about it? If so, in what ways?
- 4.) What do we learn from God’s relationship with Noah?
- 5.) Hebrews 11:7 describes Noah as a man of faith? In what ways is his faith manifest? If someone looked at your life, how would they see evidence of your faith and trust in God?

Read the short article on the next page

- 6.) What stood out to you as helpful, challenging, or confusing?
- 7.) Read Ephesians 2:1-10. Are there any parallels with Genesis 6?
- 8.) What is God calling you to in response to this passage?

PRAYER (15-20 MINUTES)

Break into men and women for prayer. Is there anything you need to apply? How can our community group help encourage you in this? Pray for one another.

HORROR STORY

The Horror of Sin

The Progress of Evil. The first four verses of Genesis 6 are some of the most debated in all the Bible. All commentators agree that the point of the verses is to explain that sin has continued to advance in the world.

The Sons of God and Daughters of Men. Some have wondered if this verse is describing angels somehow marrying human women (or at least possessing men and then taking human wives). Job 1-2 refer to fallen angels as the “sons of God.” That said, believers are also called the sons of God in the Old Testament (Deut 14:1, Isaiah 1:2, Hosea 1:10). This text is most likely describing men from the believing line of Seth now intermarrying with unbelievers from Cain’s line. Time and again in the Bible, this speaks to (or leads to) unfaithfulness (see Solomon).

120 Years. Verse 3 most likely speaks to God’s decision to bring his judgment on the earth. The clock is ticking as Noah is commanded to build the ark.

The Nephilim. The King James Version translated this as “giants,” raising all sorts of questions (b/c of the reference in Numbers 13:33). However, Nephilim most likely means “fallen ones” or “tyrants.” They were powerful men, but men nonetheless. The point is to show that even the most feared of men could not escape God’s judgment.

The Extensive and Intensive Nature of Sin. Verse 5 gives a vivid picture of the state of things in Noah’s day. Sin had spread throughout the earth. And sin’s affects were not limited to behavior, but sank deeply to level of hearts and attitudes.

The Horror of God’s Judgment

In verse 7 God announces his decision to wipe out the earth. God judgment can be uncomfortable to think and talk about, but we must grapple with what this teaches us about the holiness of God. God hates sin. This ought to shock us out of any tendency to take sin lightly. Still, God’s judgment can be difficult to understand.

God Has the Right to Judge. Genesis reminds us that God is the Creator, and thus has the right to judge, since he owns everything that exists. He has the power to judge, since he has assembled all that is. And he has the wisdom to judge, since he knows all hearts and motivations.

God Judges a World Filled with Violence. Verses 11-13 remind us what the world was like in Noah’s day. God’s judgment is upon a wicked and violent culture.

God Experiences Pain in this Judgment. There is no cheering at the flood. Verse 6 tells us that God experiences some kind of pain because of the way sin has ruined this world. This is an important part of any theology of divine judgment.

God is Patient. 1 Peter 3:20 highlights the patience of God in Noah’s day. He truly is slow to anger, and he gives many chances for repentance.

The Rescue

Thankfully, the story does not stop there. Verse 8 tells us that Noah found grace. And later God enters into a covenant with him, to rescue him and save him from judgment. We learn several things about the way God intervenes to save people.

The Rescue Begins With God's Initiative. God initiates with Noah. He comes to Noah with a rescue plan. He shows Noah grace, even before we learn about Noah's righteousness in verse 9. Ephesians 2:1-10 is a great parallel text, speaking to the way God pursues his people to rescue them.

The Rescue Requires Trust. God announces his plan to Noah, and commands him to build the ark. And responded in faith and did everything God commanded (v.22; compare Heb 11:7). Had Noah just heard the message of salvation and not responded, he would have been swept away by the waters of judgment like everyone else. This is instructive for us – we need to not only hear the gospel, but to respond in faith. Jesus warns us that not all people will (Matthew 24:37-39). Like Noah, we are offered a vessel of salvation. We need to trust and respond to the gospel. “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).