

## 98-04-12b

We're ready now to resume in Genesis chapter 6, looking at the concept of the sons of God. In Hebrew this is b'nei ha Elohim. Ben, like in the movie Ben Hur means son of, and this is the Hebrew term Ben.

In Aramaic it was Bar, Simon Bar Jonah you may recall. Bar or Ben in this case means son. B'nei is the plural.

Elohim is the name for God. It is a plural, you'll notice the I am on the end of that Elohim, and it is a plural of majesty in many cases, but Elohim is also used for the gods, with a little g, the gods of the people in the land that you are about to enter, God says to Israel, you will not go after their gods, their Elohim. And so there has been speculation that, well, these are the sons of the gods, that there was some other strange mythological thing going on here.

But these are, the only use of Elohim that we have had in Genesis thus far is the Lord God. And when you say sons of Elohim, if that's going to be a different Elohim, the scripture would have to tell us, give us some clue that this is someone other than God himself. So we have had no such clue, we've had no such indication that Elohim means anything other than the God of creation.

So we have then the sons of God. This is a term that is used very infrequently. You find it just a few times in the Old Testament.

It appears to be used in Job for angelic creation. You have life, his seven sons and his three daughters and so forth. In verse six, there was a day when the sons of God, the B'nai Elohim, came to present themselves before the Lord and Satan also came among them.

You will notice that Satan is distinguished from the sons of God who come to present themselves. This gives us an enticing glimpse of life in the heavenly realms. The angels are not constantly flitting to and fro in front of the throne of God.

There was a day on which the sons of God, the heavenly creation, or perhaps their leaders, come before God for a convocation. There is a heavenly council. We don't have time to go into this in detail.

There's an entire study you can do under the category of angelology that deals with what we call angels. There are actually many categories in the heavenly creation, what Paul refers to as principalities and powers and rulers. Angels have the specific function of being messengers.

The Hebrew word for that is malak. You know probably by now that if you want to make a personal possessive and say my something, my son, you would say b'nai. You put y on

the end of a word and that makes it possessive.

Son is ben, my son is b'nai. In the case of malak or messenger, if you say my messenger, it's malakhi or malachi, the name of the last book of the Bible. Malakhi or malachi is my messenger.

That is also going to be important to us this morning as we look at this concept of the sons of God. The sons of God is a term that encompasses apparently several categories of angelic, what we would call angelic creation. I'm using angel and angelic in a non-technical sense because there is a technical sense in which they are the messenger beings or messenger angels.

But here you have the sons of God in Job. There is a day when the sons of God or a time when the sons of God come to present themselves before the Lord. It's not a regular thing to be in the presence of the Lord.

It is an honor. It is a special thing even for the heavenly creation. And Satan comes also among them.

And you have the familiar story which goes forward in the history of Job and his circumstances, his sufferings. Chapter 2 of Job, again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord. Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord.

He is already in the adversary mode. Shatan means adversary even in modern Arabic. The Satan or the Shatan.

You remember when the Ayatollah over there was calling President Bush the great Satan, calling America the great Satan, the great Shatan, the great adversary. He isn't necessarily thinking about Lucifer. He's thinking of adversary, the great enemy, the big boogeyman on the planet to them is over here in America.

So he has already, there's some speculation looking at Revelation and the dragon falling and his tail scooping a third of the stars that maybe Satan's fall from heaven is yet future. And that there's been a lot of speculation about when Satan fell and so forth. We will take up the whole discussion of that at another time.

But suffice it to say that obviously at this point Satan when he comes to talk to God about Job is an adversary. He is a Shatan and yet he comes with the sons of God. Apparently he has at least at one time been in that company.

He is qualified to even after the fall to come and present himself before God and to have a conversation which he does. So the sons of God are very clearly here heavenly or angelic creation. There are a few other passages.

You may recall one that Jesus brings up when they begin to make an issue out of his identifying himself as the son of God. And some of the Pharisees and priests and scribes come up and say are you calling yourself the son of God? And Jesus quotes a scripture from the Psalms. Are they not all sons of God? Of course we know from John that we have the right to be called the sons of God.

Those who believe on his name. And there is a separate and distinct relationship where men can be called the sons of God. We are the sons of God.

We are now children of God. We are to walk as children of light and so forth. But we're interested for our purposes in these angelic creatures.

And thus far we have had only two types of creatures presented to us. And that is man, Ha'adam, and whatever the serpent represented in the garden. We know that he was much more than just an animal.

So there has already been the strong implication, especially when God curses the serpent and talks about the seed of the serpent, that there is a force. There is another category of creature beyond man. And here in the reference to the sons of God we have another reference to that category of creation that apparently the serpent, or the force behind the serpent, is or was a part of.

The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were beautiful. They took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. Actually the clue that helps us understand what these circumstances are is found in the next verse.

And this next verse also, every single word in this verse has been studied to death it would seem. The Lord said my spirit shall not strive with man forever for he is indeed flesh. Yet his days shall be 120 years.

What a cryptic reference that is. Has the Spirit of God been striving with man? Do we have some indication of that anywhere in the preceding five chapters? We haven't had a reference to the Spirit of God since Genesis 1-2 when it hovered over the face of the waters. And if the multiplication of man on the earth and the intermarriage with the sons of God is the occasion for God speaking these words, what is it about the intermarriage of the sons of God and the daughters of men that causes God to say I'm going to withdraw my spirit.

I'm going to tell my spirit to stop striving with man. What does that have to do with an intermarriage of any kind? Well, we have the need here to take a look at the phrase my spirit. We assume when God says my spirit that he's talking about the Holy Spirit.

The term here, the word, the noun in Hebrew is ruach. R-U-A-C-H. Ruach is used in three primary ways in the Old Testament.

It has a variety of usages, but you find it commonly translated as the Spirit of God. You find this, for example, in Exodus with the tabernacle workmen. God says I will put my spirit on them and they will become these artisans in gold and craftsmen who will produce the tabernacle equipment and the structure itself.

Ruach is used obviously there of God's Spirit. I think in Genesis 1-2 you have a fairly clear reference to the Spirit of God hovering over the waters. Ruach is also a commonly translated spirit with a small s, the Spirit of Man.

My spirit is oppressed. We'll see some passages where it is used in that way. It is also used and translated wind.

We are going to see that after the flood the waters get dried up and the process of evaporation and the revealing of the land is hastened. In Genesis chapter 8 and verse 1, God remembered Noah, every living thing, the animals that were with him in the ark, and God made a ruach to pass over the earth and the waters subsided. You'll find in your English that is probably translated wind.

But again, we have to sort of wonder, was it a spirit that God caused to pass? Was it a wind? What exactly was that? Was it the Spirit with a large s? But that's a use of ruach. It's often translated wind and apparently legitimately so in some cases. When the Lord says, my spirit shall not strive, that verb is really our key.

It is yadon in Hebrew, which is from the verb din, d-i-n. Din is the verb from which we get the noun Dan. If you look at the sons of Jacob, Dan is named such.

His name means judge and din is the verb which means to judge, to oversee, to dispense justice, to settle cases, to exert authority. When you are a judge, it's just like the judges in Israel. They did a whole lot more than sit in the courtroom, didn't they? Gideon was a judge.

Jephthah was a judge. Samson was a judge. What did they do? They were a leader.

They accomplished things on behalf of the people. And this word in no case and in no way can be legitimately translated strive. But when people came to this and said, well, my spirit will not judge man, they thought, well, that can't be right.

It's got to mean something else. And they looked around and then came up with strive. But mostly, if you have something besides a King James, it may say something different there.

It may say abide. They've gone to an Arabic cognate for instead of din, it's dun, which means to abide or remain. This is an outside possibility.

It doesn't really change our conclusion from verse three. But God says, my spirit shall

not judge man forever. This is olam.

La means to, the letter lamed, followed by olam, which means the indefinite future unto the ages. Whenever you see God promising something forever, it is a promise, la olam, to the indefinite far-flung future. So he says, my spirit will not judge, will not oversee or administrate over man forever.

And then in the New King James, it says, for he is indeed. I think the original King James said, for that also he is flesh. This is a hapoxlegomena.

It appears at first glance to be the smashing together of three Hebrew conjunctions. B'shagam is the way it looks in Hebrew. And you have a bait, which means end.

And it's a bizarre, the combination occurs nowhere else in scripture. And trying to figure out what this unknown word is, they said, well, it must be a conjunction of some sort. And well, bait means end.

And they just came up with for that also, which nobody really knows what it means. But here's the point. If we can figure out what my spirit is here, and what is being administrated, we will go a long way toward understanding these circumstances.

It appears from scripture that there has been in the early days of human civilization administration of the human race by angels, by the sons of God. The sons of God are present. They are unfallen angels.

They have been detailed by God to nurture and to oversee and guide the human race in its early generations. There's an incredible amount of information that's necessary to survive. You think about it.

How are people going to know about crops? How are they going to know about bringing things out of the earth and making tools and implements, the wheel and lots of other uses for animals to plow and to plant and one thing and another. What animals are clean? What animals are unclean? What's good to eat? What's not good to eat? A lot of this information wasn't just dreamed up over hundreds of thousands of years of evolution by cavemen. It was passed on to man from God through intermediaries.

We know that this is the case from statements made in the New Testament. Look for example at Jude chapter 6, or I'm sorry, Jude verse 6. It only has one chapter. But Jude 6, kind of a hard page to find in your Bible, sandwiched between 1st, 2nd, 3rd John and the Revelation.

Jude verse 6, he says in verse 5, I want to remind you though you once knew this, that the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, who did not keep their first estate, but left their own abode, or left their own domain, their own

proper place, he has reserved an everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day. Now, where are the demons? Where is Satan? Is he reserved in chains in darkness? He is not.

Are the demons reserved in darkness in chains? They are not. Jesus ran into dozens of them, legions of them, literally, who were not in darkness, not in chains, who roamed the earth, who went into the herd of swine, and so forth. So, what angels are these that are apparently not Satan and his followers? They are the angels who did not keep their first estate, who did not remain true to their function.

And these are the angels who were assigned to oversee, to judge, and to administrate the early human race. What did they do to depart from their first estate? What did they do to merit this fate? To be reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day? They disobeyed God. They saw the daughters of man that they were tov, and they took.

They followed, even after observing the great tragedy of the garden with Eve, they made the very same mistake. They had a trust. There was a boundary that they were not to cross.

God apparently commanded them to stay separate from men, but they saw, they found that what they saw was good, and they took, just like Eve in the garden. And this is a separate and distinct fall of angels. It's not following Satan.

It wasn't instigated by Satan. It was a free will decision by a group of angels. God had detailed to administer the human race.

You have another reference to this in 2nd Peter, just a few verses previous. 2nd Peter chapter 2 and verse 4. Talking about false prophets among the people and so forth. Peter says, for if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to Sheol, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved for judgment.

And notice the chronology here. What follows this episode in verse 4? And did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah. Our understanding here is that these angels who sinned, who have been cast down and reserved in chains of darkness, did this sin right before the flood, or at some point before the flood, because the flood is listed next by Peter.

These are the angels who sinned. This is not the necessarily the angels who rebelled with Satan, or who said I will five times. These angels sinned.

They transgressed. They crossed a boundary that God had set. And their fate is distinct and unique in the created world.

Satan and his demons are free. Satan travels up and attends convocations of the sons of

God. He's not reserved in chains.

When will he be reserved in chains, by the way? First day of the Millennial Kingdom. God will bind Satan. He will be cast into the bottomless pit, where he will remain for a thousand years.

He will not be bound until that time, as we mentioned before. It is a very dangerous thing to be running around talking about binding Satan and binding demons. There is one class of angels who have been bound.

They're bound by God, and they are angels who sinned back here in Genesis chapter 6. But what about this reference to my spirit? Well, look with me at Exodus chapter 25 and verse 20. Exodus 25 20. We want to learn a little bit about what Scripture says regarding angels, regarding the sons of God.

Exodus chapter 25 verse 20 talks about the mercy seat and the cherubim, the two cherubs, we said it in English, who are located on the lid of the Ark of the Covenant. The cherubim shall stretch out wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another. The faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat.

So they apparently have an approximately human form, but they have wings. This is where we get our standard conception of angels. You can see in Ezekiel, there are several other references to these cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant, which you can find in Solomon's day in 1st Kings chapter 6 and in 1st Kings chapter 8. But let's turn to Ezekiel chapter 1 and verse 6, where Ezekiel sees cherubim in a vision.

Ezekiel chapter 6, well, I'm sorry, it's chapter 1 verse 6. I can't read my own writing. Ezekiel looks in Ezekiel 1 4, I looked and behold a whirlwind, notice a whirlwind coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber out of the midst of the fire. Also from within it came the likeness of four living creatures and this was their appearance.

They had the likeness of a man. Each had four faces, each one had four wings. It goes on to describe them, but if you go down through this description, they are living creatures.

They have faces, look at verse 11, their face is like the face of a man, a lion, an ox and eagle. Their wings stretch upward, two wings of each one touched one another and two covered their bodies. They travel, they go forward and these living creatures, these four cherubim accompany the presence of God.

They are the honor guard for God's presence. They are these living creatures, they're cherubim with wings. They accompany the presence of God.

You remember in the descriptions in Isaiah and in Ezekiel of Satan in his unfallen state

that he was also a covering cherub. You look at Ezekiel 28 verse 14, you were the anointed cherub who covers. I established you.

You were on the holy mountain of God. You walked back and forth in the midst of the fiery stones. This fire associated with the presence of God is a common theme.

Now turn with me to Psalm 103 where we had our scripture reading this morning. This is where we're going to find these two concepts come together. The cherubim, the accompanying angels for God and this idea of my spirit.

In Psalm 103 verse 19, the Lord has established his throne in heaven and his kingdom rules over all. Bless the Lord you his angels who excel in strength, who do his word, heeding the voice of his word. Angels perform the word of God.

God gives commands and they execute it. Much of what takes place in the universe is mediated through angels. We saw in creation where God spoke and things came into being but God also accomplishes actions in the universe, in history, through angels.

He speaks and they heed his words. You remember that Daniel was waiting for word from God but the angel was detained fighting with the Prince of Persia and so forth. But now look at Psalm 104.

Psalm 104, bless the Lord O my soul, O Lord my God, you are very great. You are clothed with honor and majesty. You cover yourself with light as with a garment who stretches out the heavens like a curtain.

He lays the beams of his upper chambers in the waters, who makes the clouds his chariot, who walks on the wings of the wind. God is said in Psalm 104.3 to walk on the wings of the wind. How did Ezekiel see God traveling? On the wings of the cherubim.

Here it says God walks on the wings of the ruach, on the wings of the spirit, the wings of the wind. What use of ruach is this? What are the wings that accompany the presence of God? They're cherubim wings. Look at the next verse.

Who makes his angels spirits, ruachot, the plural of ruach. His angels are ruachot. God's angels are associated with the ruach, with the spirit.

What does the spirit of God do? It is the unseen manifestation of God's power, isn't it? That's what he is. He is the unseen presence of God in our lives. He is the comforter that God sent to us.

But God mediates his word through God the Holy Spirit. Our prayers are mediated by God the Holy Spirit. Look at Romans 8. And it appears that there is a close association, in God's mind at least, with the mediation of his word and angels.

This might put you in mind of a passage over in Hebrews. Remember Hebrews chapter 2

and verse 2? Turn to that right quick. Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 2. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward.

Now what is the book of Hebrews talking about? It talks about the law and the example in Israel, the Old Testament example of the saints. And says we have all of these for an example. We're surrounded by this great cloud of witnesses.

But if you go back and examine the giving of the law to Moses, do you find any angels present on Mount Sinai? One of the prominent characteristics and issues in that whole exchange is that Moses is talking to God face to face. God points that out explicitly. I don't talk to Moses like I do other men.

I speak with him face to face. That's why he glows in the dark and has to veil himself when he comes back down. So was the law of Moses given through intermediary angels? It was not.

So what is this word spoken through angels that indicates that every transgression should receive a just reward and so forth? This is harking back to the original instruction of the human race through these angels in Genesis chapter 6. The word of God communicated through angels. This is where the law of Talion and an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth first was given to the human race. This is where the idea of clean and unclean animals that Noah understands when the two-by-two take place for the unclean animals and seven of each clean animal are taken.

How did Noah know what was a clean and unclean animal? How did Abel know what to sacrifice? Why was Cain guilty in the bringing of his sacrifice in an improper manner? What was the means of communication of the word of God? They didn't walk with God in the garden anymore, but that knowledge had to come from somewhere. It was communicated apparently through these administering angels, which apparently are collectively referred to under the title of Ruach or Ruachot, depending on the context. God says, My spirit.

This solves another problem for us that many people have wrestled with. Turn with me over to Revelation. Revelation chapter 1 and verse 4. John to the seven churches which are in Asia, grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come and from the seven spirits who are before his throne.

What are the accompanying creatures to the throne of God? They are cherubim. And in this case, rather than the four living creatures that Ezekiel saw, which is apparently God's traveling retinue when he is moving about, he has an honor guard of four cherubim, but when he is up in the third heaven, he has seven accompanying spirits or accompanying angels. And once again, when you look at the description of these spirits, these appear to be the royal honor guard cherubim that accompany the presence of God

and guard the throne of God.

Apparently the greatest of whom at one time was Lucifer, who became Satan. You find a reference again. We might be able to explain away one reference to a seven spirits or sevenfold spirit, but look at Revelation chapter 3 and verse 1. To the angel of the church in Sardis write, these things says he who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

There are seven stars, seven churches, represented by the stars that he holds in his hand, but there are also seven spirits of God. I thought there was one spirit of God. I thought it was the Holy Spirit.

But here you have the seven spirits of God. What is being signified by that? Turn a page to chapter 4 and verse 5 of Revelation. This is the vision of the throne of God in heaven.

The one who sits there in verse 3 is like a jasper in the Sardis stone in appearance. There is a rainbow around the throne in appearance like an emerald. Around the throne were 24 thrones, and on the thrones I saw 24 elders sitting, clothed in white robes, and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. These flaming ones, these karuvim, are pictured in this vision as blazing torches that surround the throne of God.

The purifying fire representing God's holiness are there. And again in chapter 5 and verse 6, I looked and behold in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders stood a lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. These creatures are more than just an honor guard.

They occasionally are detailed to other duties and are sent out into all the earth. So it is clear to us that the phrase spirit of God, or my spirit, or my spirits can refer to heavenly creatures. And I believe that in Genesis chapter 6 and verse 3, when God says my ruach will not judge man, laolam, unto the ages, and then this virtually indecipherable Hebrew word, which means something along the lines of in the flesh.

We know that the bait that means in is there, and we have a reference to flesh. But the idea here is that God has incarnated his spirit, his ruach, in the form of these administering angels in the flesh. And he says I'm not going to do this forever.

I'm not going to continue to have administering angels existing in the flesh judging man. His days will yet be 120 years. This angelic administration of the human race has a time limit.

It's going to run for another 120 years. It goes on to tell us that there were giants in the earth in those days and also afterward when the sons of God came into the daughters of men. Once again, there is no violence implied here.

This is not the word used for the rape of Tamar or any impropriety at all. This is a normal word for physical relations resulting in pregnancy and childbirth. When the sons of God came into the daughters of men and they bore children to them, those were the mighty men of old, men of the name, men of renown, men of fame.

Where did these stories of the heroes and the ancient mythological figures come from? It was the result of these intermarriages. The extraordinary nature of these offspring that partook of both human nature and the nature of these judging angels was such that stories arose about them. And these carried through the flood in the families of Shem, Ham, and Japheth and in the non-godly lines that didn't observe the word of God, this became the basis for a lot of the mythology that you can read about today.

This also makes sense in the context because what is the occasion for God speaking and saying my spirit will not strive with man or words to that effect. It seems incongruous in the midst of this story about this strange intermarriage between the sons of God and the daughters of men. But it makes sense when we understand what the Ruach of God represents.

It is the mediating agency of God. It is the representative holy creatures who are here to perform God's purpose in administering the human race, but they sin. They transgress that boundary and their judgment is great.

They are chained and reserved in darkness. You may also recall another scripture. Remember that there is a reference in 1 Peter chapter 3 to Jesus preaching to somebody that's reserved in chains.

Remember that? 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 19? Another mysterious passage. In verse 18 of 1 Peter 3, Christ suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who formerly were disobedient. When once the divine long-suffering waited, when? In the days of Noah.

These spirits were specifically disobedient in the days of Noah when the divine long-suffering waited. God said, I will tolerate this another hundred and twenty years and then it's going to end. While the ark was being prepared in which a few, that is eight souls, were saved through water.

And Peter goes on to make a wonderful point from that example. But it's clear that Peter understood that this angelic disobedience took place in the days when Noah was building the ark, in that generation. And that those are the spirits who are imprisoned.

And that Jesus, as a part of his victory march after the cross, and after the resurrection by the way, not during the three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, but after the resurrection, went and preached, went and informed these sealed-off disobedient angels of what had transpired. So now, with that understanding, when we go back and read these first few verses of Genesis chapter 6, it lays down and makes sense. God says, my ruach, my angelic creatures will not judge man forever, relating to them in the flesh.

Their days will be 120 years. There have been many other explanations of this passage, that the human lifespan was going to be reduced to 120 years. The only problem with that is that it isn't.

There are several. Aaron, the brother of Moses, lives to be 124 and that's many, many generations down the road. Many other individuals in the Bible exceed 120 year lifespan, so that doesn't fly.

And it also explains verses 4, or the individuals mentioned in verse 4, the giants, which if you have the translation giants, this is the Hebrew word, Nephilim. The Nephilim, which this term only occurs one other place in Scripture, and that's when Joshua and Caleb and the spies go into the land and they say, we saw the Nephilim in the land and we were like grasshoppers in their sight. Nephilim, you see that I am ending, which is plural, is from the verb nafal.

Nafal, N-A-P-H-A-L, in Hebrew means to fall. The fallen ones, the fallen ones were in the earth in those days. The fallen ones are not in the earth today.

Where are they? They're reserved in darkness in the pit. There's also a fascinating reference over in Revelation to the one of the trumpet judgments, when there are angels that look like grasshoppers with a scorpion sting in their tail, and they have breastplates of iron and so forth, and they are released to harm men for five months. Where do those come from? They're released from the bottomless pit.

Their leader is Abaddon, who in Greek is called Apollyon. And there was apparently an administrative structure even for these angels when they were administering here on the earth, and Apollyon, their leader, who apparently sanctioned and allowed this whole core of angelic creatures to run amok, is going to come out and they will be used by God. They're going to know what's going on.

Jesus has informed them of the progress of human history and his victory at the cross. They're going to be released and perform an act of judgment on the earth later on in Revelation. They are released from the bottomless pit.

So the Nephilim who were in the earth in those days, and also afterward when the sons of God came into the daughters of men and bore them children, these were the

gibbereg, the mighty men, the mighty warriors, men of fame, men of renown, men of mighty acts and mighty deeds. They had a supernatural strength and supernatural abilities. And look at verse 5. Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great.

Now this sounds like an angelic problem. These angels messed up. But remember our verb for taking wives and for coming in and having sons and daughters.

This man is complicit in this. The fathers of these daughters are agreeing. Apparently they're receiving the bride price.

These mighty men can probably go out like David or like Samson and do a mighty deed and bring in a very healthy bride price. And men say, OK, fine, you can marry my daughter. And they're complicit in what is known to be wrong.

They're crossing a boundary. God said, let each kind reproduce after its kind. And this is a crossing of creatures, a crossing of species.

Even in the Mosaic Law, Israelites were prohibited from mixing animals, from crossbreeding crops. Makes you wonder about our activities today where we're crossbreeding all kinds of animals and crossbreeding crops and playing with genetics. God prohibited all of that in the Law of Moses.

And man knew better. And man was complicit. And this was an agreement on both sides of the coin with the sons of God and with the daughters of men and their fathers and their brothers.

And there were only a few, apparently in the line of Noah, who withheld themselves from any sort of participation in this action. That's why in verse 5, the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth and he was grieved in his heart.

So the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the Adamah, from the face of the earth. Remember when God gave a blessing to man? He said, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Now you have a curse.

God says, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth. He cursed Cain from the face of the earth. Remember? He said, the ground will no longer yield you its strength.

Now man is going to be completely washed off the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping things and birds of the air. For I am sorry that I have made them. It's a terrible day in the history of mankind.

And yet there is a glimmer of hope. Remember how the story began? Lamech begot

Noah. And he said, perhaps this is the one who will relieve us from the curse of the ground.

And Noah is introduced first. The story doesn't begin right after the line of Cain or all this multiplication and go right into the sons of God. That ray of hope is held out.

Noah was born. Noah is 500 years old. Noah has three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth.

And that's there with a yellow sticky on it. Remember this, Noah is there as all of this curse and evil comes across in the story because Noah, in verse 8, found grace in the eyes of the Lord. And even in the midst of judgment there is grace and there is hope.

And it's a wonderful illustration and reminder for us that grace found its fullest expression at the cross. We avail ourselves of it daily. And when we return to our study in Genesis 6 next week, we will find out how this episode plays out.

What does it mean for God to be sorry? Can God regret? Can God be sorry that he has made man? If he knew in his omniscience he was going to be sorry, why did he make them in the first place? We'll take a close look at the verb here that talks about God's regret and God's sorrow and see the other references to God's changing of his mind in the scriptures and illuminate for ourselves the judgment as well as the salvation that is pictured in Genesis 6-8. But let's close here in a word of prayer. We thank you Father for the privilege of studying your word.

We thank you that even in the midst of judgment there is the presence of your grace. There is the opportunity to express our faith in your promise to be on the blessing side of the ledger and not the cursing side to be heirs of the promises and the inheritance that belong to the seed of the woman and to separate ourselves from the opposite side. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will remind us of these things and show us their application and their relevance in our daily walk.

We pray that through these things our lives will bring glory to our Savior Jesus Christ whose death and burial and resurrection we celebrate at this time of year. And we ask these things in his name. Amen.