

What's the Message – Lesson Six

Today's study covers chapters six through nine of Genesis – Sin Engulfs the World.

Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Savior. Again, we pray as before, that the Lord will bless you through today's study, and give you a deeper comprehension of the horribleness of sin, that you may more fully appreciate the wonders of God's forgiveness. Amen.

Last time we saw the sin of Cain multiply, and become so widespread as to be commonplace. There was also a new concept introduced, the line of Seth who would be faithful followers of The Lord, contrasted with the line of Cain. In today's lesson, we see sin . . . literally . . . engulfing the world.

Chapter five traces the lineage of Seth for nearly two thousand years . . . to the ninth generation . . . and the birth of Noah. The chapter ends with the statement: .After Noah was five hundred years old, Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. At this point in his life, Noah could hardly be considered a "spring chicken". Nor could it have been considered an exemplary time to start a family, in light of the moral condition of the day.

Chapter six, verse 6, tells us: *The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* However, then beginning in verse 8, it adds: *But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. . . . Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God.*

Strange as it may seem, God then tells this man, who was already over 500 years old, to build an ark . . . for He was about to send a flood to destroy all flesh. Quite a task for any man and his sons, but God enabled him to accomplish the task. Fortunately, he didn't have to deal with a government bureaucracy, or do an environmental impact study, but he was sure to have had neighbors who made life difficult for this "crazy man" building a huge boat far away from any body of water.

Most people know the story of how Noah gathered the animals together and they came into the ark. But maybe it never quite dawned on you exactly how long Noah, his family, and all the animals were cooped up in this boat. It was more than a year after they entered, that they exited the ark and dwelt on the land again. Now, those are the basic elements of the story in these chapters, but what's the message for us, Teacher?

First, sin had so increased in the world . . . that of all the descendants of Adam . . . only Noah out of the line of Seth was seen by God as a righteous man. All the others God saw as evil continually. So God determined that He would start over again with a "new Adam" to rebuild the earth. Then God established a new covenant with Noah, saying: *I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done.*

We shall hear more of this concept of a "Second Adam" and a "New Covenant" later.

Second, that God has mercy on those who are faithful to Him, but is a God of judgment meeting out His justice on those who reject Him. This selection process of separating out who are His own will be a theme we see repeatedly in the coming lessons. But mankind has shown over the centuries that it is a slow-learner, and insists upon repeating the same mistakes over and over again.

We will see another classic example of that in our next lesson.

This series has been developed and written by our director of teacher training, Mr. D. A. Senter, and is copyrighted by Lamb of God Lutheran Church in Flower Mound, Texas. Your narrator is Dale Gaus.

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