

# Lesson 4 | September 25, 2022

## Human Sinfulness Increases

**Study Text:** Genesis 6:1–22

**Central Truth:** God is merciful, but persistent sinning invites His judgment.

**Key Verse: Genesis 6:5**

God 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 (KJV).

**The Lord observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil (NLT).**

### Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to recount how God put limits on humanity's sin, and preserved life in a time of judgment.
- Students will be called to consider both God's grace and the judgment of people who have rejected Him.
- Students will be encouraged not to abuse God's grace and to repent of persistent sin.

### Introducing the Study

**Say:** God is good. He showers the people He created with both physical and spiritual blessings. But when human beings do not respond to His kindness by living a life that honors Him, He brings judgment. **Because of His grace, He may give people a period of time—within limits—before sending judgment, as He did in Noah's lifetime.**

### Opening Activity—How Much Is Enough?

*Ask. When you were a child, how did you know that your father or mother was growing dissatisfied with your behavior; that he or she would soon not tolerate your actions and bring correction to your life?*

**Say:** Every parent has limits, based on their priorities and values. God's limits reflect His holiness and the need for people to treat Him as holy. **The people of Noah's day learned through judgment the lessons they should have learned through grace.** The grace of God that brings conviction for sin is one of His greatest gifts to us. By speaking to people's hearts and revealing their sin—and their need for salvation—He opens up the opportunity to begin a relationship with Him that lasts a lifetime. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Sin began in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve disobeyed God's simple command not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Their descendants were born into

the same state of living apart from God, and they demonstrated their sinful drive in their words, attitudes, and actions. **God would judge them for turning away from Him, but would use one person—Noah—to preserve a remnant of human and animal life on the ark.**

## **Part 1—Humans Became Exceedingly Evil Evil Will Be Limited**

Genesis 6:1–4

[Gen 6:1-4 KJV] 1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, 2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they [were] fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. 3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also [is] flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. 4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare [children] to them, the same [became] mighty men which [were] of old, men of renown.

**Say:** The Holy Spirit brings conviction of sin. Even in the days of Noah, the Spirit wrestled with the hearts of people to show them their need for repentance. Sadly, they rejected His witness, and brought destruction on themselves. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

God's blessing and mandate for human beings to fill the earth was being fulfilled (Genesis 6:1). **Although Genesis 5 makes numerous mentions that both sons and daughters were born in each generation, chapter 6 draws special attention to daughters, to lead into the story that follows.**

**Verse 2 is a point of different interpretations among Christians. Some consider the “sons of God” to be angelic beings who were able to mate with human women (NLT). However, Jesus taught that angels do not marry (Matthew 22:30). Others see the sons of God to be the descendants of righteous Seth, and the “daughters of men” (Genesis 6:4, KJV) to be the descendants of unrighteous Cain.**

**Human sin would bring the hand of God against the race. His Spirit would not “strive with,” or convict, the present generation forever; rather, humanity would be given a span of 120 years to correct its ways (Genesis 6:3, KJV; see John 16:8–11). This period of patience and grace was marked, along with the direct ministry of the Holy Spirit, by the ministry of Noah, both preaching to the people and building the ark in their presence (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5). (Note: Although some**

contemporary interpreters of Genesis 6:3 see the 120 years to mean humanity's lifespan, historical commentators understand it as the length of time that God gave the ungodly of Noah's era to repent.)

Many Bible versions use the word "Nephilim" for the "giants" in Genesis 6:4 (KJV); this is an English transliteration of the Hebrew word. They were called giants not only for their size, but for their strength and force—with which they oppressed and tyrannized others (see Genesis 6:11,13). **Although they were considered heroes and were renowned in their generation, their fame may have been the misplaced reverence of a wicked race.**

### ***Discuss***

? In what ways can believers cooperate with the Holy Spirit as He works to convict people of sin and reveal Christ to them?

? Why is it important to not go beyond the teaching of the Bible when discussing passages that may not be clear to us?

## **Evil Brings Destruction**

Genesis 6:5–7

**[Gen 6:5-7 KJV] 5 And GOD 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. 6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.**

**Say:** The world as God created it was very good—including its human inhabitants. But sin spoiled the picture, making judgment necessary. The same holiness of God that resulted in a very good world resulted in its punishment after it had gone astray. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Sin and evil had entered the human population when Adam and Eve fell to Satan's temptation. And every human being who followed carried the same propensity to turn against God and His holy character. Genesis 6:5 describes in vivid terms the complete depravity of the human race during this 120-year probationary period which God had instituted (see verse 3).

The evil in human hearts does not remain hidden there. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life" (NLT). A heart filled with evil thoughts manifests itself in evil actions (James 1:14–15).

The wickedness of the human race brought sorrow or regret to God's heart (Genesis 6:6). **Creating the human race was not a mistake. God's regret was because of people's constantly evil thoughts and consequent actions. God's unchanging nature meant that He must take righteous action against humanity's sin. Adam and Eve received judgment for their sin as the first, and only, human beings of their time. Now a large population would experience the judgment of a holy God. Although judgment was necessary, this state of affairs brought God no pleasure—it "broke his heart" (verse 6, NLT).**

God's judgment took the form of a flood, in which He would destroy both the human race and the totality of land-based animals (verse 7). Animal life had been placed under the rule of humanity and would suffer the effects of humanity's sin along with them. **The obliteration of life, landscape, and light—under forty days of constant rain—would return earth to its former condition as formless, empty, and dark (see Genesis 1:2).**

### ***Discuss***

? Could Adam and Eve's descendants have chosen to not follow them in sin? Explain.

? Since evil thoughts lead to evil actions, how may believers stop sin early in the process?

? What does God's attitude in judging the world of Noah's time suggest about His attitude in sending Christ to die for us??

## **Part 2—Noah Found God's Grace**

### **Noah and His Generation**

Genesis 6:8–11

**[Gen 6:8-11 KJV] 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. 9 These [are] the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man [and] perfect in his generations, [and] Noah walked with God. 10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.**

**Say:** God's intimate knowledge of the world and its inhabitants meant that He did not overlook Noah's faith and commitment to Him. When seeing the evil that was universal, God also saw an exception, and used this exception to preserve human and animal life during a time of universal judgment. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**Second Chronicles 16:9 states, "The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (NLT). Job concurs by giving his own assessment of God's global vision: "Doesn't he see**

everything I do and every step I take?” (Job 31:4, NLT). This all-seeing God of ours took note of one individual living in a wicked generation, Noah, who found favor with Him (Genesis 6:8).

While describing Noah as “righteous,” and uniquely “blameless” in his generation, the Bible does not imply that Noah was sinless. Every human being since our first parents (except Jesus Christ, the God-Man) has sinned. However, Noah, and later Abraham, were counted righteous because of their faith in God (Hebrews 11:7; see Genesis 15:6). Noah was a man of moral integrity, with a sincere desire to follow God. This desire would preserve not only his own life, but his sons’ lives as well (Genesis 6:10,18).

The Bible also describes Noah as a person who “walked with God” (verse 9, KJV). Walking is a frequent biblical word-picture for a person’s lifestyle—a lifestyle ideally lived in a relationship with God. At the very beginning, God walked in the Garden of Eden, and looked for Adam to walk with Him (Genesis 3:8–9). Enoch walked with God and did not experience death (Genesis 5:21–24). God still wants people to establish a relationship with Him through repentance and faith in Christ, and to walk daily with him, experiencing joy in His presence.

### **Resource Packet Item 2: Walking with God**

Distribute the work sheet and allow time for students to read through the questions. Discuss the question given.

In contrast, Noah’s generation was corrupt (Genesis 6:11). Sin pulls people away from God. The Hebrew word for corrupt is also used for the people’s corruption at Mount Sinai (Exodus 32:7); during the time of the judges (Judges 2:19); and during the reign of Israelite kings (2 Chronicles 27:2). Humankind during Noah’s time was sinning boldly and shamelessly, not concerned about the consequences of their depravity. God draws attention to one type of action that stood out among all others—violence—which filled the earth.

### ***Discuss***

? How can God’s knowledge of Noah encourage you when you feel like you are alone in a world turned against Him?

? Why should you make your walk with God a priority? How does this affect those around you?

## **God Announces His Judgment**

Genesis 6:12–13

**[Gen 6:12-13 KJV] 12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. 13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for**

**the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.**

**Say:** The world had reached a point of no return in its rejection of God's ways. It was soon to learn that no good thing comes from sin; rather, sin brings God's judgment. Noah was right before God on account of his faith; people today may enjoy the same spiritual state by faith in God's action through Jesus Christ. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**Earth, and all life forms, including humans, had been declared very good at creation (Genesis 1:31, KJV). Yet, judgment would come because everyone was corrupt in God's sight (Genesis 6:12, KJV). What brought the corruption that resulted in God's judgment? God's way had been rejected by our first parents, Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:12–13). All people—with the exception of the God-man, Jesus Christ—would follow Adam and Eve by sinful thoughts and actions. The apostle Paul, in Romans chapters 1 through 3, details the evil present in the entire human race: "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10, KJV; see also Psalm 14:3). Paul repeats the verdict that all have sinned, but gives the good news that sin will be forgiven for those who believe in Jesus Christ (Romans 3:23–24).**

#### **Resource Packet Item 2: All Have Sinned**

Distribute the case study sheet to class members. You may want to divide the class into small groups and assign one case study to each group. Then ask how we should deal with each individual, and if class members have encountered other situations in which people have denied the presence or power of sin in human lives.

Noah walked in the light he was given and received God's gift of righteousness by faith (Hebrews 11:7). Abraham later followed in his footsteps and was also justified in God's sight by faith (Genesis 15:6).

Because of Noah's right standing with him, God announced to Noah His coming judgment on the sinful world. God's declaration that He would "destroy" (6:13, KJV) all living creatures uses the same Hebrew root word that describes how people "corrupted" God's good earth (Genesis 6:12, KJV). Those God created had destroyed the world by turning against Him; He would, as a result, turn against them in destructive judgment.

#### ***Discuss***

? God dealt the death blow to sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. What were some of the things He taught His people in the centuries between Adam and Christ, to prepare them for Jesus' work?

? Why is it important to accept God's verdict that all have sinned??

## Part 3—Preparation for Coming Judgment Plans for the Ark

Genesis 6:14–16

**[Gen 6:14-16 KJV] 14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. 15 And this [is the fashion] which thou shalt make it [of]: The length of the ark [shall be] three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. 16 A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; [with] lower, second, and third [stories] shalt thou make it.**

**Say:** In one of the most incredible construction projects of the ancient world, a man about five hundred years old built a massive floating vessel (more of a box than a boat). Presumably he had the help of his three sons. **All of this happened because Noah heard the voice of God, and obeyed His commands completely.** (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**Having told Noah that the earth would be judged for sin, God gave him directions for saving himself, his family, and representatives of all land animals and birds. Noah was charged with building an ark, or very large hollow chest, of wood (Genesis 6:14). God designed this vessel not to sail, but to float. The inside of the ark was divided into cabins or small cells for its various occupants.**

The dimensions of the ark—300 cubits by 50 cubits by 30 cubits—used an ancient measure of length (verse 15, KJV). Depending on the time period, a cubit could be as short as 17 inches and as long as 23 inches. Generally speaking, a cubit was the length of a person’s arm from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger, about 18 inches. **At 450 feet long, the ark was longer than a typical city block.**

### **Resource Packet Item 3: How Big Was Noah’s Ark?**

Distribute the information sheet to supplement the teaching and facilitate the discussion of the ark’s dimensions.

The ark was constructed of “gopher wood” (verse 14, KJV), or “cypress wood” (NLT), an evergreen wood greatly durable and valued in the ancient world for shipbuilding. For waterproofing and a defense against worms, Noah was directed to coat the ark with tar, probably bitumen, which is freely available in the Euphrates valley.

An 18-inch high window at the top of the ark provided light and ventilation (verse 16). A door in the side of the vessel was the entry for animals and people. The ark was

divided into three decks, or stories. Each would have averaged about 15 feet high, leaving room for occupants and food the people and animals aboard needed.

### ***Discuss***

? How did the design of the ark differ from that of a conventional boat?

? What do you suppose Noah said to communicate God's plan to his sons and ask for their help in building the ark?

## **Death Outside, Life Inside**

Genesis 6:17–22

**[Gen 6:17-22 KJV] 17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein [is] the breath of life, from under heaven; [and] every thing that [is] in the earth shall die. 18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. 19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every [sort] shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep [them] alive with thee; they shall be male and female. 20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every [sort] shall come unto thee, to keep [them] alive. 21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather [it] to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them. 22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.**

**Say:** God works mighty deliverance—from both physical dangers and spiritual dangers. However, He desires that human beings willfully turn from actions that have put them in danger in the first place and put their faith in Him for salvation. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**God told Noah that He would send a flood to end the life of “every living thing that breathes” (Genesis 6:17, NLT). This was the result, not of natural law, but of God's direct action; God said emphatically, “I, even I, do bring a flood” (verse 17, KJV).**

**In the midst of destruction, God delivered Noah and his entire family (verse 18). God established His covenant—His solemn promise—with Noah, and called for a response of faith: Noah and his family had to enter the boat they had built. Noah's three sons and their wives believed the promise God had given Noah and entered the ark.**



In addition to the human passengers, the ark was the only place of refuge for a pair of each kind of land animal and bird (verse 19). Later, we find that seven pairs of the animals approved for sacrifice and eating and seven pairs of every kind of bird (see 7:2–3) were included. Many accounts in Scripture—such as Daniel’s safety in the lions’ den (Daniel 6:20–23)—establish God’s power over the creatures He made. Here, God promised Noah that He would personally draw pairs of each creature so they would be kept safe through the Flood (Genesis 6:20). Although God has established a special relationship with human beings only, His love and care extends to the animal kingdom as well.

The larger task was loading the ark with enough food for the human and animal passengers for an entire year (verse 21). At this point, God’s direct sanction was for a diet of plants for all living creatures (see 1:29–30). Noah obeyed God in all the preparations for the Flood (6:22).

### ***Discuss***

? God requires a response of faith in Jesus Christ. Why does He not simply save everyone without this response? What does this teach us about evangelism and missions?

? Read Matthew 10:29. What should a believer’s attitude reflect about the care God has for His animal creation?

## **What Is God Saying to Us?**

**Say:** God sees the life of every human being on earth. He sees those who have not met Him through Christ, and sends believers to share with them the truth of the gospel. He also sends the Holy Spirit to touch their hearts and aim them toward Him. God sees those who have committed their hearts to Him, and helps them grow deeper in their spiritual lives. God may call us to tasks that will affect countless people. God chose Noah to preserve both human and animal life on the ark; Noah had a quality of heart and life not shared by those of his generation. God still chooses—and uses—people who please Him.

## **Living It Out**

### **Ministry in Action**

- Examine your heart with the Spirit’s help for any persistent sin and repent of it.
- Ask God to help you be an instrument of the Holy Spirit to help others turn to Jesus Christ.
- Find opportunities to share the gospel with unbelievers both in words and in actions.

## **Daily Bible Readings**

### **Monday:**

The Wicked May Prosper.  
Job 21:7–16

**[Job 21:7-16 KJV] 7 Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? 8 Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. 9 Their houses [are] safe from fear, neither [is] the rod of God upon them. 10 Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf. 11 They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. 12 They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. 13 They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. 14 Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. 15 What [is] the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him? 16 Lo, their good [is] not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far from me.**

**Tuesday:**

Evildoers Are Cut Off.  
Psalm 37:1–10

**[Psa 37:1-10 KJV] 1 [[A Psalm] of David.] Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. 2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; [so] shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. 4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. 5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring [it] to pass. 6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. 7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. 9 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. 10 For yet a little while, and the wicked [shall] not [be]: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it [shall] not [be].**

**Wednesday:**

The Wicked and the Righteous.  
Proverbs 10:24–32

**[Pro 10:24-32 KJV] 24 The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted. 25 As the whirlwind passeth, so [is] the wicked no [more]: but the righteous [is] an everlasting foundation. 26 As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so [is] the sluggard to them that send him. 27 The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. 28 The hope of the righteous [shall be] gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish. 29 The way of the LORD [is] strength to the upright: but destruction [shall be] to the workers of iniquity. 30 The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth. 31 The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out. 32 The**

**lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked [speaketh] frowardness.**

**Thursday:**

Children of the Wicked One.  
Matthew 13:36–43

**[Mat 13:36-43 KJV] 36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked [one]; 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

**Friday:**

Wicked Hands Crucified Jesus.  
Acts 2:22–24

**[Act 2:22-24 KJV] 22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.**

**Saturday:**

Overcome the Wicked One.  
1 John 2:12–17

**[1Jo 2:12-17 KJV] 12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him [that is] from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. 14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him [that is] from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. 15 Love not the world, neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the**

**Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof:  
but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.**