

# CHAPTER 6

## INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 6

This chapter gives an account of the wickedness of the old world, both among the profane and the professors of religion, which was taken notice of and resented by God, upon which he determined the destruction of it, (<sup><0001></sup>Genesis 6:1-7) only one man, Noah, is excepted, who found favour with God, and whose character is given, (<sup><0008></sup>Genesis 6:8-10) and to whom was observed by God the general corruption of the earth, (<sup><0011></sup>Genesis 6:11-13) and to whom he gave orders and directions for the building an ark for himself, and his family, being determined to destroy the earth with a flood, and all creatures in it, (<sup><0014></sup>Genesis 6:14-17) only he would preserve him and his wife, his three sons and their wives, and two of every living creature, for which, and for himself and his family, he was to take food into the ark when built, (<sup><0018></sup>Genesis 6:18-21) and the chapter is concluded with observing, that Noah did as he was commanded, (<sup><0022></sup>Genesis 6:22).

**Ver. 1.** *And it came to pass, when men began to multiply upon the face of the earth*, etc.] Either mankind in general, or rather the posterity of Cain, who were mere natural men, such as they were when born into the world, and as brought up in it, destitute of the grace of God, and of the knowledge and fear of him; and who in proportion much more multiplied than the posterity of Seth, because of the practice of polygamy, which by the example of Lamech, one of that race, might prevail among them:

*and daughters were born unto them*; not daughters only, but sons also, though it may be more daughters than sons, or it may denote remarkable ones, for their beauty or immodesty, or both; and chiefly this is observed for the sake of what follows.

**Ver. 2.** *That the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair*, etc.] Or “good”<sup>f355</sup>, not in a moral but natural sense; goodly to look upon, of a beautiful aspect; and they looked upon, and only regarded their external beauty, and lusted after them: those “sons of God” were not angels either good or bad, as many have thought, since they are incorporeal beings, and cannot be affected with fleshly lusts, or marry and be given in

marriage, or generate and be generated; nor the sons of judges, magistrates, and great personages, nor they themselves, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and so Jarchi and Aben Ezra; but this could be no crime in them, to look upon and take in marriage such persons, though they were the daughters of the meaner sort; and supposing they acted a criminal part in looking at them, and lusting after them, and committing fornication with them, and even in marrying irreligious persons; yet this could only be a partial, not an universal corruption, as is after affirmed, though such examples must indeed have great influence upon the populace; but rather this is to be understood of the posterity of Seth, who from the times of Enos, when then began to be called by the name of the Lord, (~~0025~~Genesis 4:25) had the title of the sons of God, in distinction from the children of men; these claimed the privilege of divine adoption, and professed to be born of God, and partakers of his grace, and pretended to worship him according to his will, so far as revealed to them, and to fear and serve and glorify him. According to the Arabic writers <sup>f356</sup>, immediately after the death of Adam the family of Seth was separated from the family of Cain; Seth took his sons and their wives to a high mountain (Hermon), on the top of which Adam was buried, and Cain and all his sons lived in the valley beneath, where Abel was slain; and they on the mountain obtained a name for holiness and purity, and were so near the angels that they could hear their voices and join their hymns with them; and they, their wives and their children, went by the common name of the sons of God: and now these were adjured, by Seth and by succeeding patriarchs, by no means to go down from the mountain and join the Cainites; but notwithstanding in the times of Jared some did go down, it seems; (see Gill on "~~0050~~Genesis 5:20") and after that others, and at this time it became general; and being taken with the beauty of the daughters of Cain and his posterity, they did as follows:

*and they took them wives of all that they chose*; not by force, as Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom interpret, for the Cainites being more numerous and powerful than they, it can hardly be thought that the one would attempt it, or the other suffer it; but they intermarried with them, which the Cainites might not be averse unto; they took to them wives as they fancied, which were pleasing to the flesh, without regard to their moral and civil character, and without the advice and consent of their parents, and without consulting God and his will in the matter; or they took women as they pleased, and were to their liking, and committed fornication, to which the Cainites were

addicted; for they spent their time in singing and dancing, and in uncleanness, whereby the posterity of Seth or sons of God were allured to come down and join them, and commit fornication with them, as the Arabic writers <sup>f357</sup> relate.

**Ver. 3.** *And the Lord said*, etc.] Not to Noah, as in (<sup><0063></sup>Genesis 6:13) for, as yet, he is not taken notice of, or any discourse addressed to him; but rather to or within himself, he said what follows, or thus concluded, and resolved on in his own mind:

*my Spirit shall not always strive with man*; meaning either the soul of man, called the Spirit of God, (<sup><827B></sup>Job 27:3) because of his creation, and is what he breathes and puts into men, and therefore is styled the Father of spirits; and which is in man, as some in Aben Ezra observe to be the sense the word used, as a sword in the scabbard; and so the meaning is, it shall not always abide there, but be unsheathed and drawn out; man shall not live always, since he is corrupt, and given to carnal lusts: or else, as Jarchi thinks, God himself is meant, and that the sense is, my Spirit shall not always contend within myself; or there shall not always be contention within me concerning man, whether I shall destroy him, or have mercy on him; I am at a point to punish him, since he is wholly carnal: or rather this is to be understood of the Holy Spirit of God, as the Targum of Jonathan, which agrees with (<sup><018B></sup>1 Peter 3:18-20) and to be thus interpreted; that the Spirit of God, which had been litigating and reasoning the point, as men do in a court of judicature, as the word signifies, with these men in the court, and at the bar of their own consciences, by one providence or by one minister or another, particularly by Noah, a preacher of righteousness, in vain, and to no purpose; therefore, he determines to proceed no longer in this way, but pass and execute the sentence of condemnation on them:

*for that he also is flesh*; not only carnal and corrupt, but sadly corrupted, and wholly given up to and immersed in sensual lusts and carnal pleasures, so as not to be restrained nor reformed; even the posterity of Seth, professors of religion also, as well as the profane world and posterity of Cain:

*yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years*: meaning not the term of man's life, reduced to this from the length of time he lived before the flood; but this designs the space that God would give for repentance, before he proceeded to execute his vengeance on him; this is that "longsuffering of God" the apostle speaks of in the afore mentioned place, "that waited in

the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing”; and so both the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan interpret it of a space of an hundred and twenty years given them to repent: now whereas it was but an hundred years from the birth of Japheth to the flood, some think the space was shortened twenty years, because of their impenitence; but it is more probable what Jarchi observes, that this decree was made and given out twenty years before his birth, though here related, by a figure called “hysteron proteron”, frequent in the Scriptures.

**Ver. 4.** *There were giants in the earth in those days*, etc.] That is, in the days before the sons of God took the daughters of men for wives, in such a general manner as before declared, or before the declension and apostasy became so universal; even in the times of Jared, as the Arabic writers <sup>f358</sup> understand it, who say that these giants were begotten on the daughters of Cain by the children of Seth, who went down from the mountain to them in the days of Jared, (see <sup><OR></sup>Genesis 5:20) the word “Nephilim” comes from a word which signifies to fall; and these might be so called, either because they made their fear to fall upon men, or men, through fear, to fall before them, because of their height and strength; or rather because they fell and rushed on men with great violence, and oppressed them in a cruel and tyrannical manner; or, as some think, because they fell off and were apostates from the true religion, which is much better than to understand them of apostate angels, whom the Targum of Jonathan mentions by name, and calls them Schanchazai and Uziel, who fell from heaven, and were in the earth in those days:

*and also after that*, which shows that the preceding clause respects giants in former times,

*when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men*, came into their houses and chambers, and lay with them:

*and they bare [children] unto them*, or giants unto them, as may be supplied from the former clause; for the sense is, as there were giants before this general defection, so there were at this time, when there was a mixture of the Cainites and Sethites; which were the offspring of the sons of God, or posterity of Seth, mixing with the daughters of men, or the posterity of Cain; for this is not to be understood after the flood, as Aben Ezra, Ben Melech; and so they are described in the following words,

*the same [became] mighty men*; for tallness and strength, for power and dominion, for tyranny and oppression:

*which [were] of old*: like those that were of old before; or who in after times were spoken of, as in the days of old:

*men of renown*, or “of name”<sup>f359</sup>; whose names were often made mention of, both for their size and for their wickedness; they were much talked of, and extolled for their exploits, and even wicked ones: they were famous men, or rather infamous; for some men get a name in the world, not for their goodness, but for their greatness, and sometimes for their great wickedness; which sense is countenanced by what follows: that there were giants in these early times is confirmed by the testimony of many Heathen writers; such were the Titans that made war against Saturn, begotten by Uranus, who were not only of bulky bodies, but of invincible strength, as Apollodorus<sup>f360</sup> relates, and Berosus<sup>f361</sup> speaks of a city about Lebanon, called Enos, which was a city of giants, who were men of vast bodies, and of great strength, inventors of arms and music, were cannibals, and exceedingly debauched.

**Ver. 5.** *And God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth*, etc.]

That it spread throughout the earth, wherever it was inhabited by men, both among the posterity of Cain and Seth, and who indeed now were mixed together, and become one people: this respects actual transgressions, the wicked actions of men, and those of the grosser sort, which were “multiplied”<sup>f362</sup> as the word also signifies; they were both great in quality and great in quantity; they were frequently committed, and that everywhere; the degeneracy was become universal; there was a flood of impiety that spread and covered the whole earth, before the deluge of waters came, and which was the cause of it: this God saw, not only by his omniscience, by which he sees everything, but he took notice of it in his providence, and was displeased with it, and determined in his mind to show his resentment of it, and let men see that he observed it, and disapproved of it, and would punish for it:

*and [that], every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually*: the heart of man is evil and wicked, desperately wicked, yea, wickedness itself, a fountain of iniquity, out of which abundance of evil flows, by which it may be known in some measure what is in it, and how wicked it is; but God, that sees it, only knows perfectly all the wickedness of it, and the evil that is in it: the “thoughts” of his heart are evil; evil

thoughts are formed in the heart, and proceed from it; they are vain, foolish, and sinful, and abominable in the sight of God, by whom they are seen, known, and understood afar off: the “imagination” of his thoughts is evil, the formation of them; they were evil while forming, the substratum of thought, the very beginning of it, the first motion to it, yea, “every” such one was evil, and “only” so; not one good among them, not one good thing in their hearts, no one good thought there, nor one good imagination of the thought; and so it was “continually” from their birth, from their youth upwards, throughout the whole of their lives, and all the days of their lives, night and day, and day after day, without intermission: this respects the original corruption of human nature, and shows it to be universal; for this was not only true of the men of the old world, but of all mankind; the same is said of men after the flood as before, and of all men in general without any exception, (~~0002~~ Genesis 8:21 ~~0401~~ Psalm 14:1-3 ~~6800~~ Romans 3:9-11). Hence appears the necessity of regeneration, and proves that the new creature is not an improvement of the old principles of corrupt nature, since there is no good thing in man but what is put into him; also the disability of man to do that which is good, even to think a good thought, or do a good action; therefore the works of unregenerate men are not properly good works, since they cannot flow from a right principle, or be directed to a right end.

**Ver. 6.** *And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth,* etc.] Because of the wickedness of man, the wickedness of his heart, and the wickedness of his life and conversation, which was so general, and increased to such a degree, that it was intolerable; wherefore God could have wished, as it were, that he had never made him, since he proved so bad; not that repentance, properly speaking, can fall upon God, for he never changes his mind or alters his purposes, though he sometimes changes the course and dispensations of his providence. This is speaking by an anthropopathy, after the manner of men, because God determined to do, and did something similar to men, when they repent of anything: as a potter, when he has formed a vessel that does not please him, and he repents that he has made it, he takes it and breaks it in pieces; and so God, because of man’s wickedness, and to show his aversion to it, and displicency at it, repented of his making him; that is, he resolved within himself to destroy him, as in the next verse, which explains this:

*and it grieved him at his heart;* this is to be understood by the same figure as before, for there can, no more be any uneasiness in his mind than a

change in it; for God is a simple Being, uncompounded, and not subject to any passions and affections. This is said to observe his great hatred to sin, and abhorrence of it.

**Ver. 7.** *And the Lord said*, etc.] Not to the angels, nor to Noah, but within himself, on observing to what a height the sin of man had got, and what a spread it made on the earth:

*I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth;* though he is my creature, the work of my hands, I have made him out of the earth, and made him lord of it; I am now determined to show my detestation of his wickedness, and for the honour of my justice to destroy him from off it; just as a potter takes a vessel he dislikes, when he has made it, and dashes it to pieces: or “I will wipe men off of the earth”<sup>f363</sup>; like so much dust; man was made of the dust of the earth, he is dust, yea, sinful dust and ashes; and God resolved to send a flood of waters on the earth, which should wash off man from it, like so much dust upon it, just as dust is carried off by a flood of water, (see <sup><1213></sup>2 Kings 21:13) or “I will blot out man”<sup>f364</sup>, as most render the words; that is, out of the book of the living, he shall no longer live upon the earth; out of the book of creation, or of the creatures, he shall have no more a being, or be seen among them, any more than what is blotted out of a book:

*both man and beast;* or “from man to beast”<sup>f365</sup>; even every living creature upon the earth, from man to beast, one as well as another, and one for the sake of the other, the beasts for the sake of man; these were made for his use and benefit, but he sinning against God, and abusing his mercies, they are to be taken away, and destroyed for his sake, and as a punishment for his sins:

*and the creeping things, and the fowls of the air;* not the creeping things in the great and wide sea, for the fishes died not in the deluge, but the creeping things on the earth, (<sup><003></sup>Genesis 6:20)

*for it repenteth me that I have made them;* man, male and female, whom he created; Adam and Eve, and their posterity, and particularly the present inhabitants of the earth: but though it may respect men principally, yet is not to be restrained to them, but takes in all the creatures before mentioned, made for the use of man; and the ends not being answered by them, God repented that he had made them, as well as man. Some think the repentance, attributed to God in this and the preceding verse, is not to be

understood of him in himself, but of his Spirit in good men, particularly Noah, producing grief, sorrow, and repentance in him, who wished that man had never been, than to be so wicked as he was; but for such a sense there seems to be no manner of foundation in the text.

**Ver. 8.** *But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*] This man and his family were the only exception to the general apostasy; God always reserves some, in the worst of times, for himself; there is a remnant, according to the election of grace; it was but a small one, and that now appeared; and this was owing to the grace of God, and his choice upon that, and not to the merits of the creature. This grace, which Noah found and shared in, was the favour and good will of God; Noah was grateful and acceptable to him; he was well pleased with him in Christ; his person, services, and sacrifices, were acceptable to him through the Beloved; though he might not be acceptable in the eyes of men, who derided him for his piety and devotion, and especially for his prediction of the flood, and making an ark to save him and his family from it; yet he was very acceptable in the eyes of the Lord, and grateful in his sight, and was favoured with grace from him, who is the God of all grace, and with all the supplies of it: the Jerusalem Targum is, he

“found grace and mercy;”

the grace he found was not on account of his own merit, but on account of the mercy of God: and this shows that he was not without sin, or he would have stood in no need of the mercy and grace of God to save him; and as he found grace and favour in things spiritual, so in things temporal; he found favour with God, and therefore he and his family were spared, when the whole world of the ungodly were destroyed; he found favour with God, and therefore was directed by him to build an ark, for the saving of himself and his; he found favour with him, and therefore he had the honour of being the preserver of mankind, and the father of a new world.

**Ver. 9.** *These are the generations of Noah,* etc.] Or this is the account of his posterity, of the persons that were generated by him, that sprung from him, and peopled the earth after the flood, who are mentioned in the next verse, what follows being to be put in a parenthesis; as the genealogy of Adam is carried on from Adam to Noah, (~~GEN~~Genesis 5:1-32) so the old world ending at the flood, the genealogy of the new world begins with Noah: though Aben Ezra and Ben Gersome interpret the word “events”, things which days bring forth, (~~PROV~~Proverbs 27:1) these are the events or



the things which befell Noah, of which an account is given in this and some following chapters, whose character is next observed:

*Noah was a just man*; not only before men, but in the sight of God; and not by his own works of righteousness, for no man is just by them before God, but by the righteousness of the promised seed, the Messiah; for he “became heir of the righteousness which is by faith”, (<sup>38107</sup>Hebrews 11:7) the righteousness which was to be brought in by the Son of God, and which was revealed to him from faith to faith; and which by faith he received and lived upon, as every just man does, and believed in as his justifying righteousness before God; though he also lived a holy and righteous conversation before men, which may rather be intended in the next part of his character:

*and perfect in his generations*; not that he was perfectly holy, or free from sin, but was a partaker of the true grace of God; was sincere and upright in heart and life; lived an unblemished life and conversation, untainted with the gross corruptions of that age he lived in, which he escaped through the knowledge, grace, and fear of God; and therefore it is added, that he was holy, upright, and blameless “in his generations”: among the men of the several generations he lived in, as in the generation before the flood, which was very corrupt indeed, and which corruption was the cause of that; and in the generation after the flood: or “in his ages”<sup>f366</sup>, in the several stages of his life, in youth and in old age; he was throughout the whole course of his life a holy good man.

[*And*] *Noah walked with God*: walked according to his will, in the ways of truth and righteousness; walked in a manner well pleasing to him, and enjoyed much communion with him, as Enoch had done before him, (<sup>40672</sup>Genesis 5:22,24).

**Ver. 10.** *And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*] When he was five hundred years of age, and before the flood came upon the earth; and when it was so wicked as is next described: of these sons of his, and of the order in which they are placed, (see Gill on “<sup>40652</sup>Genesis 5:32”).

**Ver. 11.** *The earth also was corrupt before God*, etc.] That is, the inhabitants of the earth were corrupt in their lives and conversations; they were corrupt both in principle and practice, and did abominable things; and those corruptions were, according to Jarchi, uncleanness and idolatry; they were corrupt in the worship of God, worshipping the creature more, or

besides the Creator; and they were corrupt in their manners and behaviour to one another, being guilty of fornication and adultery, and other enormous crimes; of some against God, and of others against their neighbours; and these they committed openly and impudently, without any fear of God, or dread of his wrath and displeasure, and in contempt of him, his will and laws:

*and the earth was filled with violence*; with doing injury to the persons and properties of men; with oppression and cruelty, by tyrannical decrees and unrighteous judgments; or with rapines and robberies, as the Targums and Jarchi; and with rapes, as Aben Ezra adds: the account that Lucian<sup>f367</sup> gives from tradition agrees with this; that the present race of men is not the first, they totally perished by a flood; and those men were very insolent and addicted to unjust actions; for they neither kept their oaths, nor were hospitable to strangers, nor gave ear to suppliants, for which reason they were destroyed.

**Ver. 12.** *And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt*, etc.] This is spoken as if he had never looked upon it before; whereas his eyes are always upon the earth, and the inhabitants of it, and upon all their ways and works: but this denotes the special notice he took, and the particular observation he made upon the condition and circumstances the earth, and its inhabitants, were in. And this is remarked, as well as the particle “behold” is used, to denote the certainty of this corruption; it must needs be true, that the earth was corrupted, since the omniscient God had declared it to be so, who sees and knows all things:

*for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth*: that is, all men, excepting Noah; who were flesh, carnal and unregenerate persons; these had corrupted the way of God, the true religion, with their idolatries: and they had corrupted their own way, their manners, their life and conversation with their uncleanness and wickedness of various sorts: the Arabic writers<sup>f368</sup> say, that after Enoch was taken away, the children of Seth and of Cain worshipped idols, everyone as he pleased, and were immersed in wickedness, and gave their right hands to each other, and joined in fellowship in committing sin and vice; and that in the times of Noah, none were left in the holy mount but he and his wife, and his three sons and their wives; all went down below and mixed with the daughters of Cain, and were immersed in sins, and worshipped strange gods, and so the earth was corrupted and filled with lasciviousness. The Jewish writers also

observe <sup>f369</sup>, that the generations of Cain were guilty of uncleanness, men and women, like beasts, and defiled themselves with all kind of fornication and incest, everyone with his mother, and with his own sister, and with his brother's wife, and that openly, and in the streets: and Sanchoniatho <sup>f370</sup>, the Heathen historian, the writer of the history of Cain's line, says of the fifth generation before the flood, that the women of those times, without shame, lay with any man they could meet with.

**Ver. 13.** *And God said unto Noah*, etc.] This is a proof that he found favour in his eyes, since he spake to him, and told him what he had observed, and what he was determined to do, and gave him directions to make an ark for the security of himself and family, when he should destroy the world:

*the end of all flesh is come before me*; that is, it was determined to put an end to the lives of all men, and of all cattle, and fowl and creeping things on the earth; all which are included in the phrase, "all flesh", even every living substance on the earth:

*for the earth is filled with violence through them*; that is, through men, for they are principally intended in the preceding clause, though not only; and it was through them, and not through other creatures, that the earth was filled with violence, in the sense in which it is explained in (see Gill on "<sup><del>G061</del></sup>Genesis 6:11"):

*and behold, I will destroy them with the earth*; meaning, that he would destroy all men, together with the cattle and creeping things of the earth, the trees, and herbs, and plants in it, yea, that itself, for that is said to perish by the flood, (<sup><del>G066</del></sup>2 Peter 3:6). Some render it, "out of the earth" <sup>f371</sup>; that is, would destroy them from it, that they should be no more on it.

**Ver. 14.** *Make thee an ark of Gopher wood*, etc.] It is not called a ship, for it was not made for sailing to any distant parts, but an ark or chest, being like one, flat bottomed, and ridged and sloping upwards, and was made for floating on the waters for a little way. So Lucian <sup>f372</sup>, and other Heathen writers, call it λαρναξ, "an ark" or "chest": this was made of "Gopher wood", which all the Targums, and the more ancient Rabbins, understand of cedar wood; some the box tree, as the Arabic version; others, the pine; others, fir; the Mahometans say it was the Indian plane tree; and others, the turpentine tree: but the cypress tree bids fairest to be the wood of which, the ark was made, as Fuller <sup>f373</sup>, Bochart <sup>f374</sup>, and others <sup>f375</sup> have shown;

that being nearest to “Gopher” in sound, and being a wood very durable and incorruptible, and fit for shipping. Alexander made a navy of cypress trees in the groves and gardens about Babylon, as Strabo<sup>f376</sup> relates: where this ark was made, is not easy to say: some think in Palestine; others, near Mount Caucasus, on the borders of India; others, in China: but it is most likely it was near the garden of Eden, where Noah lived, and not far from Ararat, where the ark rested. Bochart<sup>f377</sup> conjectures, that “Gopher” is the name of the place where it was made, as well as of the wood of which it was made; and that it might be Cupressetum or Cyparisson, which Strabo<sup>f378</sup> places in Assyria. How long Noah was building the ark is variously conjectured: a Jewish<sup>f379</sup> writer says fifty two years; and an Arabic writer<sup>f380</sup> an hundred years; others think Noah was building it the whole one hundred and twenty years<sup>f381</sup>, the time of God’s longsuffering and forbearance, which some conclude from (~~1~~1 Peter 3:20) but though it would require not a few years to build such a vessel, and prepare everything necessary for the use of it, yet one would think it should not take so many years as the least account gives unto it: it may be observed, the order is, “make thou”, or “for thyself”<sup>f382</sup>; for thy use and benefit, for the saving of thyself and family, as well as for the preservation of the several creatures which were for the service of him and his posterity:

*rooms shalt thou make in the ark*; or “nests”<sup>f383</sup>; little apartments, and many of them for the several creatures, and for their provisions, as well as for Noah and his family. The Targum of Jonathan gives us the number of them, paraphrasing the words thus,

“one hundred and fifty cells shalt thou make for the ark on the left hand, and ten apartments in the middle to put food in, and five cabins on the right, and five on the left:”

*and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch*; it was pitched without to keep out the waters, and that they might more easily slide off, and to preserve the ark from being eat with worms, or hurt with the wind and sun; and it was pitched within, to take off the ill smell that might arise from the several creatures, as well as for the better security of the ark. Some take it to be bitumen, a sort of clay or slime like pitch, such as was used at the building of Babel, and of the walls of Babylon. De Dieu conjectures it was that kind of bitumen which the Arabs calls Kaphura, which agrees in sound with the word here used; but why not the pitch of the pine tree, or the rosin

of the cypress tree, and especially the latter, if the ark was made of the wood of it <sup>f384</sup>?

**Ver. 15.** *And this [is the fashion] which thou shall make it of*, etc.] The form and size of it, its length, breadth, and height, as follows:

*the length of the ark [shall be] three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits*; which some interpret of geometrical cubits, each of which contained six ordinary cubits; others of sacred cubits, which were larger by an hand's breadth than the common cubit; but the general opinion of learned men now is, that they were common cubits of eighteen inches long; and by the geometrical calculations made by them it is found, that the ark of such dimensions was abundantly sufficient to contain Noah, and his family, and the various creatures, and all necessary provisions for them <sup>f385</sup>. But if the Jewish and Egyptian cubit, the cubit of the Scriptures, as Dr. Cumberland <sup>f386</sup> has shown it to be, consisted of twenty one inches and upwards, the ark according to them must be very near twice as great, and so more convenient for all the ends to which it was designed; for, as he observes, the cube of such a cubit is very near double to the cube of eighteen inches, and therefore so must the capacity be.

**Ver. 16.** *A window shalt thou make to the ark*, etc.] Or a "light", such as is that at noon, for which the word in the dual number is used; and therefore Junius and Tremellius translate it a "clear light". The Jewish writers <sup>f388</sup> will have it to be a precious stone, a pearl which Noah fetched from the river Pison, and hung up in the ark, and it gave light to all the creatures, like a large chandelier; but a window no doubt it was to let light into the several apartments, and to look out at on occasion, since Noah is afterwards said to open it; but what it was made of is difficult to say, since it does not appear that as yet glass was invented. Some think it was made of crystal, which would let in light, and keep off the water. A very learned <sup>f389</sup> man is of opinion, that Noah understanding chemistry, prepared a fine subtle fragrant spirit, of an oily nature and luminous, which he put into vessels made of crystal or glass, and hung them up in every room in the ark, and which was both illuminating and refreshing; and this he thinks is what is meant by the "Zohar", or "light", which we translate a "window"; but this is afterward said to be opened by Noah, to send forth the raven and the dove, which will not agree with such a vessel of spirituuous liquor:

*and in a cubit shall thou finish it above*; not the window, as some think, which they place at top of the ark, and suppose to be a cubit in length, but

the ark itself, which was finished with a roof raised up a cubit high in the middle:

*and the door of the ark shall thou set in the side thereof;* on which it is not said; an Arabic writer <sup>f390</sup> places it on the east side of it, on which side he supposes Noah and his sons dwelt, and on the west side his wife and his sons' wives. How large this door was is not said; it is reasonably supposed <sup>f391</sup> to be ten cubits high and eight broad, that there might be room enough for an elephant to enter in by it; and it seems it was so large, that Noah, and those with him, could not shut it, but it was done by the Lord, (<sup><0076</sup>Genesis 7:16)

*[with] lower, second, and third [stories] shalt thou make it:* the above Arabic writer <sup>f392</sup> makes the lower story to be for the beasts, the second for the birds, and the third for Noah and his children; and with him agrees a Jewish writer <sup>f393</sup>: but as by this distribution no place is left for provisions, they seem most correct who place the beasts in the lower story, and the birds with Noah and his family in the uppermost, and the provisions for all in the middle. This ark was a type of the church of God. As to the form and pattern of it, it was of God, so the separation of men from the world in a church state is of God; it is by his appointment, and it is his will, that when any numbers of men are converted in a place, that they should be incorporated together in a church state, the form of which is given by him, its officers appointed, and the laws and ordinances of it fixed by him: and as to the matter of it, "Gopher wood", a lasting and incorruptible wood, denoting the duration of the church; God ever had, and ever will have a church in the world: as to the parts of it, and rooms in it, the rooms may point at particular churches, of which there have been many; or may signify, that there is always room enough in the church of God to receive saints. The ark had three stories in it, as the tabernacle and temple had three divisions, which were types of the same also; and may have respect to the visible church, consisting of believers and unbelievers, the invisible church, or general assembly of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, and the church triumphant. The door into the ark may signify Christ, who, and faith in him, may be said to be the door into the church, and to all the ordinances of it: the window may either typify the glorious light of the Gospel, held forth in the church, or the ordinances of it, to which sensible souls betake themselves, as doves to their windows, (<sup><2318</sup>Isaiah 60:8). Into this ark not only Noah and his family, but creatures of all sorts were admitted, as sinners of all sorts called by grace, and

become peaceable, are received into the church of God; yea, even good and bad have a place here, though the latter under the notion and character of the former, but are hypocrites in Zion: here also were plenty of provisions for all in it, as there are in the church of God fulness of spiritual provisions for all the people of God. The ark was of the use of a ship, and was the means of saving a few men, even Noah and his family; so the church of God has the nature and use of a ship, of which Christ is the pilot, and conducts it through the sea of this world, in which it is often tossed with tempests, and distressed; but at last brought to its haven, in which a few are saved, not as the cause, which alone is Christ, but as the means. The Apostle Peter makes baptism its antitype, (<sup>f402b</sup>1 Peter 3:21) which is God's ordinance, and not man's, of his appointing; as to the form and manner of it, is the object of the world's scorn, when rightly administered, as Noah's ark was; represents a burial, as that did when Noah entered into it; and was an emblem of Christ's resurrection and ours, when he came out of it: it was a type of baptism in its salutary effect, it saves by water, as that does by leading to the resurrection of Christ; it saves not as a cause, but as a means of directing to Christ, the author of salvation; and saves not all in the water, only those that are in the ark, that is, truly and rightly in the church, and real members of it, or that are in Christ; and so many make the ark also a type of Christ.

**Ver. 17.** *And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth,* etc.] That there was such a flood of waters brought upon the earth, is confirmed by the testimonies of Heathen writers of all nations; only instead of Noah they put some person of great antiquity in their nation, as the Chaldeans, Sisithrus or Xisuthrus; the Grecians and Romans, Prometheus or Deucalion, or Ogyges. Josephus <sup>f394</sup> says, all the writers of the Barbarian or Heathen history make mention of the flood and of the ark; and he produces the authorities of Berosus the Chaldean, and Hieronymus the Egyptian, who wrote the Phoenician antiquities, and Mnaseas, and many others, and Nicolaus of Damascus: and there are others that Eusebius <sup>f395</sup> makes mention of, as Melo, who wrote against the Jews, yet speaks of the deluge, at which a man with his sons escaped; and Abydenus the Assyrian, whose account agrees with this of Moses that follows in many things; as do also what Lucian <sup>f396</sup> and Ovid <sup>f397</sup> have wrote concerning it, excepting in the name of the person in whose time it was: and not only the Egyptians had knowledge of the universal deluge, as appears from the testimony of Plato, who says <sup>f398</sup>, that an Egyptian priest related to Solon, out of their

sacred books, the history of it; and from various circumstances in the story of Osiris and Typhon, which name they give to the sea, and in the Chaldee language signifies a deluge; and here the Targum of Onkelos renders e word by “Tuphana”; and the Arabs to this day call the flood “Al-tufan”; but the Chinese also frequently speak of the deluge<sup>f399</sup>; and even it is said the Americans of Mexico and Peru had a tradition of it<sup>f400</sup>; and the Bramines also<sup>f401</sup>, who say that 21,000 years ago the sea overwhelmed and drowned the whole earth, excepting one great hill, far to the northward, called “Biudd”; and that there fled thither one woman and seven men (whose names they give, (see <sup><0073></sup>Genesis 7:13) those understanding out of their books that such a flood would come, and was then actually coming, prepared against the same, and repaired thither; to which place also went two of all sorts of creatures (see <sup><0069></sup>Genesis 6:19) herbs, trees, and grass, and of everything that had life, to the number in all of 1,800,000 living souls: this flood, they say, lasted one hundred and twenty years (see <sup><0063></sup>Genesis 6:3) five months and five days; after which time all these creatures that were thus preserved descended down again, and replenished the earth; but as for the seven men and woman, only one of them came down with her, and dwelt at the foot of the mountain.

And this flood was not topical or national only, but general and universal: it was brought “upon the earth”, upon the whole earth, as the following account shows; and by the Lord himself, it was not through second causes, or the common course of things: and to show it possible and certain, this form of expression is used, “behold, I, even I, do bring”; it was wonderful, beyond the power of nature, and therefore a “behold” is prefixed; it was possible, because the Almighty God declares he would bring it; and it was certain, which the redoubling of the word points at; and would be quickly, since he said, “I am bringing”, or “do bring”; just about to do it; wherefore the ark was not so long preparing as some have thought, and the command to build it was not long before the flood came. The word for the flood comes from one which signifies to fall<sup>f402</sup>, either because of the fall of the waters at it, or because it made all things to fall, wither, and decay, as herbs, plants, men, beasts, and all creatures; or from one that signifies to consume, or to mix and confound, and bring all things to confusion, as Jarchi suggests<sup>f403</sup>: and the end and intention of it, as here expressed, was

*to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven*; every living creature, men and women, the beasts and cattle of the earth, and



every creeping thing on it, and the fowls of the heaven, man principally, and these for his sake.

*[And] everything that is in the earth shall die;* but not what was in the waters, the fishes of the sea, which could live in the flood.

**Ver. 18.** *But with thee will I establish my covenant,* etc.] Made with Noah at this time, though not expressed, that on his making an ark, as God directed him, and going into it at his command, he would preserve him while building it from the rage of wicked men, and save him in it and his family, when the flood should come; and that they should come safe out of it, and repeople the world, which should be no more destroyed by one; for this covenant respects that later mentioned, (<sup>OLD</sup>Genesis 9:11-17) so Aben Ezra; or the promise of the Messiah, which should spring from him, for the fulfilment of which Noah and his family were spared; and this in every article God would confirm, of which he might be assured from his power, veracity, and faithfulness, and other perfections of his:

*and thou shalt come into the ark;* when the covenant would begin more clearly to be established, and more plainly to be fulfilling; Noah on the one hand being obedient to the divine will, having built an ark, and entering into it; and on the other, God giving him leave, and an order to enter into it, and shutting him up in it to preserve him:

*thou and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee;* that is, Noah and his wife, and his sons and their wives, in all eight persons; and eight only, as the Apostle Peter observes, (<sup>OLD</sup>1 Peter 3:20) by this it appears that Noah's three sons were married before the flood, but as yet had no children. Jarchi concludes, from the mode of expression used, that the men and women were to be separate; that they entered the ark in this manner, and continued so, the use of the marriage bed being forbidden them while in the ark.

**Ver. 19.** *And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark,* etc.] That is, of fowls, cattle, and creeping things, as after explained; and two of each sort at least were to be brought, as Jarchi observes, and not fewer; though of the clean sort there were to be more, even seven, as after directed; and these were to be brought, that they might preserve their species, as it follows:

*to keep [them] alive with thee*; to be fed and nourished by him in the ark, while others perished by the flood, that so they might propagate their own species, and be continued, for which reason it is further ordered:

*they shall be male and female*; not any two, but one male and one female, for the end before mentioned.

**Ver. 20.** *Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind*, etc.] What before is generally expressed by “every living thing”, is here particularly explained of every sort of them; and from the order of them some have thought that in the same manner they were disposed of in the ark, the fowls in the first story, the cattle in the next, and the creeping things in the lowermost: but others place them in a different manner, (see Gill on “<sup>f403</sup>Genesis 6:16”) the roots and grain in the lower story, the living creatures of all sorts in the second, and their hay and litter in the third: the second story being three hundred cubits long, and fifty broad, contained in the whole fifteen thousand cubits, which is supposed to be divided into an hundred and fifty equal rooms; so the Targum of Jonathan on (<sup>f404</sup>Genesis 6:14) of these, four are allowed for Noah and his family, two with earth for those animals that live underground, one for those which live on herbs and roots, and the other for those which live on flesh; and the other one hundred and forty four rooms are divided into three parts, that is, twenty four for birds, twenty five for beasts, and the other ninety five for such animals as are designed to be food for the rest; and according to the calculations of learned men, there appear to have been in this story rooms sufficient for all sorts of birds, beasts, and creeping things <sup>f404</sup>:

*two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive*; that is, they shall come of themselves, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe, the providence of God so directing and impelling them, just as the creatures came to Adam; so that there was no need for Noah to take any pains by hunting or hawking to get such a number together: the Targum of Jonathan is,

“they shall come unto thee by the hand of an angel, who shall take and cause them to come.”

So says another Jewish <sup>f405</sup> writer, that they were collected by the angels who presided over each species; in which, except the notion of angels presiding over every kind of creature, there is no incongruity, as Bishop Patrick observes; and two of every sort were to come to the ark, to be

preserved alive there, that they might propagate their species. So Lucian says <sup>f406</sup>, that swine, and horses, and lions, and serpents, and all other creatures which were on the earth, entered into the ark “by pairs”.

**Ver. 21.** *And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten*, etc.] By man and beast; of which (see <sup><0029></sup>Genesis 1:29,30)

*and thou shall gather [it] to thee*; to lay up in the ark:

*and it shall be for food for thee, and for them*: during the flood, a quantity sufficient for them: and according to the calculation of learned men <sup>f407</sup>, well versed in mathematics, there was room enough in the ark, and to spare, to put food for them all during the time the flood was on the earth.

**Ver. 22.** *Thus did Noah*, etc.] Or “and” or “therefore Noah made” <sup>f408</sup> the ark; and “all things”, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions:

*according to all that God commanded him, so did he*; he made the ark according to the pattern God gave him, he gathered together food for himself and family, and for all the creatures, and laid it up in the ark as God directed him; and when the time was come, he and they not only entered into it, but he took with him all the creatures he was ordered, as after related; in this we have an instance of his fear of God, of his faith in his word, and of his obedience to his will, (see <sup><8107></sup>Hebrews 11:7) in all which he was a type of Christ, the builder of his church the ark was a figure of, and the pilot of it through the tempestuous sea of this world, and the provider of all good things for it, for the sustenance of it, and of those who are in it.