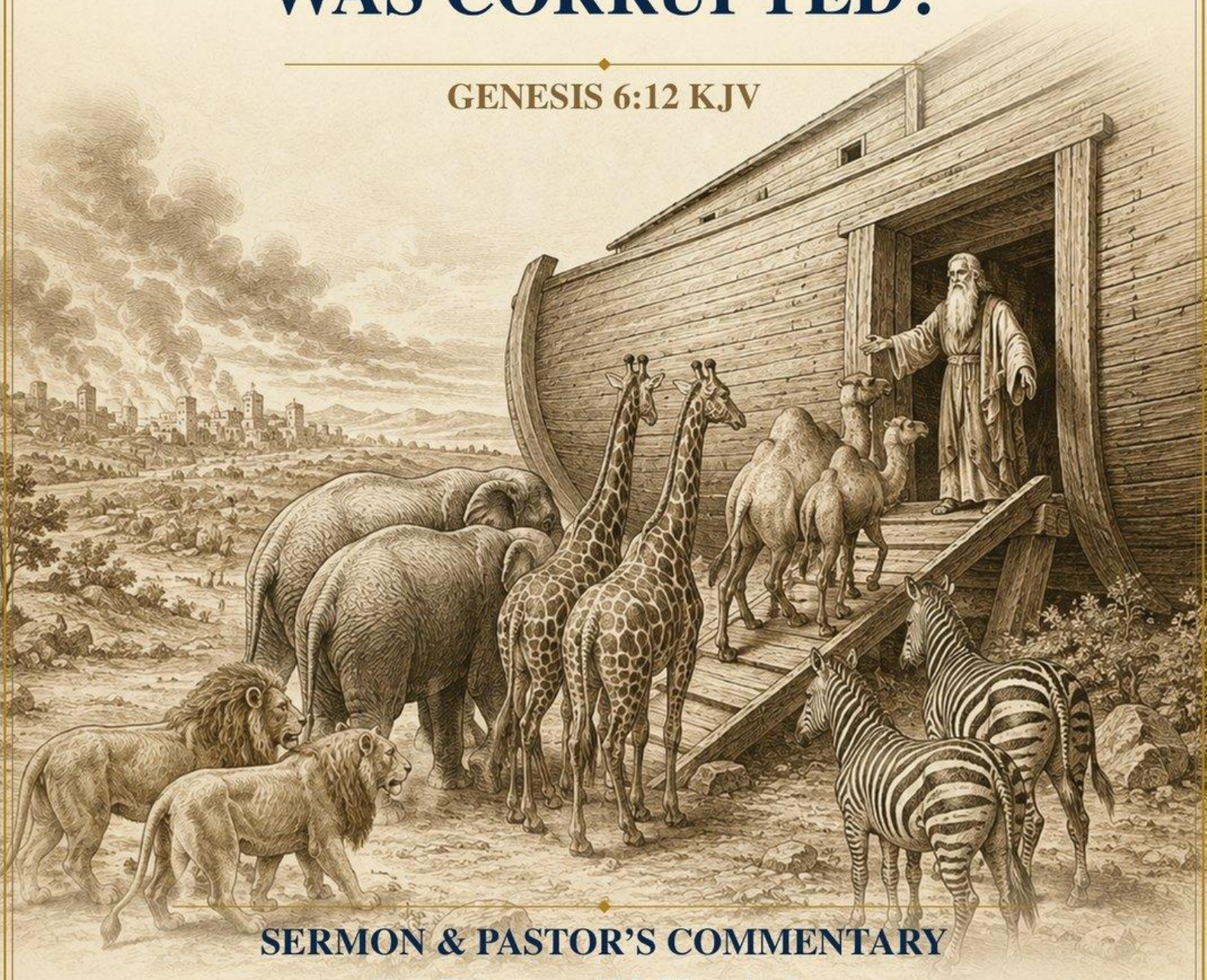


REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

REASON TOGETHER STUDY

WHAT DID GOD MEAN WHEN HE SAID 'ALL FLESH' WAS CORRUPTED?

GENESIS 6:12 KJV



SERMON & PASTOR'S COMMENTARY

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Aloha.

Welcome to Reason Together Church.

Whether this is your first time with us or you have been part of this church family for a long time, I am grateful that God has brought you here today.

This is a place where sincere questions are welcome.

You do not have to pretend that you understand everything in the Bible.

You do not have to be afraid of asking a difficult question.

Our invitation is simple.

Bring your questions.

Open your Bible.

Let us Reason Together the Word of God.

We also want to recognize any honored guests who may be with us today.

Thank you for sharing this time with our church family.

No one is going to single you out or ask you to stand.

We simply want you to know that you are welcome here.

After the service, please join us at the Reason Together Cafe for a cup of coffee and conversation.

The coffee is free, and so are the refills on the conversation.

Our Keiki Kids Center is also available for families who need it.

If this is your first visit, we have a very simple guest card.

We ask only for your first name and an email address so we can thank you for coming and let you know what is happening here.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for giving us a Bible that is true.

Thank You that Your Word gives us enough light to believe, enough truth to obey and enough mystery to keep us humble.

Help us distinguish what You have said from what people have imagined.

Give us confidence where the text is clear.

Give us caution where the evidence permits more than one conclusion.

Give us honesty where the answer remains uncertain.

Most of all, use this account of judgment and grace to show us the condition of our own hearts and the refuge You have provided through Jesus Christ.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Our Scripture reading today comes from Genesis chapter 6, beginning in verse 5.

The Bible says,

"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."

"And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."

"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."

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

"These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God."

"And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth."

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence."

"And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt;"

"for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

"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."

Before we begin, let me say a brief word about giving.

Reason Together Church does not pass an offering plate.

If you are our guest, you are never expected to give.

If you are a member of another church, we encourage you to support your home church faithfully.

If Reason Together Church is your church home and God leads you to give, the giving box is available in the back.

The Bible teaches that God loves a cheerful giver.

We never want giving to become pressure, manipulation or an interruption of worship.

And now, with our church matters behind us, let us turn our complete attention to one strange phrase in one of the most familiar accounts in the Bible.

Here is the question.

How does an animal corrupt its way?

A person can knowingly disobey God.

A person can lie.

A person can steal.

A person can murder.

A person can worship an idol.

A person can hear the truth of God and deliberately reject it.

But can a cow become wicked?

Can a bird become rebellious?

Can an elephant decide that it no longer believes in God?

Can an animal commit sin in the same moral sense that a human being commits sin?

At first, the answer seems obvious.

Animals do not possess the moral responsibility that God has given to people made in His image.

Yet Genesis 6:12 does not say only that mankind had become corrupt.

It says,

"All flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

Why did God say all flesh?

Did that expression include the animals?

If it did, what had happened to them?

Had they become violent?

Had people corrupted them?

Had their behavior departed from the order God originally established?

Had someone altered them physically?

And why did animals die in a judgment that Genesis introduces by describing the wickedness of man?

Those are fair questions.

They are interesting questions.

They are also questions that have produced some very imaginative sermons.

Some teachers say the entire world had been genetically contaminated.

Some say fallen angels or pre-Flood people were altering animal DNA.

Some say Noah was selected because his bloodline remained genetically pure.

Some say the principal purpose of the Flood was to eliminate hybrid creatures from the earth.

Those claims make for an exciting presentation.

But an exciting claim is not necessarily a Biblical claim.

Today we will begin with what the Bible says.

We will distinguish what the Bible says from what the Bible may permit.

And we will refuse to promote speculation into revelation.

Genesis begins with a sentence repeated like a beautiful refrain.

God created light.

"And God saw the light, that it was good."

God separated the waters and gathered the seas.

God brought forth grass, herbs and fruit trees.

"And God saw that it was good."

God made the sun, moon and stars.

"And God saw that it was good."

God made the creatures of the sea and the birds of the air.

"And God saw that it was good."

God made the beasts of the earth, cattle and creeping things.

"And God saw that it was good."

Then God made man in His own image.

Genesis 1:31 says,

"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."

Now listen to Genesis 6:12.

"And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt."

The God who looked upon creation in Genesis 1 looked upon it again in Genesis 6.

What He had created good had become corrupt.

God did not create the corruption.

The world did not begin this way.

Sin entered the human heart, and the effects of that rebellion spread through the world humanity had been commanded to govern.

Genesis 6:11 says,

"The earth also was corrupt before God."

That last expression matters.

It was corrupt before God.

The people living in Noah's generation may not have called it corruption.

They may have called it progress.

They may have called it freedom.

They may have called it strength.

They may have called violence necessary.

They may have admired the powerful people who took whatever they wanted.

They may have stopped noticing the suffering surrounding them.

That is what happens when evil becomes normal.

When everyone accepts corruption, corruption stops looking unusual.

But what becomes normal before men does not become righteous before God.

God saw it.

God saw every violent act.

God saw every abused person.

God saw every life treated as though it had no value.

God saw every evil imagination of the heart.

And God saw what human rebellion had done to His earth.

Then the Bible uses the expression that creates our question.

"All flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

The Hebrew expression translated "all flesh" is kol basar.

Kol means all or every.

Basar means flesh.

It refers to embodied creaturely life.

It can describe people.

It can describe animals.

It can describe both together.

But here is something we must say plainly.

The Hebrew word basar does not mean DNA.

It does not mean genetic code.

It does not automatically mean bloodline.

Whenever someone reads the word flesh and immediately substitutes the word genetics, that person has already moved beyond what the Hebrew word means.

The context must tell us whose flesh is being discussed.

Fortunately, Genesis uses the expression "all flesh" repeatedly throughout the Flood account.

Genesis 6:17 says,

"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."

That includes human beings and air-breathing land animals.

Genesis 6:19 says,

"And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark."

In that verse, "all flesh" clearly includes animals.

Genesis 7:15 says the animals went into the Ark,

"two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life."

Genesis 7:21 gives us the clearest definition.

"And all flesh died that moved upon the earth,"

"both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast,"

"and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth,"

"and every man."

There is no uncertainty in that verse.

"All flesh" includes birds.

It includes cattle.

It includes beasts.

It includes creeping things.

And it includes mankind.

After the Flood, God established His covenant with Noah, his descendants and every living creature.

Genesis 9 repeatedly calls them "all flesh."

Throughout Genesis 6 through 9, the expression reaches beyond humanity.

We therefore cannot dismiss the possibility that animals are included when Genesis 6:12 says all flesh had corrupted its way.

But we must also be honest about the immediate context.

Genesis 6:5 identifies the wickedness of man.

It identifies the thoughts of the human heart.

Genesis 6:11 identifies corruption and violence.

Human beings possess moral intention in a way animals do not.

For that reason, some interpreters believe "all flesh" in verse 12 means all humanity.

Others believe the expression intentionally expands the picture to include animal life.

The broader reading is very possible.

It may even be the most natural reading within the entire Flood narrative.

But Genesis does not stop and explain exactly what had happened to every creature.

That is where humility must begin.

The verse says all flesh had corrupted "his way."

The Hebrew word translated way is derek.

It can mean a road.

It can mean a path.

It can mean conduct, course or manner of life.

The KJV says "his way" because "all flesh" is treated as a collective expression.

It does not mean that flesh had corrupted God's way.

It means creaturely life had corrupted its own course upon the earth.

For human beings, that was unmistakably moral corruption.

People knew God and rebelled against Him.

They filled their minds with evil.

They filled the earth with violence.

They possessed dominion, responsibility and accountability.

But created disorder and moral guilt are related without being identical.

An animal does not have to become a human sinner in order to become part of a world disordered by human sin.

Think about an animal trained by a cruel person to attack innocent people.

The animal participates in the violence.

The animal becomes dangerous.

The animal may have to be restrained or destroyed.

But the moral guilt belongs principally to the person who trained and used it.

Think about animals used in idolatrous worship.

Think about animals abused for entertainment.

Think about animals bred or trained for human violence.

The creatures become part of a corrupted system even though they did not design that system.

There are three responsible ways to understand Genesis 6:12.

The first is that "all flesh" primarily means all humanity.

This interpretation keeps moral responsibility where Genesis clearly places it.

Human wickedness was great.

Human thoughts were evil.

Human beings filled the earth with violence.

Noah is contrasted with the people of his generation.

The New Testament calls Noah's world ungodly.

That interpretation has real strength.

Its difficulty is that the expression "all flesh" repeatedly includes animals in the surrounding chapters.

The second possibility is that animals were corrupted through human activity.

People may have trained animals for violence.

They may have used animals in warfare, bloodshed or idolatry.

They may have abused the created distinctions God established.

They may have engaged in sexual perversion involving animals.

Scripture later condemns such acts explicitly.

This interpretation explains how animals could be involved in corruption without possessing human moral guilt.

But Genesis does not tell us which of those practices occurred before the Flood.

We cannot turn possible examples into historical facts.

The third possibility is that the behavior of the animal kingdom had itself become disordered.

Genesis 1 presents plants as food for people and animals.

Genesis 6 says the earth was filled with violence.

If "all flesh" includes animal life, the creatures may have become increasingly aggressive, predatory or hostile.

Some interpreters believe animal violence formed part of the violence filling the earth.

Future Kingdom passages such as Isaiah 11 picture the wolf dwelling with the lamb and the lion eating straw like the ox.

Those passages present peace among animals as part of God's restored order.

That makes animal disorder before the Flood a reasonable possibility.

But once again, we must not say more than Scripture says.

The Bible does not tell us precisely when every form of animal predation began.

It does not list which animal behaviors changed.

It does not explain the biological mechanism.

Here is the balanced conclusion.

We may conclude that corruption reached the created order.

We may not claim that God has told us exactly how every animal was corrupted.

There is another Hebrew detail that is too important to miss.

The word translated corrupt in Genesis 6:11 and 12 comes from the Hebrew root shachath.

That same root can also mean ruin or destroy.

The earth was corrupt.

All flesh had corrupted its way.

Then God said,

"I will destroy them with the earth."

The corruption and the destruction are connected by the same Hebrew root.

Humanity had become the destroyer of God's world.

God brought that destroying course to its appointed end.

The judgment corresponded to the condition.

God did not destroy a morally healthy world.

He judged a world that had become saturated with evil and violence.

Romans 6:23 says,

"For the wages of sin is death."

Sin produces death because sin separates life from the God who gives it.

The Flood did not introduce destruction into a perfect moral order.

It revealed where the world's chosen course was already leading.

And what particular form of corruption does Genesis name most clearly?

Violence.

Genesis 6:11 says,

"The earth was filled with violence."

Genesis 6:13 repeats,

"The earth is filled with violence through them."

The Hebrew word is *hamas*.

It describes violence, oppression and violent wrongdoing.

Genesis explicitly says violence.

Genesis does not explicitly say genetic engineering.

That distinction matters.

Sometimes speculation draws our attention away from the sin God actually names.

We become fascinated with what fallen angels might have done while ignoring what people were certainly doing.

They were hurting one another.

They were oppressing one another.

They were filling God's earth with bloodshed.

Humanity had been given dominion as a sacred trust.

People were commanded to tend what God had made.

Instead, dominion became domination.

Strength became exploitation.

Authority became violence.

And sin never remains confined to the person committing it.

Anger spreads through a household.

Addiction injures an entire family.

Greed harms employees, customers and communities.

Abuse changes the life of someone who did not choose it.

Violence reaches people, animals and the land itself.

Sin always promises to remain private.

Sin never honors that promise.

Long before modern sermons about genetics, ancient Jewish readers also asked what "all flesh" meant.

Their writings are helpful when they are used properly.

They show us how earlier people interpreted Genesis.

They do not add inspired sentences to Genesis.

First Enoch expands the brief account of the sons of God and the Nephilim into a much larger story about rebellious Watchers and violent giants.

In that writing, the giants consume what people produce.

Then they turn against humanity.

They sin against birds, beasts, reptiles and fish.

They devour flesh and drink blood.

First Enoch pictures uncontrolled appetite, violated boundaries and terrible bloodshed.

It shows that some ancient readers connected the crisis of Genesis 6 with violence against animal life.

But First Enoch does not describe modern laboratories or the alteration of DNA.

The Book of Jubilees is even more direct.

It says people, cattle, beasts, birds and creeping things corrupted their prescribed order.

It describes creatures devouring one another.

That is important evidence that ancient Jewish interpreters sometimes included animals in "all flesh."

But evidence of an ancient interpretation is not proof that every added detail occurred.

Later rabbinic writings said cattle, beasts and birds departed from their proper species in mating.

Again, that proves the animal question is old.

Modern Nephilim teachers did not discover it.

But an old interpretation is still an interpretation.

Then there is the writing commonly called the Book of Jasher.

A passage often cited from that work says people mixed animals of one species with another.

Some sermons quote it as though an eyewitness had confirmed pre-Flood genetic engineering.

That creates two problems.

First, the commonly circulated Sefer ha-Yashar is a much later Jewish midrash.

It is not demonstrably the lost book mentioned in Joshua and Second Samuel.

Second, mixing or selectively breeding animals is not the same as scientifically altering DNA.

That later writing may preserve a tradition about how someone interpreted Genesis.

It cannot establish what actually happened before the Flood.

Ancient voices may help us see possibilities.

Only Scripture determines what the Church may proclaim with certainty.

Now let us test the modern genetic-corruption theory fairly.

The theory usually proceeds like this.

The sons of God produced hybrid offspring.

The Nephilim corrupted the human bloodline.

The corruption spread into the animal kingdom.

Noah alone possessed uncontaminated genetics.

God sent the Flood to preserve pure human and animal DNA.

There are Biblical observations somewhere within that chain.

Genesis does mention the sons of God.

Genesis does mention the daughters of men.

Genesis does mention the Nephilim.

Genesis does say all flesh was corrupted.

But the theory connects those observations with claims Genesis never states.

We have already seen that flesh does not mean DNA.

What about Noah being "perfect in his generations"?

Genesis 6:9 says,

"Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God."

The Hebrew word translated perfect is tamim.

It can mean blameless, complete or possessing integrity.

God later told Abraham,

"Walk before me, and be thou perfect."

Job is described as perfect and upright.

Neither statement means Abraham or Job possessed genetically superior blood.

The surrounding description of Noah is moral and spiritual.

Noah was just.

Noah walked with God.

Noah obeyed what God commanded.

Hebrews 11:7 says Noah acted by faith and became an heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Most importantly, Genesis 6:8 has already told us why Noah was preserved.

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

Noah was not saved because his flesh was better.

Noah was saved because he found grace.

Noah was not sinless.

The events after the Flood make that painfully clear.

Noah needed grace before the Flood.

Noah needed grace after the Flood.

And we need the same grace today.

The genetic theory also has a family problem.

Noah did not enter the Ark alone.

His wife entered.

His sons entered.

Their wives entered.

Yet Scripture gives us no genetic qualification for any of those women.

It does not explain their ancestry.

It does not say Noah tested their blood.

It emphasizes the household's relationship to Noah and Noah's relationship to God.

The theory also has an animal problem.

Genesis says the animals entered "after their kind."

Some people combine that expression with "all flesh had corrupted his way" and conclude God selected only genetically uncontaminated animals.

But "way" and "kind" are not the same Hebrew word.

The Bible never says some animals had ceased to belong to their created kinds.

It never says Noah inspected their genetics.

The animals came according to their kinds because God intended to preserve the kinds He had created.

The theory also has a post-Flood problem.

Genesis 6:4 says,

"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that."

The KJV uses giants where the Hebrew says Nephilim.

Numbers 13 later uses the name again.

That does not settle who the Nephilim were.

It does not settle every question concerning Genesis 6:1 through 4.

That mysterious subject deserves careful treatment of its own.

But it does create a serious difficulty for anyone claiming the Flood permanently eliminated everything associated with Nephilim genetics.

The text itself says, "and also after that."

Finally, the genetic theory has a New Testament problem.

When Jesus spoke about the days of Noah, He did not warn His disciples about contaminated genetics.

When Peter wrote about Noah, he emphasized ungodliness, righteousness, divine patience, judgment and deliverance.

When Hebrews spoke about Noah, it emphasized faith.

The inspired interpretation of the Flood points us toward moral rebellion and saving grace.

The genetic theory may contain a few possible observations.

It surrounds them with unsupported connecting claims.

We should not mock someone for asking the question.

We should not pretend we know everything that occurred in that ancient world.

But we must never use God's name to give our imagination the authority of Scripture.

That brings us to the difficult question.

If mankind was morally guilty, why did the animals die?

Genesis 6:7 says,

"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."

The animals did not write the laws of that society.

They did not design its idols.

They did not decide to oppress the weak.

Why did they share the judgment?

The answer begins with humanity's position in creation.

God gave mankind dominion.

Human beings were not isolated residents renting a small room in creation.

They were appointed to govern the earthly realm beneath God.

When the representative ruler rebels, the realm under that ruler suffers.

When Adam sinned, the ground was cursed for his sake.

Thorns and thistles appeared in the place humanity was commanded to cultivate.

Hosea 4 describes lying, killing and blood touching blood, then says the land would mourn and the beasts, birds and fish would suffer.

Romans 8 says the whole creation groans and travails in pain.

Creation suffers beneath consequences it did not personally choose because creation was placed beneath human dominion.

We see smaller examples of that principle constantly.

When a government begins a war, animals do not vote for the war.

Yet habitats are destroyed.

When people poison a river, fish did not choose the poison.

When greed destroys a forest, the creatures living there did not sign the contract.

Human decisions reach the world entrusted to human care.

The Flood was not merely the execution of individual human criminals.

It was the de-creation of the inhabited world they had corrupted.

The waters again covered the earth.

Dry land disappeared.

The boundaries established in creation collapsed.

Air-breathing land life perished outside the Ark.

But the same account that shows animals sharing humanity's judgment also shows animals sharing God's preservation.

God commanded Noah to bring them into the Ark.

God caused them to come according to their kinds.

God sustained them through the Flood.

God released them into the renewed world.

God commanded them to multiply.

God included them in His covenant.

Genesis does not portray the animals as worthless collateral damage.

Their preservation mattered to God.

Listen to Genesis 8:1.

"And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark."

God remembered Noah.

God remembered Noah's family.

God remembered every living thing.

God remembered the cattle.

He remembered the birds.

He remembered the beasts.

He remembered the creeping things.

Biblical remembrance does not mean God had temporarily forgotten where He parked the Ark.

It means God moved to act faithfully upon His purpose.

Every life He had entrusted to that refuge remained within His care.

That truth should encourage someone today.

If God remembered every living thing inside the Ark, He has not forgotten you.

You may feel surrounded by a storm.

You may wonder whether God sees where you are.

You may wonder whether the long season will ever end.

The God who saw the corruption also remembered those inside the refuge He provided.

He sees.

He remembers.

He acts in His appointed time.

The Flood account deliberately resembles the reversal and renewal of creation.

In Genesis 1, God separated waters and caused dry land to appear.

In the Flood, waters covered the dry land again.

In Genesis 1, God filled the sky and land with living creatures.

In the Flood, those habitats were emptied.

Then God sent a wind across the waters.

The waters receded.

Dry land appeared.

Birds were sent out.

People and animals emerged.

The command to be fruitful and multiply was renewed.

The Ark was more than an emergency boat.

It was a refuge from judgment.

It was a vessel of preservation.

It carried God's purposes through judgment into a renewed world.

But what did Noah do when he stepped onto that renewed earth?

His first recorded act was not building a house.

It was not planting a field.

It was not organizing a government.

Genesis 8:20 says,

"And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD;"

"and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl,"

"and offered burnt offerings on the altar."

The first recorded structure Noah built after the Ark was an altar.

The first recorded act in the renewed world was worship.

The additional clean animals had been preserved in sufficient numbers so sacrifice could be offered without extinguishing their kinds.

God preserved Noah.

Noah responded in worship.

A sacrifice was offered.

God spoke words of mercy.

Then God established His covenant with all flesh.

The renewed world did not begin with Noah boasting that he had survived.

It began with sacrifice before God.

But even that renewed world had an unresolved problem.

Genesis 6:5 said,

"Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

After the Flood, Genesis 8:21 says,

"The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

Before the Flood, the human heart was evil.

After the Flood, the human heart was still evil.

The landscape changed.

The population changed.

The animal population changed.

Human nature did not change.

Noah soon became drunk.

Sin appeared within the preserved family.

The Flood removed a corrupt generation.

It did not remove corruption from the human heart.

That may be the most important evidence against making genetics the center of the story.

If contaminated biology were the principal problem and only uncontaminated people entered the Ark, we would expect the problem to be solved.

It was not solved.

Water could remove sinners from the world.

Water could not remove sin from the heart.

Civil laws can restrain conduct.

Consequences can interrupt behavior.

Fear can temporarily change a decision.

But none of those things can give a sinner a new heart.

Only God can do that.

Jesus told us how to apply the days of Noah.

Matthew 24 says,

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

"For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage,"

"until the day that Noe entered into the ark,"

"And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away;"

"so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Eating was not the sin.

Drinking was not the sin.

Marriage was not the sin.

The people continued ordinary life as though God had never spoken.

They made plans without reference to judgment.

They lived beside the Ark while dismissing the warning represented by it.

Second Peter calls Noah a preacher of righteousness.

God was patient while the Ark was being prepared.

Every day of construction was another day of warning.

Every board announced that God had spoken.

Every layer of pitch testified that Noah believed Him.

Hebrews 11:7 says,

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house."

Noah had never seen the coming event.

But he knew the God who gave the warning.

Faith did not mean Noah understood every unanswered question.

Faith meant he trusted the One who spoke.

When Jesus and the apostles interpreted Noah's generation, they emphasized sin, unbelief, righteousness, patience, judgment, faith and salvation.

They did not tell us to search for contaminated DNA.

The question is no longer merely what entered Noah's Ark.

The question is whether we have entered the refuge God has provided for us.

Noah heard God's warning.

Noah believed what he had never seen.

Noah entered the refuge God provided.

Those inside passed through judgment.

Those outside remained exposed to judgment.

The Ark was not saved by the quality of Noah's carpentry alone.

It was God's appointed provision received through obedient faith.

Today God has warned that judgment is coming again.

Second Peter says the world that then was perished under water and the present world is reserved unto fire against the day of judgment.

But God has again provided a refuge.

Not an Ark made of gopher wood.

Not a religion assembled from human effort.

Not a bloodline inherited from righteous parents.

God has provided His Son.

Jesus Christ lived the righteous life we have failed to live.

He bore our sin upon the cross.

He received the judgment our corruption deserves.

He shed His blood for our forgiveness.

He rose bodily from the grave.

Everyone who comes to Him by faith receives eternal life.

We are not saved because our flesh is better than someone else's flesh.

We are not saved because our family has attended church for generations.

We are not saved because we avoided the sins other people committed.

We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

You can find that grace today.

The Flood could wash corruption from the face of the earth.

Only Jesus Christ can cleanse corruption from the human heart.

Perhaps you have been interested in the Bible for a long time.

Perhaps you enjoy examining the mysteries.

Perhaps you can explain several interpretations of the sons of God and the Nephilim.

But knowing theories about the Ark is not the same as entering the refuge.

Standing near the Ark would not have saved anyone.

Admiring the Ark would not have saved anyone.

Agreeing that Noah had built an impressive structure would not have saved anyone.

The question was whether a person believed God's warning and entered God's provision.

The same is true of Christ.

Knowing facts about Jesus is not the same as trusting Jesus.

Admiring His teaching is not the same as receiving Him as Savior.

Attending church is not the same as being born again.

Have you trusted Jesus Christ?

Are you relying upon your religion or upon the Savior?

Are you prepared if ordinary life ends sooner than you expect?

If you have never received Christ, you can call upon Him today.

You do not need perfect words.

You need sincere faith in a perfect Savior.

You may pray something like this.

Heavenly Father,

I know that I am a sinner.

I know that corruption is not merely a problem in the world around me.

It is present within my own heart.

I cannot save myself.

I believe Jesus Christ died for my sins.

I believe He was buried and rose again.

Please forgive me.

Cleanse me.

Give me a new heart and eternal life.

I receive Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord.

Help me follow You from this day forward.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Those words do not save because they form a special formula.

Jesus saves when a sinner genuinely turns to Him in faith.

If you trusted Christ today, please speak with me after the service so we can pray with you and help you begin walking with God.

For those who already know Christ, this passage leaves us with several responsibilities.

Do not normalize what God calls corruption.

The world before the Flood may have stopped noticing its violence.

God did not stop seeing it.

Ask God to show you any sin you have learned to excuse simply because everyone around you excuses it.

Remember that your choices reach beyond you.

Your anger touches your family.

Your integrity blesses your workplace.

Your faithfulness affects the people placed within your care.

Your treatment of God's creation reveals something about how you understand dominion.

Sin does not remain private, and neither does obedience.

Walk with God even when your generation walks another way.

Noah could not cleanse his generation.

But he could walk with God within it.

He could believe what God said.

He could obey the next instruction.

He could build while others continued as though judgment would never come.

And if you are the person who feels forgotten inside a long storm, remember Genesis 8:1.

God remembered Noah.

God remembered every living thing.

The storm did not mean God had abandoned the Ark.

The waiting did not mean God had forgotten His promise.

God sees what corruption has done.

God remembers those who trust Him.

God acts faithfully in His appointed time.

All flesh had corrupted its way.

But Noah found grace.

Corruption was widespread.

But grace was still available.

Judgment was coming.

But God provided an Ark.

Judgment is coming again.

And God has provided Jesus Christ.

The question is not whether your flesh is better than someone else's flesh.

The question is whether you have entered the refuge God has provided through Jesus Christ.

Aloha Nui Loa.

COMMENTARY ORIENTATION

The title asks what God meant when He said that ‘all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.’ The question is important because the phrase appears to widen the indictment beyond humanity. In the same Flood narrative, ‘all flesh’ clearly includes birds, cattle, beasts, creeping things and people. If that range applies in Genesis 6:12, the corruption had reached the animal world as well as human society.

The question must also be stated carefully. Genesis plainly describes human wickedness, evil thoughts and earth-filling violence. It does not describe a genetic laboratory, altered chromosomes or a biologically pure family. Later Jewish writings expand the story. Modern sermons sometimes combine those expansions with the Nephilim, selective breeding and current genetic vocabulary. Those combinations may be imaginative, but imagination is not exegesis.

This Commentary therefore proceeds through four categories. Biblical certainty identifies what the inspired text states. Contextual conclusion identifies what the repeated language most naturally means. Plausible interpretation describes an explanation consistent with the text but not directly revealed. Speculation describes a proposal which requires facts Genesis never supplies. Keeping these categories distinct allows the difficult question to remain genuinely interesting without allowing it to become sensational.

CENTRAL COMMENTARY CLAIM | Across Genesis 6–9, ‘all flesh’ regularly includes humans and animals. Genesis 6:12 therefore likely describes corruption reaching the whole creaturely order. Yet human wickedness and violence remain the moral center of the passage. Animals may have shared in a disordered creation without sharing human moral guilt. Genesis does not teach that DNA was corrupted or that Noah survived because his bloodline was genetically pure.

The Commentary begins with the literary movement of Genesis 6:5–13, then examines the key Hebrew terms and traces ‘all flesh’ through the whole Flood account. Only after the positive reading is established does it consider animal corruption, ancient interpretations and the modern genetic theory. The final movement returns to Genesis 8:21. The Flood removed a corrupt generation, but it did not cleanse the human heart.

GENESIS 6:5–13 IS ONE DEVELOPING INDICTMENT

The passage moves from the heart to the whole earth

Genesis 6:5 begins with man. God sees that human wickedness is great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of the human heart is only evil continually. Verse 6 reveals Divine grief. Verse 7 announces judgment upon man and upon the creatures living within the world entrusted to man.

Verse 8 then interrupts judgment with grace. Noah finds grace in the eyes of the LORD. Verse 9 describes his just conduct, blameless integrity and walk with God. Verses 11–12 widen the view again.

The earth is corrupt before God, the earth is filled with violence and all flesh has corrupted its way. Verse 13 joins the breadth of the corruption to the breadth of the coming destruction.

The order matters. The narrative does not begin by accusing animals. It begins with the human heart. It does not define the crisis through biological terminology. It names wickedness and violence. Whatever ‘all flesh’ contributes must be interpreted inside that inspired diagnosis.

What God saw

The verb ‘saw’ appears with theological weight. Genesis 1 repeatedly says that God saw what He had made and declared it good. Genesis 1:31 concludes that God saw every thing He had made and it was very good. Genesis 6:5 says God saw great wickedness. Genesis 6:12 says God looked upon the earth and saw corruption.

The contrast is not that God discovered something previously hidden. It is judicial inspection. The Creator evaluates the world which bears His workmanship and human stewardship. Society may have normalized violence, but it remained visible before God. The expression ‘before God’ in verse 11 places the earth under the gaze and authority of its Maker.

GENESIS 6:5 IDENTIFIES THE MORAL CENTER

GENESIS 6:5 KJV | 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.

The human heart is explicit

Genesis describes wickedness as inward before it describes violence as outward. The ‘imagination’ is the forming, framing or inclination of thought. The statement does not say that every person performs every possible evil act at every moment. It says the inward direction of fallen humanity is comprehensively bent away from God.

The repeated terms intensify the diagnosis: every imagination, only evil and continually. Human beings still possess created abilities, families, culture and skill. Yet those good gifts are governed by a heart alienated from the Giver. Capacity does not equal righteousness. Civilization can become highly developed while its moral center becomes deeply corrupt.

Violence grows from inward rebellion

By beginning with the heart, Genesis prevents a shallow explanation of the Flood. The catastrophe was not merely a response to poor social organization, uncontrolled animals or dangerous technology. Violence filled the earth because human thought and desire had become persistently evil.

This prepares the later Gospel conclusion. If the central problem were only environmental or genetic, external cleansing might solve it. Genesis 8:21 will repeat the diagnosis after the Flood. The heart problem survives the water because it requires more than the removal of a generation. It requires spiritual regeneration.

DIVINE GRIEF AND CREATURELY JUDGMENT

‘It repented the LORD’

Genesis 6:6 says that it repented the LORD that He had made man and that it grieved Him at His heart. The KJV wording does not mean that God discovered a mistake or learned information unavailable to Him. Scripture elsewhere declares His perfect knowledge and unchanging character.

The language communicates a real change in God’s administration toward a changed human situation. The Creator who delighted in His good world now confronts rebellion with grief and judgment. Divine holiness is not detached. Human evil truly grieves the God against whom it is committed and damages the creatures He made.

Why beasts, creeping things and birds are named

Genesis 6:7 announces the destruction of man ‘both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air.’ This is the first explicit animal inclusion in the immediate judgment paragraph. The verse does not say that every named creature planned wickedness. It says that the world of human life and dominion will be swept away.

Biblical judgment frequently reaches the land, households, animals and institutions connected with human rebellion. Adam’s sin brings a curse upon the ground. Pharaoh’s defiance brings plagues upon Egypt’s fields and herds. Prophetic judgments describe land and animals suffering when human bloodshed defiles a nation. Shared consequence does not establish identical guilt.

NOAH FOUND GRACE

GENESIS 6:8–9 KJV | But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

Grace precedes the description of Noah’s life

Verse 8 stands between the announcement of destruction and the account of Noah. The first saving word is grace. Noah is then called just, perfect in his generations and one who walked with God. His character matters, but the narrative first identifies God’s favor.

Hebrews 11:7 later says Noah acted by faith and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. The Flood narrative does not present him as a naturally superior specimen who deserved preservation because his flesh was biologically better. It presents a man who received grace and responded to God's warning in believing obedience.

Tamim does not mean genetically pure

The Hebrew adjective tamim can mean complete, whole, sound or blameless. God tells Abram in Genesis 17:1, 'walk before me, and be thou perfect.' Job 1:1 calls Job perfect and upright. Those statements concern integrity before God, not hereditary purity.

The phrase 'in his generations' places Noah's life among his contemporaries or throughout the periods of his life. The immediate description explains itself: he was just and walked with God. Turning tamim into a technical statement about an uncontaminated genome imports a modern subject into a moral and covenant context.

The seven-person silence

Eight people enter the Ark. If the preservation of humanity depended upon genetic purity, the narrative would need more than a statement about Noah. His wife, his three sons and the three daughters-in-law all contribute ancestry to the post-Flood population. Genesis gives no genetic qualification for seven of them.

This silence is not a small detail. It reveals that the genetic theory asks the narrative to perform a task the narrative never attempts. Genesis explains survival by Divine warning, grace, covenant, obedient faith and the appointed refuge.

THE EARTH WAS CORRUPT AND FILLED WITH VIOLENCE

GENESIS 6:11–12 KJV | The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

Shachath binds corruption to destruction

The Hebrew root shachath appears repeatedly in Genesis 6:11–13. The earth was corrupt. All flesh had corrupted its way. God says He will destroy them with the earth. The literary relationship may be expressed this way: the world has been ruined through creaturely corruption, so God brings ruin upon the corrupted order.

The root can describe moral corruption, physical ruin or destruction according to context. Its repetition is more important than assigning one narrow English definition to every occurrence. It joins sinful action, a ruined earth and Divine judgment. It does not independently identify a biological mechanism.

Hamas is the clearest public symptom

The noun hamas means violence, wrongful force, cruelty or oppression. Verse 11 says the earth was filled with it. Verse 13 repeats that the earth was filled with violence ‘through them.’ The passage therefore provides its own visible evidence of corruption.

Violence is more than isolated anger. To fill the earth, it must have become a governing social reality. Power was used to injure. Life was treated as expendable. The strong oppressed the weak. The corruption of the heart became the structure of the world.

This explicit emphasis should govern the sermon. A teacher may investigate animals, giants and ancient traditions. None of them should cause the repeated word ‘violence’ to disappear. Before Genesis tells us how the world was judged, it tells us what filled the world.

WHAT DOES ‘ALL FLESH’ MEAN?

Basar is embodied creaturely life

The Hebrew noun basar commonly refers to flesh, a body, kinship or a living creature viewed in its embodied condition. When joined with kol, ‘all,’ it often becomes comprehensive language for mortal creaturely life. Context determines whether a particular occurrence concerns humanity, animals or both.

Within Genesis 6–9, the expression repeatedly gathers humans and land animals as breathing life under judgment, preservation and covenant. This narrative pattern is the strongest evidence for the range of the phrase in Genesis 6:12.

LEXICAL SUMMARY | Basar means flesh, body, kinship or embodied creaturely life according to context. Kol basar means ‘all flesh.’ Shachath means corrupt, ruin or destroy. Derek means way, course or conduct. Hamas means violence, wrongful force or oppression. Tamim means complete, whole or blameless. None of these terms means DNA or genetic engineering.

The collective singular ‘his way’

The KJV says that ‘all flesh had corrupted his way.’ Modern readers may expect ‘their way,’ but Biblical Hebrew can treat a collective expression as singular. The phrase views all flesh as one comprehensive body of life. The pronoun does not identify one hidden individual and does not mean God’s way.

Derek means a road, way, course or manner of conduct. It often describes the direction of a life. Later interpreters sometimes understand the animals’ ‘way’ as their created reproductive order. That proposal may be considered, but the noun alone does not prove it. Genesis 6:12 does not say ‘after his kind,’ does not use the Hebrew noun min and does not describe a breeding program.

THE FLOOD NARRATIVE INTERPRETS ITS OWN PHRASE

‘All flesh’ in the Ark instructions

Genesis 6:17 says God will destroy ‘all flesh, wherein is the breath of life.’ The phrase includes the terrestrial breathing world outside the Ark. Verse 19 commands Noah to bring into the Ark ‘of every living thing of all flesh.’ Here the reference is unmistakably animal.

Genesis 7:15 says the animals went in ‘two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life.’ Verse 16 says the male and female representatives entered ‘of all flesh.’ The phrase describes the animals which God preserves.

‘All flesh died’

GENESIS 7:21 KJV | And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man:

This occurrence supplies an inspired definition by enumeration. ‘All flesh’ is followed by fowl, cattle, beasts, creeping things and every man. The scope is not merely humanity. It is the land-dwelling creaturely world.

The same expression appears on both sides of the judgment. All flesh enters under representative preservation. All flesh outside the refuge dies. Later, all flesh is addressed through covenant promise. The repeated language creates the narrative horizon within which Genesis 6:12 should be read.

‘All flesh’ in the covenant

Genesis 9:11 promises that all flesh will never again be cut off by Flood waters. Verses 15–17 speak of every living creature of all flesh. The rainbow is a sign concerning the whole creaturely order which shared the catastrophe.

Across the narrative, then, all flesh breathes, enters, dies, multiplies and receives covenant protection. It would be unusual to restrict the same phrase in Genesis 6:12 to humanity without a strong contextual signal. No such limiting signal appears.

WERE THE ANIMALS CORRUPTED TOO?

The strongest contextual answer

The strongest contextual answer is yes, with qualification. Genesis 6:12 likely includes animals within the statement that all flesh had corrupted its way. The narrative’s repeated usage makes animal inclusion natural. Yet the verse does not tell us precisely what animal corruption involved.

An interpreter must therefore separate the range of the subject from the mechanism of the corruption. The subject may include animals. The mechanism may remain unrevealed. A broad statement does not authorize a detailed reconstruction.

Three responsible readings

The first reading restricts ‘all flesh’ in verse 12 to humanity because moral conduct and accountable ways belong primarily to people. This preserves the explicit emphasis on the human heart, but it must explain why the same phrase repeatedly includes animals in the immediate narrative.

The second reading says humanity corrupted the whole creaturely order. Animals, land and social life were drawn into a system of violence through human dominion. This reading fits Genesis 6:5, the repeated laments, prophetic texts concerning a mourning land and Paul’s description of a groaning creation.

The third reading says animals themselves displayed disordered behavior. Aggression, predation, abnormal breeding or other disruption may have spread through the animal world. This reading takes the active wording seriously and has ancient interpretive precedent. Its weakness is that Genesis never describes the behavior.

The second and third readings can be combined cautiously. Human rebellion may have corrupted the whole ecology while animals also displayed the resulting disorder. The approved Commentary allows that range but refuses to convert a possibility into a hidden scientific report.

MORAL GUILT IS NOT THE SAME AS CREATED DISORDER

Human beings bear image-of-God responsibility

Genesis 1 gives humanity dominion and Genesis 9 grounds the protection of human life in the image of God. Humans deliberate, covenant, worship, rebel and answer to Divine command in a distinctive manner. Genesis 6:5 locates evil in their thoughts and hearts.

Animals are living creatures made and valued by God. Scripture can describe dangerous behavior and impose consequences upon an animal. Genesis 9:5 says God will require human lifeblood at the hand of every beast. Exodus 21:28 commands that an ox which kills a person be stoned. These texts protect human life and regulate danger. They do not make the ox a human moral agent.

An animal can participate in a disordered world

An animal may become aggressive, be trained for violence, be bred for harmful purposes or suffer within ecological collapse. In each case the creature participates in a corrupted order. Participation does not require that the animal conceive rebellion against God as a human being does.

This distinction permits the Commentary to take Genesis 6:12 seriously without saying that beasts became sinners in the same sense as people. The whole creation can be disordered while moral culpability remains centered upon rebellious image bearers.

WHY DID ANIMALS DIE IN A JUDGMENT AGAINST MAN?

Creation is joined to human dominion

The question is not unique to the Flood. When Adam sins, the ground is cursed for his sake. Hosea 4:1–3 joins lying, killing and bloodshed with mourning land, languishing beasts, birds and fish. Jeremiah 12:4 says the land mourns and beasts are consumed because of human wickedness. Isaiah 24 says the earth is defiled under its inhabitants.

Romans 8:19–23 gives the broadest apostolic theology. Creation has been subjected to vanity and groans while awaiting liberty connected with the redemption of God’s children. The created world shares consequences because humanity’s vocation is representative. Human government of creation is not morally private.

The Flood judges an inhabited order

The Flood is not portrayed as eight billion isolated trials. It is a judgment upon the earth and the violent order filling it. Waters erase the inhabited world outside the refuge. Fields, settlements, animal territories and human society disappear together.

This does not make animal death emotionally easy. It places it within the grave reach of human sin. Scripture refuses the modern fiction that private choices harm no one else. Human rebellion spreads through families, societies, land and fellow creatures.

GOD REMEMBERED EVERY LIVING THING

GENESIS 8:1 KJV | And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged;

Animals are named within Divine remembrance

To say that God remembered is to say that He turned covenant attention into preserving action. The text names Noah, every living thing and all the cattle. The animals are not forgotten cargo or disposable scenery. God acts for their future within the renewed earth.

Genesis 8:17 commands that the creatures be brought forth so they may breed abundantly, be fruitful and multiply. The blessing language recalls Genesis 1. Judgment has not canceled God's purpose for a living, fruitful world.

The covenant includes every living creature

GENESIS 9:15 KJV | And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

Genesis 9 repeatedly names every living creature in the covenant. God does not make animals moral parties identical to Noah. He nevertheless places them within the sphere of His promised restraint. The rainbow concerns more than human security. It witnesses to Divine faithfulness toward the creaturely world.

The theology of animals in the Flood is therefore balanced. They share judgment, but they also share preservation. God remembers them, blesses renewed multiplication and includes them in covenant promise. A sermon which mentions only their death misses half of the narrative.

THE FLOOD AS DE-CREATION AND RE-CREATION

The ordered world is reversed

Genesis 1 separates waters, reveals dry land, fills the realms with living creatures and commands fruitfulness. The Flood reverses that order. Waters cover the dry land and the air-breathing terrestrial world dies. The language of kinds, living creatures, breath and multiplication connects the judgment to the Creation account.

Genesis 8 restores order through wind, receding waters, emerging land, released creatures, sacrifice and renewed fruitfulness. The movement is not a second creation from nothing. It is the preservation and reordering of a judged world.

Why this matters for 'all flesh'

The de-creation pattern explains why animal life belongs centrally to the Flood. God is judging the corrupted creaturely habitat under human dominion. The Ark preserves a representative future for that habitat. 'All flesh' is precisely the language appropriate to a judgment and renewal with creation-wide dimensions.

ANCIENT READERS ALSO ASKED ABOUT THE ANIMALS

First Enoch 6–9

First Enoch's Book of the Watchers expands Genesis 6:1–4. Watchers descend, take wives and teach forbidden arts. Their giant offspring consume human resources and turn violently against humanity. The account also says they sin against birds, beasts, reptiles and fish, then emphasizes flesh-eating, bloodshed and the cry of the earth.

This is valuable Second Temple Jewish background. It shows an early supernatural reading of the verses before Noah. It does not describe DNA engineering or the systematic alteration of every animal kind. Its principal ideas are forbidden boundary crossing, destructive knowledge, giant violence and bloodshed.

Jubilees 5

Jubilees offers the clearest ancient animal-inclusive expansion. It says lawlessness increased and that all flesh corrupted its ways, including men, cattle, beasts, birds and everything walking upon the earth. It adds that creatures began to devour one another.

Jubilees demonstrates that the animal question is old. An ancient Jewish interpreter understood 'all flesh' comprehensively and imagined animal behavior departing from created order. The work remains an interpretive rewriting rather than an inspired explanation. Even its language concerns disorder, devouring and violence rather than modern genetics.

Genesis Rabbah and Rashi

Genesis Rabbah 28:8 contains a later rabbinic interpretation which associates animal corruption with mating outside ordinary species boundaries. Rashi later repeats a tradition that cattle, beasts and birds cohabited with those not of their own kind.

These witnesses show that cross-boundary breeding became one Jewish answer to Genesis 6:12. They do not prove that the answer is historically correct. Midrash explores gaps, draws moral connections and expands compressed narratives. It belongs to the history of interpretation, not to the canon.

The later Book of Jasher

A work commonly circulated as the Book of Jasher says that people taught the mixing of animals of one species with another. Modern sermons sometimes cite this as though it were the lost Biblical book named in Joshua and Samuel.

The extant Sefer ha-Yashar is a much later midrashic work. The shared title does not establish identity with the lost source. It can document a later tradition, but it cannot provide eyewitness confirmation. Its description of mixing also does not specify genetic engineering.

ANCIENT-SOURCE GUARDRAIL | An ancient interpretation can show how old a question is. It cannot become a missing verse of Genesis. First Enoch, Jubilees, Genesis Rabbah, Rashi and the later Book of Jasher must be named, dated and kept beneath the authority of Scripture.

DOES GENESIS TEACH GENETIC CORRUPTION?

The modern theory

The broad genetic-corruption theory claims that supernatural beings or their human collaborators altered human and animal genetics before the Flood. It often says the Nephilim spread contamination through the population, animals were hybridized, Noah remained genetically uncontaminated and the Ark preserved pure genetic stock.

Several separate questions are joined inside that theory. The sons of God may be interpreted as angels without proving animal engineering. The Nephilim may be understood as supernatural hybrids without proving that all humanity was genetically altered. Ancient traditions may describe boundary violations without supplying a modern mechanism. One conclusion does not automatically produce the next.

Basar is not DNA

The English word ‘flesh’ can make a modern reader think about biological tissue and therefore genetics. The Hebrew word basar does not carry the technical concepts of chromosomes, genes or a genome. It describes flesh, body, kinship or creaturely life according to context.

A doctrine cannot be built by placing modern content inside an ancient word. The theory needs narrative evidence that a genetic alteration occurred. Genesis supplies no such event description, agent, procedure or result.

Tamim is not a bloodline certificate

The theory commonly reads ‘perfect in his generations’ as biologically uncontaminated. Yet tamim is ordinary Biblical language for wholeness and blamelessness. Noah’s walk with God explains the phrase more naturally than a genome does.

The absence of any genetic description for Noah’s wife and daughters-in-law is decisive evidence against making heredity the narrative key. They are essential to post-Flood ancestry. The text does not forget to discuss them. It is discussing grace, faith, obedience and covenant instead.

‘After their kind’ is not an Ark purity test

Genesis 6:20 says birds, cattle and creeping things came after their kind. The wording preserves the created categories and representative continuity of animal life. It does not say Noah inspected DNA or rejected corrupted specimens.

The Hebrew term for kind, min, is not the word derek translated ‘way’ in Genesis 6:12. Connecting the two may form a hypothesis, but the lexical link is not present. The Ark instructions emphasize pairs, preservation, food and survival.

CLAIM TEST | If the Flood were principally a genetic cleansing operation, Genesis would be expected to identify the contamination, certify all eight survivors, describe the purity requirement for Ark animals and explain the post-Flood result. It does none of those things. Genesis 8:21 instead repeats the moral diagnosis of the human heart.

THE NEW TESTAMENT INTERPRETS THE FLOOD

Jesus emphasizes readiness for judgment

Matthew 24:37–39 compares the coming of the Son of man with the days of Noah. People ate, drank, married and continued ordinary life until the Flood came and took them all away. Luke 17 presents the same warning alongside the days of Lot. The inspired emphasis is complacency before sudden judgment.

Jesus does not warn His hearers about corrupted genetics. He warns people who live normally while ignoring the approaching judgment of God. That emphasis must shape Christian preaching from the Flood.

Hebrews emphasizes faith

Hebrews 11:7 says Noah, warned of things not seen, moved with fear and prepared an Ark to the saving of his house. By this faith he condemned the world and became heir of righteousness by faith.

The apostolic interpretation confirms the narrative’s emphasis upon grace and believing obedience. Noah was not preserved because he possessed superior flesh. He trusted the word of God and entered the refuge God appointed.

Peter emphasizes judgment, patience and salvation

First Peter 3 joins Noah’s household, the waters, conscience, Christ’s resurrection and salvation. Second Peter 2 joins rebellious angels, the ungodly world, Noah as a preacher of righteousness and Divine preservation. Second Peter 3 uses the Flood to warn scoffers concerning future judgment.

These passages do not answer every question about Genesis 6:1–4. They do identify the theological center: sin, judgment, patience, preaching, faith, preservation and the saving work of Christ. A genetic

theory which becomes the true explanation of the Flood is out of proportion with every inspired New Testament use of the account.

THE FLOOD DID NOT CLEANSE THE HUMAN HEART

GENESIS 8:21 KJV | And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

The pre-Flood diagnosis returns

The wording echoes Genesis 6:5. Before the Flood, the imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually. After the Flood, the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. The waters changed the population and the landscape. They did not regenerate fallen humanity.

The statement appears in a setting of sacrifice and mercy. God acknowledges the continuing human condition and promises restraint. The covenant does not pretend that human nature has become pure. It establishes a world in which redemption history will continue toward the promised Savior.

Why the genetic theory misidentifies the central problem

If the Flood's primary purpose were to purify a contaminated gene pool, Genesis 8:21 would be a strange conclusion. The supposedly purified family still carries the inward problem which produced the violent world. Scripture is directing attention away from biological superiority and toward universal fallen nature.

The Flood could remove corruption from the face of the earth. It could not cleanse corruption from the human heart. Only the saving grace of God, applied through Jesus Christ, can forgive guilt, give new life and begin the transformation the sinner needs.

CREATION GROANS AND AWAITS RESTORATION

Romans 8 completes the theological pattern

Paul describes creation as subjected to vanity, held in bondage to corruption and groaning in travail. Creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God and the liberty connected with their redemption. The physical creation shares the consequences of human fallenness and the hope of future restoration.

This theology helps explain the animals in Noah's story. They live within the world humanity governs. They suffer when human dominion becomes violent. They are preserved when God renews the creaturely order. Their presence in the covenant anticipates the truth that God's redemptive purpose is larger than isolated souls.

Prophetic pictures of peace

Isaiah 11 and Isaiah 65 picture wolves, lambs, lions, cattle and children within a peaceable order where violence no longer destroys. Whether every feature is interpreted literally, symbolically or through both dimensions, the imagery presents the reversal of harm.

Colossians 1:20 speaks of reconciliation through the blood of Christ extending to things in earth and heaven. Revelation 21–22 presents a renewed creation from which death, curse and sorrow are removed. The final Biblical horizon is not endless creaturely corruption. It is restoration under the reign of Christ.

PASTORAL COMMENTARY

For the person who has normalized violence

Genesis says the earth was filled with violence before it says the earth was covered with water. A person can become accustomed to harsh speech, intimidation, exploitation or cruelty because everyone nearby accepts it. God still sees what a culture normalizes.

The passage calls the believer to examine not only dramatic crimes but the use of power. Do our words crush? Do our habits make others afraid? Do our choices injure people, animals or places entrusted to us? A world filled with violence begins with hearts which excuse wrongful force.

For the person fascinated by hidden explanations

Mysteries attract attention. Genesis 6 contains real mysteries. The identity of the sons of God, the Nephilim and the possible condition of animals deserve careful study. Yet fascination can become a way of avoiding the truth stated plainly.

The text says the human heart is evil. It says the earth is filled with violence. It says Noah found grace. A hidden theory may feel more exciting than repentance, but the explicit word of God must govern the questions we ask and the response we make.

For the person troubled by animal suffering

The Flood does not treat animal death casually. The judgment is severe because sin is severe. Yet God also commands preservation, remembers every living thing and includes every living creature in His covenant. The Creator values the life which human rebellion harms.

Christians should therefore reject both sentimentality and indifference. Animals are not people, but they are God's creatures. Human dominion is accountable stewardship. Kindness to animals, care for habitat and refusal of needless cruelty are consistent with the God who remembered the cattle in the Ark.

For the person comparing moral bloodlines

The genetic theory can subtly turn Noah's deliverance into biological superiority. The Gospel destroys that pride. Noah found grace. Every human family after the Flood still shares the fallen heart. No ethnicity, ancestry, church tradition or moral record produces a purer class of flesh.

The question is not whether our flesh is better than someone else's flesh. The question is whether we have received the grace God offers and entered the refuge He provides through Jesus Christ.

FROM THE ARK TO CHRIST

The refuge was appointed by God

Noah did not design a private escape after the rain began. God warned him, described the Ark, established His covenant and commanded him to enter. Grace supplied the refuge before judgment arrived. Faith responded to the word of God.

The Ark does not provide a complete picture of every doctrine of salvation, but it faithfully joins warning, judgment, grace, provision and believing response. Outside the appointed refuge, no degree of intelligence or physical strength could survive the waters.

Christ cleanses what water could not

Every person has sinned and stands under righteous judgment. Religious ancestry, moral comparison, scientific knowledge and personal effort cannot remove guilt or create a new heart. Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, died for our sins, was buried and rose bodily from the dead.

Salvation is the gift of God received by grace through faith. The sinner does not become acceptable by developing better flesh. The sinner is forgiven and made alive through union with Christ. His blood cleanses from sin in a way Flood water never could.

Noah was not saved because his flesh was better. Noah was saved because he found grace. The final question is not whether a listener can solve every mystery before the Flood. It is whether that person has entered the refuge God has provided through Jesus Christ.

THEOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS

- Genesis 6:5 identifies the human heart as the moral center of pre-Flood wickedness.
- Genesis 6:11 and 6:13 identify violence as the earth-filling public expression of that corruption.
- The repeated root shachath joins corruption, ruin and Divine destruction within the passage.
- Across Genesis 6–9, 'all flesh' regularly includes humanity and animals.
- Genesis 6:12 therefore likely includes animals within the corrupted creaturely order.
- The exact manifestation of animal corruption is not revealed.
- Animals may participate in disorder or suffer its effects without bearing human moral guilt.

- Human dominion makes creation's suffering under human sin a consistent Biblical theme.
- God's treatment of animals includes judgment, preservation, remembrance, renewed fruitfulness and covenant promise.
- Basar does not mean DNA and derek does not independently prove altered breeding.
- Tamim describes Noah's blameless integrity rather than a genetically pure bloodline.
- Genesis records no genetic qualification for Noah's wife, sons, daughters-in-law or Ark animals.
- Ancient noncanonical writings document interpretations but cannot add inspired facts to Genesis.
- The New Testament emphasizes ungodliness, warning, patience, faith, judgment, preservation and salvation.
- Genesis 8:21 demonstrates that the Flood did not cleanse the fallen human heart.
- The saving answer to human corruption is the grace of God through Jesus Christ.

INTERPRETIVE CAUTIONS

- Do not say that 'all flesh' unquestionably makes every animal a morally guilty sinner.
- Do not restrict 'all flesh' to humanity without addressing the inclusive uses throughout Genesis 6–9.
- Do not define basar as DNA, genome, chromosome or bloodline.
- Do not define tamim as genetically uncontaminated.
- Do not turn 'his way' into 'God's way' or assume that derek means reproductive kind.
- Do not let discussion of the Nephilim erase Genesis 6:5 or the repeated emphasis on violence.
- Do not cite First Enoch, Jubilees, Genesis Rabbah, Rashi or Jasher as though they were canonical Scripture.
- Do not identify the extant Book of Jasher with the lost Biblical source without evidence.
- Do not translate ancient stories of boundary violation into modern genetic engineering without textual support.
- Do not assign identical moral agency to humans and animals because both experienced judgment.
- Do not describe animals only as collateral loss. Preserve the themes of remembrance and covenant.
- Do not portray the Flood as a successful purification of human nature. Genesis 8:21 says otherwise.
- Do not let caution become refusal to ask the animal question or let curiosity become certainty beyond the text.

COMMENTARY SUMMARY

- Genesis 6:5–13 develops one indictment from the human heart to a corrupted earth and all flesh.
- God's repeated inspection reverses the 'God saw that it was good' language of Creation.
- Human wickedness is inward before earth-filling violence becomes outward.
- Noah finds grace and is described through righteousness, blamelessness and walking with God.
- Kol basar is broad creature language whose Flood-context uses repeatedly include animals.
- Shachath creates a corruption-destruction word relationship and hamas identifies violence.
- The strongest reading includes animals but leaves the mechanism of their corruption unresolved.

- Human-caused creation disorder and disordered animal behavior are compatible possibilities.
- Human guilt remains distinct because humanity bears God's image and accountable dominion.
- The animals share judgment, Ark preservation, Divine remembrance, renewed multiplication and covenant.
- First Enoch and Jubilees show early interpretive interest in supernatural and animal corruption.
- Genesis Rabbah, Rashi and the later Book of Jasher document later cross-boundary traditions.
- None of these sources supplies canonical proof of animal genetic engineering.
- Basar is not DNA, tamim is not genetic purity and 'after their kind' is not a recorded screening test.
- Jesus, Hebrews and Peter use the Flood to teach readiness, faith, judgment, patience and salvation.
- Genesis 8:21 repeats the heart diagnosis and reveals the limitation of external judgment.
- Romans 8 places creaturely suffering and future restoration within God's redemptive purpose.
- The Ark points toward God's appointed refuge and Christ cleanses what Flood water could not.

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- Answers in Genesis, ‘Why Are Pre-Flood Animals Described as Corrupted Flesh?’:
<https://answersingenesis.org/genesis/why-pre-flood-animals-described-corrupted-flesh/>
- John MacArthur, ‘Noah’s Ark of Faith’: <https://www.gty.org/sermons/90-257/noahs-ark-of-faith>
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External commentaries, ancient writings, ministry articles and sermon material were used as research aids. Scripture remains the controlling authority. Ancient expansions are labeled as interpretations and modern claims are stated at the level of confidence supported by the Biblical evidence.

A FINAL WORD

Genesis invites us to look at the whole scene. Human hearts were evil. The earth was filled with violence. All flesh had corrupted its way. Birds, cattle, beasts, creeping things and people lived within one creaturely order moving toward judgment.

The same narrative also invites us to see grace. Noah found grace. God preserved representatives of living creatures. God remembered Noah and every living thing. God placed every living creature within the covenant sign. Judgment was severe, but corruption did not cancel the Creator’s purpose for life.

We may reasonably conclude that the animal world shared the corruption of the pre-Flood order. We should remain humble about what that looked like. Genesis gives us no warrant to replace violence and the human heart with a theory of genetic engineering. Ancient interpretations can sharpen the question, but only Scripture can govern the answer.

The deepest corruption survived the Flood because it lived in the human heart. That is why the final hope is not cleaner flesh, better ancestry or external water. Jesus Christ died for sinners and rose again. Noah found grace and entered God’s provision. We are saved when we receive God’s grace and trust the refuge He has provided in His Son.

FINAL DOCTRINAL SUMMARY | ‘All flesh’ in Genesis 6–9 is broad creaturely language which includes humans and animals. Genesis 6:12 likely includes the animal world within the corruption, but human wickedness and violence remain the explicit moral cause of judgment. Animals can share a disordered creation without possessing human moral guilt. Scripture does not teach genetic contamination or a biologically pure Noah. God judged all flesh, preserved all flesh representatively and covenanted with every living creature. The Flood did not cleanse the human heart. Salvation and inward cleansing come through Jesus Christ alone.