

Moses 8 — Sons of God, Daughters of Men, and the Grief Before the Flood — Methuselah, Noah, and the End of an Age

Moses 8: Methuselah preserved so the covenant line could pass to Noah; the patriarchal chain; the sons-of-God / daughters-of-men crisis; Noah's preaching; the giants and the violence of all flesh; the grief before the Flood; the ark commanded. The close of the Book of Moses.

Moses 8 closes the Book of Moses at the edge of the Flood — and it's the chapter where the apocryphal method has to show it can say no. This is Genesis 6: the giants, the sons of God, the wickedness that brings the Flood — the beating heart of the ancient Enoch literature. If you've heard that apocrypha "proves" Joseph Smith, here is where you'd expect borrowing. Instead, Joseph had access to the famous reading and declined it. That's more interesting than borrowing.

Insights

- 1. 8:2 — the one kept back.** Enoch's whole city went to heaven — but not Methuselah. He "was not taken" so the covenant line could pass through him to Noah. Faithfulness sometimes means staying WITH the suffering rather than being lifted out. Some are kept back because they're load-bearing.
- 2. 8:3 — the promise before Abraham.** Methuselah "prophesied that all the families of the earth should be blessed" — the Abrahamic promise, four hundred years early. Abraham didn't originate the blessing of all nations; he inherited a promise already ancient, running back to Adam.
- 3. 8:13-15 — the correction.** The famous ancient reading: the "sons of God" are angels who father giants. Moses 8 declines it — they're the covenant line, marrying out of the covenant and losing the faith. The catastrophe is spiritual, not biological. A marriage catastrophe, not a monster story.
- 4. 8:20-21 — the title without the substance.** The people throw the gospel back at Noah: "we are the sons of God... are we not eating and drinking, and marrying?" They claim the title and live like it means nothing — the very scene Jesus quotes for the last days (Matt. 24:38). The danger is ordinary life lived as if the warning were a joke.
- 5. 8:24 — Noah, by name.** *Repent... and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, even as our fathers.* The same gospel Adam received and Enoch preached, the name spoken plainly before the Flood.
- 6. 8:25-26 — the grief, shared.** Genesis says "it repented the LORD." Moses 8 relocates the grief to Noah — not to deny God's grief (Moses 7 showed it in full) but to show the other half: a prophet's heart breaking in time with God's. The two hearts move together.

Hebrew Word Studies

zera ha-mevorach / berit netzach (זֶרַע תִּירָב / בְּרִית נֶצַח) — **the blessed seed / an everlasting covenant vv. 2-3, 9-11.** *Zera ha-mevorach*, "the blessed seed," is one thread you can pull all the way through scripture. The same seed-language runs from Eve (the "seed of the woman," Moses 4:21), through Noah ("the fruit of his loins," Moses 8:2), through Abraham ("thy seed after thee," Gen. 17:7), through David, to Christ — "which seed is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). And *berit netzach*, "everlasting covenant," is the term for that unbroken chain (Gen. 17:7's "everlasting covenant"; Heb. 13:20's "everlasting covenant"). What Moses 8 shows is the machinery of preservation up close: at every generation, the line is kept alive by deliberate providence. Methuselah is held back from translation so the line survives; Noah is carried through the Flood; the promise never quite gets extinguished, though it comes close. The practical point for a reader is that covenant belonging isn't an abstraction — it's a literal, fragile, carefully-guarded inheritance, and the Restoration claims it runs straight into the present priesthood (D&C 86:8-11). To be in the line is a gift; to be faithful in it is the assignment.

bnei ha-Elohim / bnot ha-adam (בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים / בְּנוֹת אָדָם) — **sons of God / daughters of men vv. 13-15.** The whole interpretive fight lives in *bnei ha-Elohim*, "sons of God." It's true the phrase elsewhere means the heavenly host (Job 1:6, the "sons of God" before the throne) — which is exactly why the ancient angels-and-giants reading got going. But the phrase also means covenant people: those adopted as God's sons. Moses 6:68 used it that way a chapter and a half ago — "thus may all become my sons" — of mortal disciples through baptism and the priesthood. So Moses 8 reads the "sons of God" of Genesis 6 in that second sense: the covenant Sethite priesthood line, who forfeited their birthright by marrying "as they chose," outside the covenant. *Bnot ha-adam*, "daughters of men," are the women of the world they married. The doctrine that results is one a modern reader can actually use: the catastrophe was a marriage catastrophe — a covenant people who stopped marrying

within their faith and, within a generation or two, lost the faith entirely. It's the same warning Israel gets again and again (Deut. 7:3-4; the foreign wives who turned Solomon's heart, 1 Kings 11; Ezra 9-10; "be ye not unequally yoked," 2 Cor. 6:14). The Restoration's whole theology of covenant marriage stands on this reading of who the sons of God really were.

nikham / atzav (נִחַם / אִצַּו) — **to be moved, to relent or be sorry / to be grieved, pained vv. 25-26.** *Nikham* is a famously flexible Hebrew verb — it can mean "to be sorry," "to relent," even "to be comforted" (it's the word for Isaac being comforted after his mother's death, Gen. 24:67). And *atzav*, "grieved," shares its root with the "sorrow" (*itzavon*) of Eve's childbearing in Genesis 3:16 — it's deep, laboring pain. Whether the Hebrew of Genesis 6 attaches that pain to the Lord or the Restoration's text attaches it to Noah, the doctrine lands in the same place: the agony of the coming Flood is felt by prophet and God together. This is the second of the Book of Moses's two great pages on divine grief — Moses 7's weeping God, and Moses 8's grieving prophet who feels what God feels. Put together they teach that to share God's sorrow over a wicked world is not a failure of faith or a lapse from discipleship; it is the most God-like thing a prophet does. Paul knew it — "I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:8), his affection and Christ's running together. Noah's pained heart and the Lord's pained heart are not two facts. They're one fact with two names on it.

Apocryphal Correlations — the old books beside the restored text

1 Enoch 6-11 — the reading Moses 8 DECLINES. 1 Enoch's centerpiece: two hundred "Watchers" descend, take wives, and father giants who fill the earth with violence until the Flood. The most famous apocryphal storyline there is — and available to Joseph (Laurence 1821). Moses 8 keeps the giants, the violence, the Flood-as-judgment, but rejects the angels-mating core, reading "sons of God" as the covenant line. D&C 91's "keep the true, leave the untrue," worked out in the text.

The Book of Giants (Qumran, 4Q530-532). The giants dreading the coming flood; Mahaway sent to Enoch — confirming the antediluvian world of giants and imminent judgment Moses 8 describes. Buried at Qumran, undiscovered until 1948 — genuinely unavailable to Joseph.

Jubilees 5-10. The pre-Flood corruption, the Watchers, Noah, and the Flood as cleansing. No English until 1888 — unavailable.

Canon = Moses, the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants. These are extra-canonical witnesses, not scripture; the Church takes no position on them. Read per D&C 91. Moses 8 is a worked example of that verse: the famous available reading (1 Enoch's angels) is corrected; the buried witness (Book of Giants) is confirmed. Discrimination, not borrowing.

Where the threads lead

The days of Noah. Moses 8:20-21; Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27 — eating, drinking, marrying "until the flood came" — Christ's own picture of the last days, quoted from this chapter.

Covenant marriage. Moses 8:13-15; Deuteronomy 7:3-4; Ezra 9-10; 2 Corinthians 6:14 — faith kept or lost in families, by whom the covenant people marry.

Two pages on divine grief. Moses 8:25-26 with Moses 7:28-37; Hosea 11:8 — the weeping God and the grieving prophet, one grief with two names on it.

How the chapter changes the reader

Moses 8 closes the Book of Moses with a few things to carry out. Your marriage choices are covenant choices — strip away the giants and the Flood turns on a people who stopped marrying within their faith and lost it within a generation. To grieve over a wicked world is not weakness; it's what Noah and God did together. And the gospel you have is old, preached by name through every link of a chain back to Adam, kept alive across a whole flood by one preserved old man and one obedient family. Faith at the end of an age keeps preaching, builds the ark, and grieves for the ones who won't get in. Next comes Abraham.