

Regret?

Genesis 6:6 states:

"The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled." NIV

Regretted that He had made human beings"? God?

Don't be troubled with looking up other versions because they are much the same, with the words 'repented' and 'sorry' also used for the subject word. The Hebrew word translated as 'regret' is "nā•hem'.

First, let us take a look at the modern definition and connotation of this word, regret. As a verb, it means "to be very sorry for . . .". The ". . ." is my issue here because the connotation is to be sorry for a mistake or something beyond one's control or power."

God has never made a mistake and has absolute power - He knew this would happen when He created Man. If He knew it would happen, why did He do it? He did it because it was His intent and His plan.

I just heard a pastor, a Bible scholar, say, "*God actually regrets something. He regrets that He did something. He regrets, and He sorrows that He made man to begin with . . .*"¹

This proves the connotation, and although this scholar loosely quotes the Bible, he adds emphasis reinforcing the connotation.

This is an example of a connotation that, unfortunately, anthropomorphizes God.

I submit that God is saddened by what He saw, and He was truly troubled. To God, this sadness was concurrent with the creation because God is not bound by time - He sees our beginning and our end concurrently.

At no point did God make a mistake or believe He made a mistake. This is contrary to the nature of God.

It is also unfortunate that Dr. Woods promulgated this anthropomorphism when just a few seconds of explanation could have provided more voracity to his message.

A minor thing, you say? Attributing man's character to God is not a minor thing.

The creation of mankind, with mankind's foreknown fall and salvation, is the most significant creative act of God - it defines the nature of God for all creation to see. His redemption of man glorifies Him. God was not sorry and did not regret this creation - the issues with understanding this passage are in the translation from an ancient language and modern connotations.

¹ Dr Andy Woods, podcast Genesis 026, Grace Before Judgment - Part 1, 4 minutes, 5 seconds into the podcast.