

## **The Story – The Flood**

Turn to Genesis 6 as we look at another of the big stories of the bible – the flood. Why is this a big story? Well, God brought judgment upon the entire world destroying all living things except for those people and animals that were on the ark with Noah. That's kind of a big deal.

The story of a flood that destroyed the whole world is found not just in the bible, but similar stories are found in a number of ancient civilizations, indicating the worldwide truth of this event. But other than its' historical significance, why is the story important to us today? Because the New Testament points back to the judgment of the flood as an example, a predictor of a coming event. Jesus said, **“As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.” Matthew 24:37** Peter tells us in his second epistle that the world will be judged and destroyed again, this time not by water but by fire. The point is judgment is coming, so it might be helpful to look at the story of the flood to see what provokes such judgment.

**“The Lord saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the Lord said, ‘I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth – men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air – for I am grieved that I have made them.’ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. This is the account of Noah.” Genesis 6:5-9**

Notice the bible says “the Lord saw how great man’s wickedness had become.” God sees. He is aware of everything going on, including the thoughts of our hearts. Don’t think somehow God hasn’t noticed how we live, what we do, what we think, how we behave. God sees it all, but what is it that provokes his judgment? **Three things that provoke God’s judgment.** (There are more, but let’s consider these three things).

**Total rejection of God.** Mankind had totally abandoned God. They didn’t pray, didn’t obey his commands, they didn’t even consider God in their thoughts. God simply wasn’t a consideration. When we wipe God from our minds, our hearts, our families, from society, from politics, from the marketplace of ideas, we have gone back to the sin of Adam and Eve: we don’t need God to tell us how to live or what to choose and the result always ends poorly. You can’t reject God and exclude God from your life and expect to escape judgment.

**The destruction of marriage and family.** I know, here we go again, but I'm not making this stuff up, I'm just reporting to you what the Bible says. The breakdown of marriage and the family, abandoning God's order and design regarding the family as a building block of society provokes God's judgment.

In Genesis 3 we see Adam and Eve sin, individual sin. In Genesis 4 the poison of sin spreads to the family as one of Adam and Eve's sons, Cain kills his brother Abel. We see the breakdown of the family and by Genesis 6 we see the breakdown of society as the world falls deeper into violence and sin.

The first four verses of Genesis 6 have always presented a problem for Bible students and scholars. Some speculate it is talking about fallen angels, leaving their station and having sex with the daughters of men. The Nephilim were giants that were thought to be the strange offspring. Sounds kind of science fiction doesn't it? Jesus said angels don't marry in Matthew 22 so that seems to discount that theory. Some think it is talking about the marriage of godly men with ungodly women. For sure the marriage of godly to ungodly is forbidden in both the Old and New Testament. We are not to be "unequally yoked together with unbelievers." If you were already married before you got saved, the bible instructs you not to divorce but to live a godly life and influence your spouse to come to Christ, but if you are a believer, you shouldn't be marrying someone that isn't a follower of Christ. In the Old Testament, marrying non-believers often led to the corrupting of the faithful and even the corrupting of the nation of Israel. See Ezra, Nehemiah, or look at Solomon for example. In the New Testament, remember it distorts the image of the relationship between Christ and the church.

The point is something was going on with regard to marriage and sexuality that was apart from God's plan, God's will, God's order. When verse 4 speaks of men of renown, that is not necessarily a good thing. It may imply these men were taking women by force and having children by them. Impregnating woman but never being a father or a husband. It sounds too familiar doesn't it? Verse 2 says "they married any of them they chose." Perhaps they married and divorced and married and divorced. The Lord saw there was no commitment, no fidelity, no honoring of marriage and family. Disobedience to his word concerning marriage and the family leads to judgment and destruction. What else provokes God's judgment?

**Total corruption of moral and spiritual life.** Every thought and inclination of the hearts of men had become evil. **"Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of**

**violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways.” Genesis 6:11-12** It’s interesting that in verse 3 God said, **“My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years.” Genesis 6:3** It’s as if God says, “He is mortal. I created man in my image, but now I don’t even recognize him. He is corrupted and violent in all his ways, just living according to his fleshly desires and not according to my Spirit.” The people created in God’s image corrupted their ways and now God responds. God tells Noah he is going to put an end to all people, but God doesn’t respond immediately or in anger. Let me show you something about God’s response in terms of the judgment and the flood. **Three ways God responds to their sin.**

**God responds patiently.** In verse 3 God says, “his days will be a hundred and twenty years.” Some see that as God setting a limit to how many years a person will live since these ancient folks were living hundreds of years. But even after the flood, men continued to live for many years. It seems more likely that God is saying he is giving mankind 120 years to repent and turn to God before the flood comes. Genesis 5:32, just before the account of the flood, God tells us Noah was 500 when his sons were born. He was 600 years old when the flood came. It seems likely he was 480 when God spoke to him about the ark and the flood. 120 years God waited, giving men and women an opportunity to turn from their wickedness and repent and serve God. Why would God wait so patiently? Why does he wait now? Peter tells us. **“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9** God waits patiently because of his mercy. He wants us to repent. He wants you to come and experience his forgiveness and grace. He doesn’t want you to be lost from him and his presence forever. He doesn’t want anyone to perish, after all, he gave his only Son so you could be saved!

God was patient with the people of Noah’s day but be aware that the day Noah’s work was done and the ark was completed, the patience came to an end and judgment came without mercy. It reminds me of what Jesus said, that this gospel will be preached to the whole world and then the end will come. When the work is done, like when Noah’s work was done, the end will come. God is patient, but judgment will come.

**God grieves over sin.** The bible says God was grieved and his heart was filled with pain that he had made man and then had to watch them turn away from God and become corrupt and evil. Understand, God doesn’t judge in anger like we do. He is not screaming, “Go to hell you

sinner!” It is with sorrow, broken hearted over their choices to turn away from God and his word, that he releases the judgment of the flood. Stop and realize, your sin, your choice to disobey God, to go your own way without God, is breaking the heart of your heavenly father. He grieves over your sin! His judgment is preceded by patience and grief, but don’t doubt that the judgment will come. That’s the third thing about God’s response:

**God responds with certainty.** Don’t mistake his patience and his grief over sinfulness as some “wishy-washy” response. Peter warns about the scoffers that say “Where is his coming? Where is this judgment you talk about?” Peter says they’ve forgotten about the flood when everything was destroyed. (2 Peter 3:3). There is a certainty about his response. He may wait 120 years, but when the day comes, it comes with a non-negotiable certainty. And there are two aspects to this – there is a certainty in his salvation and there is a certainty in his judgment and destruction.

**Certainty in His salvation.** The bible says “**Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God.**” **Genesis 6:8-9** God found a righteous man who walked with him and through Noah God provides salvation and a means of escape for the righteous and the innocent animals. He tells Noah to build an ark, a boat like no other boat ever built up to that time. Amazing design. 450 feet long, 75 foot wide, 45 foot high with three interior decks. God told him to build a roof for it (because it was going to rain) and to leave an 18 inch window just under the roof line, all the way around, likely to provide a ventilation system and provide light. We don’t know how long it took Noah to build this ark. Maybe it took 120 years, maybe not, but it was an incredible undertaking. We can speculate on what the neighbors were thinking and saying. The Genesis account doesn’t record Noah as saying anything but the New Testament refers to Noah as a “preacher of righteousness” in 2 Peter 2:5. It is certainly believable that Noah warned the people of judgment that was coming, that they needed to turn from their sin, but no one listened. No one repented. 120 years of warning and no one responded because their hearts were totally focused on self and sin.

Genesis 7 God says to Noah, “**Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation.**” **Genesis 7:1** God provides a means of escape for the righteous, a means of escaping his wrath. Remember it said “Noah found favor – grace-in the eyes of the Lord.” It is by God’s grace alone as we turn to him in faith and trust in him

that we escape the judgment, the wrath of God that is to come. We can count on that, that God will rescue his people from wrath.

God tells Noah, “Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made.” (7:4) It was God’s prerogative because he was creator. God then causes a supernatural migration of animals in order to save the various species. Two by two, male and female, seven of every kind of clean animal came on board. The bible then says, “**And Noah did all that the Lord commanded him.**” **Genesis 7:5** A few verses later, after Noah and his family are safely on the ark, the bible says, “**Then the Lord shut him in.**” **Genesis 7:16.** There was certainty in God’s salvation for Noah and there is for all of us who have trusted in Jesus as our Savior and Lord. He shuts us in his ark of safety and we don’t have to fear God’s wrath. His wrath and judgment against our sin was placed upon Jesus on the cross. He bore the judgment for our sin. There is certainty in his salvation and there is...

**Certainty in His judgment.** Look at Genesis 7:11, “In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, on the seventeenth day of the second month – on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth and the floodgates of the heavens were opened and rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.” Genesis 7:11. We are talking a cataclysmic flood. The waters came from beneath and from above. It very well may have changed the earth geologically. It was total in scope and the Scripture suggests it was worldwide. Everything inside the ark survived and everything outside perished. Understand, there is no half way measure in God’s salvation nor in his judgment. God provided salvation through the ark but you are either in or out. There were no hangers on on the outside. God’s salvation is total and complete, but so is his judgment.

Let’s go back to verse 16. Then the Lord shut him in. God shut the door. In Revelation the Lord says, “**See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.**”

**Revelation 3:8** It’s good news that God has opened the door for us, a way to escape the wrath and judgment that is to come. He has set before you an open door. In fact, later in that chapter Jesus says, “**Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him and he with me**” **Revelation 3:20** It’s a standing invitation. You know those hotel rooms with adjoining doors. You can open your side but the other side is still locked. Think of it in those terms. Today the door is open from his side. He is waiting for you to open the door and accept his invitation. Open the door to life and escape the wrath and judgment that is to come. But understand the door won’t always remain open.

The Lord says he has set before us an open door, but the verse just before reminds us, **“What he opens no one can shut and what he shuts no one can open.” Revelation 3:7** God shut the door on the ark and when it was shut, Noah couldn't open it, his sons couldn't open it, no one could. Salvation was total and complete, but so was the judgment and the flood.

Today the door is open from Jesus's side, and you have the opportunity to accept his invitation and open the door, but the day will come when he will shut the door and no one can open it. No amount of begging, bargaining, pleading, confessing, or crying will open that door. You have to decide while there is time. So what do we take away from this story? Three things:

**Judgment is coming: get right with God while the door is open.** It's just that simple. The door is going to be shut and when God shuts it, that's it. People keep thinking they've got plenty of time but time is running out. Even if God's final judgment day for the planet is 120 years away, the final day for you might be today. His side of the door is open. Jesus is knocking. Open the door and invite him in! If you are already a follower of Jesus, consider...

**Judgment is coming: what kind of person ought you to be?** Peter speaks of the flood and then says **“The present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment...Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.” 2 Peter 3:7-12**

We know judgment is coming. We know, like Noah, that God is not pleased with the wickedness and the dissolution of marriage and family and with the violence and total depravity of man. Like Noah, we know we've been called to live holy lives, to walk with God in obedience, to serve him and live for him. We are watching for that day, not living foolishly, not in fear, but making every day count for Jesus. Peter continued, **“That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.” 2 Peter 3:12-14** I'm not fearing the end, I'm anticipating the beginning, a new heaven and a new earth and a new home with Jesus. I want to live so I'm ready to meet him when he comes. Finally...

**Judgment is coming: let's finish all God has for us to do.** That was the testimony concerning Noah. Blameless among his people, upright, he walked with God and he did all that

the Lord commanded him to do. Wouldn't you love for someone to say that about you? For God to be able to say that about you? "He did everything I commanded him to do." "She did everything I asked her to do." "He finished his assignment. She completed her task." I want to live an obedient life, resting in his grace, looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, trusting in his salvation, finishing my assignment.

Judgment is coming. Someday. What are you going to do about it? It's better to decide today! Don't wait. Don't delay.