

GENESIS 6:1-22

NOAH FOUND FAVOR IN THE EYES OF THE LORD

There were several good questions that were asked last week. Let me answer them very briefly. (1) How long between Adam's creation and the Flood? Answer: 1660 years. The book of Genesis was written by Moses around 1450 B.C. or some 630 years after the Flood. (2) How did the people in Genesis communicate with God? Answer: There were 3 primary ways – by an audible voice, thru dreams and visions, and thru the Holy Spirit. (3) Where did I get that God spoke to the hippos? Answer: In Job Chapter 40 God tells Job to consider all the various things in nature that He (God) has made and how He directs their behaviors. One of the creatures mentioned is called "Behemoth" (v 15). Based on how it's described, many Bible commentaries believe that this could be a hippopotamus. (4) How did the world populate after Adam and Eve? Answer: If the race was to populate and fulfill the command of Gen. 1:28, there is little doubt that Adam's sons and daughters had to have married their own sisters and brothers if the race was to populate the earth. But due to the purity of the race as evidenced by the long length of life, there were no adverse effects as we see happening today. Gradually, as the effects of sin took its toll on the human race, marrying one's own sister, etc., began to create hereditary problems. [bible.org] One Jewish tradition (not in the Bible) holds that Adam and Eve had 33 sons and 23 daughters. (5) is there any connection between Cain and the Canaanites. No the Canaanites got their name from Noah's grandson Canaan and not from Cain.

The last question about how people could have such lengthy life expectancies before the Flood will be answered next week when we get into the Flood itself. So let's get into Chapter 6...

READ Genesis 6:1-4

As the earth increases in population over the next 1000-plus years, mankind becomes more and more sinful. The ensuing generations follow in Cain's footsteps. They have evil hearts. They move further away from God.

In v 4 the "sons of God" have sexual relations with the "daughters of man" and children are born. We're not told exactly who these "sons of God" are. Some Bible scholars say that they are fallen angels, demons. They take on human form and end up marrying the daughters of man and together they produced what amounts to a super race of mighty warriors – the group of people referred to here as "the Nephilim." Some translate this as "giants." Whoever they are they establish kingdoms and fill the world with violence and corruption. Mankind systematically ruins God's creation. This summarizes what's going on from Adam and Eve's time to the time of Noah. Over this long period of time millions of people populate the earth.

READ Genesis 6:5-6

John MacArthur says this... "In Genesis 1:31 God saw all that He had made and behold, it was very good. Just five chapters later, it's very, very bad." God is overwhelmingly disappointed. He is sad. "It grieved God to His heart." The human condition becomes more and more depraved after the fall in Genesis Chapter 3. People get progressively worse.

Jesus describes man's sinful state this way: "For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person" (Mark 7:21-23). In response to all the wickedness that He sees, God would have been perfectly justified to wipe every person off the face of the earth. In fact God says this...

READ Genesis 6:7

"Blot out" means "to remove." Here we get an indication of the pervasiveness of sin, just how widespread it is. Like a cancer it spreads quickly and impacts not only the individual who sins, not only the people in whom that person comes in contact with, but ultimately it effects all humanity and for that matter the rest of God's created order here on earth. Man's sinfulness devastates God's perfect creation. I want you to think back to the curse in Genesis Chapter 3. Not only did mankind get a death

sentence as a result of Adam and Eve's sin, but so did every other living thing. This includes trees, plants, animals, insects – all living things received God's judgment of death. So, it should come as no surprise that God's response to sinful humanity that we see here in this chapter 6 extends beyond humans to include all living things on the earth.

READ Genesis 6:8

The King James Version says that "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." God looks down and sees Noah. God knows his heart.

READ Genesis 6:9

What a great statement about Noah's character! He is a righteous man. The writer of Hebrews says, "By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith" (Hebrews 11:7). Noah's character stands in stark contrast to that of the rest of humanity. Noah has faith in God. Noah is saved from destruction by God's grace thru his faith in God! As we are about to see Noah demonstrates this faith by a total obedience to God.

READ Genesis 6:10

These three sons of Noah will become important later in the story.

READ Genesis 6:11-12

This was established earlier and the writer of Genesis, Moses is reiterating it. This is fundamentally important and we need to remember it as we read what is about to take place. Because of the earth's corruption God plans to destroy it. Now, we haven't yet been told HOW the earth will be destroyed. And we don't know yet WHO if anybody will escape this destruction.

God goes to this righteous man named Noah and He lays out His divine plan. What I want you to notice is that only God speaks. In fact,

Noah never says a word in the entire text from Genesis Chapters 6 through Chapter 8. He will not utter his first words in the Bible until the end of Genesis Chapter 9. Interesting.

READ Genesis 6:13

We already know this from v 1-12, but now God lets Noah in on His plan to destroy the earth. God says, "Here's what I want you to do, Noah..."

READ Genesis 6:14-16

The word "ark" in Hebrew means "box." The writer of Genesis, Moses doesn't use the term for boat or ship. This structure will have no rudder, no sails, no oars and no V-shaped bow to cut thru the water. The purpose for this giant box-like structure will be to prevent those who are inside of it from drowning.

We don't know for sure what kind of wood Gopher wood is. There's a lot of speculation as to what this tree might have been. The most common view is that it was Cyprus wood. Whatever the case, this wood came from a tree that would have been readily available and plentiful in Noah's day in the Mesopotamian region.

The dimensions are given. Converting to our English system of measure the ark is to be 450 ft long by 75 ft wide by 45 ft high. It's a large rectangular box with a roof, windows and a door. The 6:1 ratio of length to width will provide this structure with great stability in the turbulent waters. It's interesting to note that Noah's ark will be the largest floating vessel ever made in human history until the 19th Century. That's when steel started being used in ship building.

Now let's face it. Nobody just gets up one day and decides to build something this large. From the dimensions I calculated the internal volume to be 1.5 million cubic feet. That's the equivalent of 520 rail box cars. This will allow for hundreds, perhaps thousands of rooms or compartments on three separate decks. It's a massive undertaking!

God next reveals to Noah WHY he is to build this floating box.

READ Genesis 6:17

For the first time Noah hears about God's plan to judge the earth by flooding it. Looking ahead to Genesis Chapter 7, we get clarification as to what God means by "all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven." There we read that "All flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died" (Genesis 7:21-22). The flood is going to destroy all air breathing creatures under heaven excluding those water breathing creatures in the water such as fish. This event will be a cataclysmic upheaval of the entire earth!

READ Genesis 6:18

Noah is chosen by God because of his righteousness, because of his faith in God. And now God establishes a covenant with him. God makes an unconditional promise. We will learn the details of this covenant later. Through Noah's family God is going to spare a remnant of mankind and the animals.

I need to stop here and make a point that often gets overlooked. God is obviously very upset and deeply saddened at mankind's sinful, depraved condition. The Bible even says that God regrets that He made man. So why doesn't God just go ahead and wipe every person off the face of the earth and start over again? I said earlier that He would have been justified to do this. So why doesn't He? **Because He can't!** And here's why... God had made a promise to Adam and Eve back in the Garden – a promise that one of Eve's male descendants would destroy the evil serpent. So then, for this promise to be fulfilled God MUST preserve a remnant of humanity. And He will do this through this one righteous man named Noah.

READ Genesis 6:19-20

Notice in v 20 that God will bring all of the animals to Noah. Noah's job will be to load them into the ark to keep them alive while they are housed on the ark.

READ Genesis 6:21

I don't know this for a fact but it certainly appears to be the case that at least temporarily during the year-long flood event and sometime thereafter all people and animals are vegetarians. God never directs Noah to gather any additional animals to be slaughtered for the purpose of feeding the carnivores. And there is no refrigeration system on board to store meat. That's just something that caught my attention.

READ Genesis 6:22

Noah obeys. He builds the ark, keeps the door open, loads up his family, the animals along with all the food provisions God had directed. Over and over in the next chapter, Chapter 7, we will read the phrase: "as God had commanded Noah." Obedience is the mark of a true follower of God.

Genesis Chapter 6 ends with Noah building the ark as instructed and Genesis Chapter 7 begins with Noah entering the ark.

Let me give you a rough timeframe of events here. Noah is 500 years old as Genesis Chapter 6 begins (Genesis 5:32). He is 600 years old when the flood comes (Genesis 7:11). So it takes a hundred years or so to build the ark and to stock it per God's instructions. And only after that do the raindrops begin to fall, which we will get to next time.

What is going on during these hundred years? Obviously the ark is being built. That must have been quite a spectacle to behold. It certainly would have drawn attention from those passing by. Jesus gives us some insight into what's going on. He compares the time leading up to the flood to the time leading up to His return. There are similarities.

This is what Jesus says... "But concerning that day and hour [of Jesus' return] no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the

Father only. For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man" (Matthew 24:36-39).

For 100 years life goes on as usual for most people in the world. Is anybody aware that a flood is coming other than Noah and his family? To answer that question let's go to the Apostle Peter for his commentary on this subject: "If [God] did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald [preacher] of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly" (2 Peter 2:5). Peter, under divine inspiration, offers us a little detail that was not given to us in the Genesis account. Noah is preaching a message of "righteousness." Peter doesn't tell us what that message is, but I like to think that it went something like this...

MAN: "Hey, Noah, what are you doing?"

NOAH: "I'm building an ark like God told me to do."

MAN: "But why? For what reason? There's no water around here!"

NOAH: "I'm glad you asked. You see, God told me that He plans to destroy the world with a flood. This ark is going to protect me and anyone else who's inside of it."

MAN: "Do you really believe that? Come on, man!"

NOAH: "Yes. I believe what God told me. I really do. I have no idea when this will happen, but I know that it will. When it does we're going to be ready! Hey, we've got plenty of room. Would you and your family like to join us?"

MAN: "Noah, you're one crazy, old fool! See ya later!"

Look, you figure Noah had to have been asked numerous times over the decades of building this massive structure what exactly he was doing.

And Noah being an honest, God-fearing man would have told them. But despite years and years of warnings about a coming flood, in the end only Noah and seven members of his family boarded the ark and were saved.

Again, Peter is speaking... "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which He went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water" (1 Peter 3:18-20). Peter compares our salvation in Jesus to Noah's ark. As we will see next time, the ark will carry eight people to safety during God's flood judgment upon the earth. The ark will be the ONLY means of deliverance. It will carry those who are in it to a brand new life. And so it is for those who are in Christ.

Millions of people perished in the great flood. Why? Because they did not heed Noah's message of God's coming judgment and take advantage of the only means of salvation. For 100 years while the ark is being built, Noah preaches a message that God's judgment is coming. It is in preparation for this judgment that Noah is building the ark. This is the idea Peter conveys.

So, how does God save us? Thru the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Peter goes on to tell about the baptism of God's judgment upon the earth in Noah's day. The ark represents Jesus Christ. We are saved from the wrath of God's judgment if we are in Christ. There is judgment for all those who remain outside of Christ. Peter offers a very effective picture of salvation. So what is his point? Get saved while there is time. Get on board the ark that is Jesus Christ! Judgment is coming!