

GENESIS

Lesson 16

The Flood Part 1: Noah and The Ark, Genesis 6:9-22

In this lesson, we observe only one person doing what God desired—and that person was Noah. We can learn many favorable behaviors from Noah. However, if we learn nothing else, we must learn that doing what God desires—doing what pleases God—should be our goal every single day of our lives, just as it was with Noah.

The previous lesson was entitled "The Beginning of the End of the Beginning," because we were studying how mankind, God's creation, had descended into such corrupt behavior that God wanted to destroy the beginning of all mankind, along with all living creatures who have the "breath of life." However, as we will discern from this lesson, God had a plan for a new beginning for mankind, and He accomplished this plan through one righteous person, Noah.

As we noted in the last lesson, Jesus pointed out in Matthew 24:37-39 that when judgment came, it came suddenly—the people "did not know until the flood came and took them all away." Jesus cited the Great Flood to illustrate that judgment for mankind would be coming once again when he returns as the Messiah. He told his disciples, "...so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."

The world around us continues to live in sin, practicing every kind of evil imaginable; and judgment is coming upon them. Until then, however, it is our job to keep proclaiming the Gospel and to focus on living in this world but not conforming to it. (Romans 12:2) Just as God saved Noah and his family through one righteous man, Noah, He will save those who have put their faith in one righteous man, Jesus—the only man who died, was buried, and rose again and is now sitting on the right hand of the Father—Jesus the Messiah. Judgment is most assuredly coming, but today we can find grace in the eyes of the Lord—just as Noah did—by putting our faith in Christ.

We know today that that new beginning, i.e., the world following the flood, did not result in an earth devoid of sin. Noah and his family were not the only entities who survived the flood—sin did as well. Today we are living in this sin-driven world, but we look forward to a new *permanent* beginning—an eternal home with Jesus living with us, and us with Him, forever, as he promised in John 14:2 and Revelation 22:1-5.

Furthermore, as followers of Christ, we are already reborn. Paul writes, "...behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17 [NKJV]) We are new, eternal, beings, and we look forward to the day when we will live in our new eternal home with him.

As we begin to encounter the second half of Genesis Chapter 6, we read the following in verses 5 through 7:

"The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. So, the Lord said, 'I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.'" [NIV]

Mankind had degraded into practicing and thinking about every evil thing imaginable. They had turned completely away from God. Can you imagine just how awful and difficult that time would have been for Noah, i.e., living on the earth and trying to follow God when no one else was? And yet, we read in Genesis 6:8, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." [NKJV] Living among a people with no moral compass, Noah alone received God's grace, along with his wife, his three sons, and their wives. Note that it was God's grace that saved Noah and his family, just as Christ's grace saves us.

Wouldn't it be amazing if we could go back in time and hear what Noah was telling the lost people living around him? It would be great to see how Noah was living, to hear his speech, to understand his thoughts, and to observe his actions. All of his being would have been focused on countering everything that was going on around him. He would have been seen and treated as an outcast, but yet he held to his faith in God—and it saved him from the coming judgment. Similarly, we cling to the rock, Jesus, for salvation, as this will keep us from the coming judgment on this lost and dying world. (Genesis 6:9)

So, imagine that you are Noah, living a righteous life during those days and witnessing all the corruption and perversion around you. Then God tells you that He is going to destroy every living thing. What would you do? What would you think?

1. What did Noah do when he heard this coming judgment pronounced? See Genesis 6:22.

God now gives very specific instructions to Noah on what will happen. He provides Noah instructions regarding the ark that he is to build—an ark that will house his family and all the animals that God will save from the coming judgment. Read Genesis 6:14-21.

2. In reading the above verses, which included God's instructions to Noah, what are some things we can infer from this passage regarding life on the earth pre-flood, aside from the evil they were doing?

3. What else can we discern about the people of that day, in terms of their knowledge, skills, lifestyles, and customs from Jesus' words in Luke 17:26-27?

When you reflect on everything that we've read, what we can discern from these verses about life in those days? Does it sound like a depiction of stone age creatures, i.e., man dragging his woman around by the hair, living in caves, hunting animals for food, and grunting to communicate with one another? No, of course not. These were intelligent human beings who knew exactly who God was, and they knew exactly what they were doing by turning their backs on God. The picture we see here is not one of a group of ignorant cave dwellers, but rather one of a civilized people consciously deciding to do everything that God abhorred.

By definition, the "stone age" is defined as the period preceding the Bronze Age, when tools became part of the archaeological patchwork in the ancient ruins of mankind. Evolutionists want you to believe that a half-man/half-ape, being existed during the stone age, using crude tools and weapons and living in caves. The reality is that tools existed well before the Bronze Age. We know this based on many factors, two of which would be (1) the Ziggurat described in Genesis Chapter 11, and (2) the great pyramids, the earliest of which were built by the Egyptians around 2600 BC near the end of the commonly-called Stone Age and well before the Bronze Age. Both of these structures required a solid understanding of engineering and construction, a common language, and the tools to build them with.

I point this out for two reasons. Firstly, I don't want you to be deceived by man's understanding or "knowledge" of ancient prehistoric events, because it is all based on theory and speculation. Secondly, I want to illustrate that no one is "without excuse" or unaware of man's intended relationship with God. In Romans 1:20 [NIV], Paul asserts, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse."

Mankind went into the flood fully—civilized and conscious of every evil act; their sin was evident and brought the ensuing judgment that God commanded. The truth is that, from the first day that God created mankind until today, we have never been ignorant about the existence of God. Many have chosen to turn their back on God, but all are without excuse. Man is destined for a coming final judgment, as those were in "the days of Noah." It is our role as Christians to warn the lost around us, just as it was Noah's responsibility to also follow God's instructions. We are to "do everything" that God commands us to do, and more so as we see the day of reckoning approaching. (Hebrews 10:25)

As we consider God's instructions to Noah, and Noah's obedience in following these instructions (Genesis 6:22, where it says that he did all that God commanded), many wonder how long it took him to build the ark. You can find a lot of guesses regarding the length of time that it took, but in truth no one knows. I would estimate that it took Noah and his sons somewhere between Noah's age of 500 when he fathered Japheth and then went on to father Shem and Ham, and his age of 600 when the flood came. Based on this assumption, it is doubtful that Noah got much help from the three sons early on. Serious progress was probably not made until his sons were fully grown and could help him, as it would have been difficult for him to build something like this by himself. So, I believe we can theorize that it might have taken as little as a few years (i.e., a miracle) up to perhaps seventy-five years or more, but again that would all be pure speculation. What is important is not the time it took, but the fact that "Noah did everything just as God commanded him." (Genesis 6:22)

Let's close by looking at a non-Genesis passage in the Bible that is relevant to our lesson.

4. Read Psalm 19:7-8. How does this passage apply to Noah, and how does it apply to us today?

In the next lesson, we will be examining life inside the ark to see what the flood was like from that perspective. The ark was a real cargo-sized ship or vessel with a lot of capacity to house animals and humans. We will be taking an in-depth look at it, the flood itself, and the survivors. As a final thing to consider, look at Genesis 6:20 and 7:9 and consider how Noah and his sons were able to encourage and cajole the animals to come into this strange-looking vessel?

In Christ,

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