

GENESIS: THE BEGINNING IS NOT THE END

Escape From Judgment

TEXT: Gen. 6-8, Jn. 3:16-18; 5:22-24, 2 Cor. 5:10, 1 Pet. 3:20, Heb. 12:7-11

INTRODUCTION: The Bible only covers around 5,000 years of history. A little over 1,000 of those years encompass the end times. **The space of time between the creation of the world and the Great Flood was approximately 17 centuries.**

I tell you that, not merely to give you a chronological orientation, but so you will understand why as we look at things that began during the history recorded in the Book of Genesis, we move so slowly through the first chapters. It is because from the end of chapter 3 of Genesis to the beginning of chapter 6, more than 1,600 years pass by.

Last week we saw that with the increase in the population of the earth came also a dramatic increase in the wickedness of mankind. Evil multiplied, aided by demonic encouragement, spurred on by the desire of men to live life their own way, they became intensely violent with one another. It was a period of desperation on the earth.

When the intent of the hearts of men became only evil continually,

and the entirety of the earth was filled with the violence of men,

God sent His judgment upon His sin-filled creation in the form of a flood.

God commanded the rain to fall and it fell around the globe in mighty torrents for forty days and forty nights. The fountains of the deep that had served as a source of water for mankind, flowing out of the earth from artesian wells, were now broken open to release their reservoirs in raging currents of devastating force.

The waters continued upon the earth for just over a year, covering the very tallest of the mountains before they receded into the newly formed basins we call our oceans. During the course of this world-wide deluge, every air breathing animal that walked upon or flew above the face of the earth, and every man and woman who had lived upon it was destroyed. All that remained of land animals or human beings were those whom God had sealed inside an ark.

It had been a huge barge designed by God Himself for Noah, who through faith in God and His promise, had found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah and

his family, his wife, his three grown sons and their wives, eight people in all, had been rescued from their desperate world and chosen to help start the story of man over again. The ark had been large enough to hold two of every kind of land animal known to man today, both living and extinct, and still have plenty of room left over for the storing of food and fresh water. It served its purpose well, allowing the animals to repopulate the earth and to allow Noah and his family to escape from judgment.

As much as the account of the Great Flood in accordance with what honest and open-minded men know today about hydrology, meteorology, and geology, do not think for a moment that we will ever be able to explain it all. Just as Jesus' calming of the storm on the Sea of Galilee or feeding 5,000 families with one boy's lunch was an explanation defying miracle, so also was the flood. It was a supernatural judgment that came by the hand of God.

It was sent as a judgment upon the sin of mankind upon the earth in those days, but dear friend, hear me now in this, it was recorded in the Book of Genesis as both a warning and instruction to us all. It is a message that begins, but does not end in Genesis.

The first part of that message is

I. THE FLOOD DEMONSTRATES THE REALITY OF DIVINE JUDGMENT.

A. Receiving this message requires that we comprehend the reality of a world-wide flood.

I was 17 years old when I arrived on campus of my state Baptist University ready to prepare to become the preacher of the Word of God I had been called to be the year before. Imagine my surprise to find that many students and even a number of professors, some of them in the Religion Department, believed the Bible to be filled with myths and legends. One of the chiefs of those legends in their way of thinking was Noah's Flood.

This kind of thinking was not new, but it was new to me. I was not just taken aback; I was taken in. I became a victim of my own pride. Wanting to be like many of those that seemed to be among the academically elite, I willingly believed the lies they had believed.

I remember the look in my poor mother's eyes at the breakfast table the first weekend her preacher boy son came home from college for a visit. I said, "Mom, if you were able to calculate the amount of space that was required to hold two of every kind of animal that ever existed, and then you saw that the ark Noah built was not big enough to hold them all, would you still believe the story in the Bible about Noah and the ark?"

She thought a moment and then said, "Well, yes, Mike, I think I would." Then I watched her eyes grow as big and round as saucers when I said, "Well, I wouldn't!" I went on to explain my new-found philosophy. I said, "I believe that after you accept Jesus by faith, everything else has to be proved."

It did not occur to me that none of the sceptics at the university I was following with unquestioning admiration had offered any proof for their doubts or unbelief. I just assumed they had their evidence, and when I got as smart as they were, then I would know it and understand.

I did not trouble myself with looking for evidence or proof to support my liberal philosophy until eight years later. God in His providential mercy put in the heart of a teenage girl to ask a question that sent me on a very serious study of the book of Genesis and the question of origins. For the very first time in my life I started looking for evidence and proof about whether what was claimed in the first eleven chapters of the Book of Genesis was fact or fiction.

Contrary to all I had come to believe, and much against what had become my own personal philosophy, I discovered that the evidence testified that Genesis was true. It was true science. It was true history. It was true theology. It was true doctrine. It was all true.

That discovery of course, included what Genesis said about a world-wide flood sent by the Almighty to bring judgment on a sinful world and of an ark designed by God but built by a man who believed the word of God, and who by faith found grace in the eyes of the Lord. By that grace through faith, he escaped the judgment of God.

My friend, if right now your heart is scoffing at this old preacher, saying to you, "I can't believe someone would actually believe that story of Noah in an ark in a world-wide flood is literally true," would you just go to this website

answersingenesis.org

Go to the store and order the dvd, ***Is Genesis History?*** And watch and listen to what these Ph.D. scientists have to say and to show you.

Because you cannot really get the message that God is sending to us today from what He did thousands of years ago in sending the flood as a judgment on sin if you think the flood is a myth or a legend and did not really happen.

B. Jesus warned people who just as folks in the day of Noah **did not believe a flood was coming, so also they would scoff at the notion of His coming for the rapture of the church **as well.****

Matthew 24:37–42 37 But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 Two *women will be* grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

In fact, Jesus often warned people about the coming Day of Judgment and the awful fate of those who did not believe His words.

Matthew 10:15 Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

And Jesus told us that

II. ESCAPE FROM THE JUDGMENT OF CONDEMNATION ONLY COMES THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.

John 3:16–18 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. 18 “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

And not in this single place in the gospels, but throughout the message of Jesus He tells us that the only escape from the condemnation we justly deserve because of our sin is by trusting in Him and what He did in paying for our sin upon the cross.

John 5:22–24 22 For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, 23 that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. 24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

But dear believing brother and sister in Christ, do not think that the warning of God’s judgment has no purpose for you because through faith in Christ you have escaped the Judgment of Condemnation.

Remember that **all believers shall appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ.**

2 Corinthians 5:9–10 9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

This is not a judgment of salvation or of heaven versus hell. This is a judgement of our works since we have been saved, whether they are good or bad.

III. ESCAPE FROM LOSS AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST COMES BY OUR FAITHFULNESS.

1 Corinthians 3:11–15 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Too many Christians are content to think, "Now that I have trusted Christ, it does not matter what I do. I will go to heaven."

And that is true IF you have truly trusted Christ. However, **one who feels this way may need** to take the Bible's advice **to examine himself to see if he really is in the faith**, if he has truly made Jesus the Lord and Master of his life if he cares nothing about how he lives now.

But the Holy Spirit also warns even genuine believers, that while we are saved by grace through faith in Christ, what we do with our lives matters, even in eternity.

How we spend our time, energy, money, effort, opportunities will all be examined at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Those who live faithfully will be rewarded. Those who are saved but unfaithful, will indeed be saved, but will suffer loss.

ESCAPE FROM LOSS AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST COMES BY OUR FAITHFULNESS.

Finally, dear fellow believer, let us remember that

IV. CHASTENING IN THIS LIFE PREPARES US FOR THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

Hebrews 12:7–11 7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected *us*, and we paid *them* respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Here the Spirit reminds us that **God's chastening in our lives for sin and disobedience is a mark that we are truly saved.** God does not chasten lost people.

But He also tells us that the chastening comes to train us in righteousness so that ultimately we shall profit. God does not want us to suffer loss when we come before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

God wants our lives to be successful, but successful in righteousness and in things that matter for eternity.

PRAYER – I pray for the lost that as they stand before You this morning that they might be overwhelmed with a holy fear.

- That as those who waited while Noah built the ark before their eyes began to fear when the rain started to fall,
- May those who have never humbled themselves before the Son of God who bore their sins upon the cross, fear the coming and certain judgment of those who have not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God.
- And may fear lead to repentance and faith. May today they call out believing to Jesus, confessing Him as Lord and Savior.

Then Lord I pray for all of us who do believe, who have trusted Christ as Lord and Master

- Lord, lead us to examine the faithfulness of our lives.
- Help us examine how we lived this last week,
- Examine the plans we have for the week to come.
- How we used the 24 hours each day You gave us?
- How we have used the energy, and opportunities You brought to us?
- How have we spent the money You made available to us?
- May we think seriously about how You would see these things if in just a little while we appeared at the Judgment Seat of Christ.