

**November 18, 2007**

The Life of Noah – Part 3 – Genesis 7:1-24

Alright good morning. As always I'm glad that you are back this Sunday morning. Grab your Bibles and your message maps if you would like to take notes and let's go back to the Life of Noah. Genesis chapter 7.

The past two weeks we've been studying this portion of Genesis and at the very least have learned 2 things. One – that **we can make a difference in the world we live in – we can be instruments of LIFE and HOPE in our world.** And two – the way **we do that** is not in grand gestures and bold speeches – it is **one step at a time** in the daily grind of life – it is **letting the BIG picture affect the my decisions in the LITTLE choices right in front of me** – whatever that might be. So we've seen the what and the how, this morning we'll end up looking at the why.

Before we look at the text this morning, let me jog your memories back about 7 years ago. Remember Y2K? The computer glitch that was going to end the world as we know it? All because computerized calendars couldn't handle a year that didn't begin in 1 – 9 – planes were supposed to crash. Bank computers were going to dump our accounts. The stock market would crash. Stores would run out of food. Traffic lights would fail.

So people bought lots of food, filled up their cars with gas, bought bottled water by the truck load, even stored up weapons just in case. And then New Years Eve. New Years Day. And it happened. There was plenty of food, traffic flowed, accounts were correct, lights were on. In fact life continued on so normally that it was almost boring.

Which is good news – our lives continued as they had been. But there is a hidden danger there too. The result could be that since nothing DID happen, people might believe nothing CAN happen. And the danger is that we will continue in our self-assured arrogance with unrealistic feelings that we are in control. Let me read **2 Peter 3:3-7** to you.

*3 First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.*

*4 They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."*

*5 But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water.*

*6 By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.*

*7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

So what happens when the warnings are real? What happens when God is saying something we should take seriously? What happens when God is about to do something? That's what we're going to look at today. This is the part of the story that gets glossed over in the children's books. All of chapter 7 in Genesis is reduced to "*it rained and poured for 40 days-eyes days-eyes.*" But there is a major lesson – a major truth – and a major application for us in this chapter I don't want us to miss.

Let's look at portions of chapter 7:1-6, 10-12, 17-24.

The evidence for the flood is so overwhelming that I can't possibly even scratch the surface in this study. Let me just look with you real fast at the water – one of the questions – where did the water come from?

Look again at verse 18-20 with me. TEXT

When we look at mountains like Mt Everest which is over 29,000 feet high, it seems pretty crazy to think that there could be enough water to cover these mountains. And as it is today – that would probably be true. But listen to what the Bible says in **Psalms 104**. The New American Standard Bible which is a word for word translation says in **verses 6-9**:

“You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters were standing above the mountains. At your rebuke they fled. At the sound of your thunder they hurried away. The mountains rose, the valleys sank down to the place which you established for them. You set a boundary that they may not pass over, so that they will not return to cover the earth.”

The Bible says the mountains rose and the valleys sank. The water ran to the places God had set for it so that it couldn't cover the earth again. The earth's landscape was catastrophically changing. The mountains as we know them rose by God's command to bring an end to the flood.

It is interesting to note – speaking of Mt Everest – that the top 3000 feet of Mt Everest is covered with clam fossils and other ocean living fossils. This would pretty much indicate that either clams migrated upwards 26000+ feet above sea level OR that Mt Everest was once at or below sea level. Observable science and the Bible agree that the waters were higher than the mountains.

And here's the Bible's claim in **Psalm 24:1-2** “The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.”

Compare that to what we just read in 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.”

The Bible says the water spewed from below and rained from above. In fact the majority of the water came from below. A catastrophic event orchestrated by God caused the water below the crust of the earth to erupt violently and the land to sink.

As a small example – think of the flooding in New Orleans from Hurricane Katrina. Part of the problem came from the torrential downpours but when the levees gave way, water from the river flooded into the land basin. That's sort of the picture we get in Genesis.

Why am I making a big deal out of this? Because we have got to get something foundational established. **What the Bible tells us is historical FACT.** Creation is a fact. The fall of man is a fact. The flood is a fact. This is history. There are tons of reasons why I believe that, but the most compelling is that Jesus said so. Listen to **Luke 17:26**:

“Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.”

Jesus believed in Noah – a real man. Jesus believed in a real ark. And Jesus believed in a real flood that destroyed everybody. **You cannot hold on to JESUS** – you cannot hold on to the gospel – **you cannot hold onto the New Testament and reject GENESIS because Jesus believed the historical record of Genesis.** Noah was a real person, a real family, lived in a real time, built a real ark, and floated during a real flood that destroyed the world.

## VIDEO

The truth that this portion of the Life of Noah tells us today is not one we like to think about. The truth is that **God's PATIENCE does come to an end and he destroys UNREPENTANT sinners.**

**Gen 6:7** told us “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.”

**Gen 6:13** “So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.”

**Gen 6:17** “I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish.”

And then in **Gen 7:21-22** “Every living thing that moved on the earth perished-- birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died.”

There are a number of passages in the Bible that display God's terrible judgment on his enemies. These are often disturbing to us, and they should be. We want to see the God of love and forgiveness, not the God of righteous wrath. But what we have got to get imprinted in our hearts today is that God hates sin. God is intolerant of it. He judges it with fatal anger. And God spares no guilty soul. God literally destroyed them all – the whole of humanity with the exception of 8 people. God is not sentimental about sin. We can't be either.

Now having said that, I want to point out how the Lord felt. **Genesis 6:6** tells us that God was sorry He had made man and was grieved in His heart. That's what He felt. He felt sadness. He felt grief over what man had become. And God expressed that sorrow in human terms – He said it was as if He was sorry He made them.

Now remember, God's not sorry in the sense that things didn't turn out how He thought they would. He's not getting new info here. Things happened just how He knew they would. But that doesn't make Him any less sorrowful nor does it make man any less guilty. God's sadness is tied to the fact that He has no choice. God's holiness demands destruction. It is necessary, it is inevitable, it is consistent with who God is. His holy nature has no choice but to punish sinful unrepentant man, and that brings God grief. **God's judgment on sin is not arbitrary or CARELESS. It is a reality of His HOLINESS.**

It rained for 40 days and 40 nights. But Noah and his family were in the ark for a year, a month, and ten days. We can only imagine how they must have felt. Forty days of downpour. Four more months of floating around. Another half a year waiting for the earth to dry out. Talk about being overwhelmed. The biggest floating structure ever built up to that time. Rain they had never seen before. Destruction of the entire planet. They're floating along in a zoo guided only by God and living in the hope of a better world and a new life. And all the future of the world is huddled under that one roof.

Now here's where I want us to take a metaphorical jump to the reality of our lives. Remember that Noah was righteous, blameless among the people of his time, and walked with God. Yet here he is with his family in one of the scariest situations of all time.

I was meeting with one of our youth this past Monday and we were looking at **John 15:1-7** together. You probably know the passage. It is where Jesus is saying if you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit, but apart from me you can do nothing. He says He is the vine, we are the branches and His Father is the Gardener. And in **verse 2** He says that as the Gardener, every branch that bears fruit, His Father prunes so that it can bear more fruit.

Did you catch that? Pruning means cutting. It means shaping. From the Gardener's perspective, it's all good, but if you're the branch – and you're doing what you're supposed to be doing and suddenly in come the shears and OUCH. What's that about? The pruning from the branch's perspective may be really painful.

I hate to keep using James and Philippians as examples, but those are the two books we've been together through so far so you should be able to relate to the verses we see there.

**James 1:2-4** says "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Paul in **Philippians chapter 1:12-14** – Paul who is in prison waiting for possibly a death sentence says, "Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly."

What I'm trying to say is that one of the things we are challenged with from this part of the Life of Noah is that we need to evaluate our view of God.

Oswald Chambers in his quiet time book *My Utmost for His Highest* over the past few days has really nailed this point for me. Let me read you some of his words:

On November 10<sup>th</sup> he wrote: **"I must learn that the PURPOSE of my life belongs to God, not me. God is using me from His great personal perspective, and all He asks of me is that I TRUST Him."**

The next day he wrote: "If God has made your cup sweet, drink it with grace, or even if He has made it bitter, drink it in communion with Him. If the providential will of God means a hard and difficult time for you, go through it. You must go through the trial before you have any right to pronounce a verdict, because by going through the trial you learn to know God better."

And then on the 13<sup>th</sup>, Oz really took off the gloves. "How dare we talk of making a sacrifice for the Son of God. We are saved from hell and total destruction, and then we talk about making sacrifices!"

**See the challenge for us today from the Life of Noah in chapter 7 of Genesis is that we have got to ENLARGE our view of God.**

Yes **God is a God of love, but He is also a God of HOLINESS.**

Yes **God is a God of patience, but He is also a God of JUDGMENT.**

Yes **God is God when things are going well – but He is also God when things are HARD.**

So let me sum this up so far:

And if from the Life of Noah the "what" for us is that we can be instruments of life and hope in the world we live in.

And the "how" is that we make that difference one decision at a time – day by day trusting God.

Then the "why" we see today is two-fold.

**First: because God hates sin. And judgment is REAL and judgment is COMING.** The next verse in the passage in **2 Peter** we looked at earlier makes that clear. Let me read it again. **Chapter 2 verses 4-7:**

4 *They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."*

5 *But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water.*

6 *By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.*

7 *By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

And secondly – we make that difference – we trust in those choices – **because that same God is seeking His glory and through that our best in ALL things even when we can't see the OUTCOME.**

The Life of Noah is calling us to enlarge our view of God today.

To re-establish a holy reverence for the holiness of God.

To hate sin.

To have hearts broken for people who are headed towards judgment. To trust the goodness of God in the lives of His children all the time.

And the simple question we've asked each week, we ask again.

Will you?

**Will you take the reality of the flood to heart and let it change your life?**

Let's pray.