

NOAH AND THE ARK OF SALVATION



GENESIS 6:1-16

ARTICLE / EXPOSITION

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Part 1: Noah and the Ark of Salvation
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Introduction:

Let me start with the bad news. In Genesis 6:1- 8, we see and learn that a life without God is only wickedness and evil continually. We know the reason why God destroyed the earth with the global flood and the death of all flesh. Man's heart was filled with violence. The people in the antediluvian era (before the flood) did not acknowledge God as their Creator. They did not seek God and offer sacrifices to God. The daughters of men along with their parents abandoned God in exchange for marriage with demonic and ungodly men. This was the worst of its kind as they sought help from demons (fallen angels) instead of God. In short, they gave up their souls to demons to influence their marriage and family life. They wanted their children to live longer than Adam and Eve and be like God who is eternal. They wanted their children to be bigger, mighty men. Moses described them as "Nephilim" (Numbers 13-32-33). Men and women who can make the world a better place, a better society, and mighty people who can act like gods without help from God. But God said, "Men are just flesh. Men will die" (Genesis 6:3). Men were producing evil ideologies and becoming more corrupt and filling the earth with violence, hatred and rejection of God's commands.

God was grieved and mourned when He saw how men were evil continually. At the same time, His heart was determined to execute punishment and judgment on all flesh. God said, "People on the earth will have 120 years to confess their sins and repent." Did they confess and repent during the 120 years of grace? No one on the earth except Noah. Noah was righteous and blameless, and he walked with God like Enoch. Noah was faithful in his marriage and family, obedient to God's Word and a faithful preacher of righteousness. Genesis 6:8 says, "But Noah found favour in the eyes of Yahweh."

Are we seeing righteous and blameless men and women in our generation today? The modern world is filled with violence. Secularism, atheism, and narcissism are increasing in influence and acceptance. We are seeing people having no desire to seek the righteousness of God. People worship idols in all forms. Sexual immorality, polygamy, bigamy, homosexuality, and same-sex marriages are considered righteous and legal nowadays. No repentance, no sense of godly conscience and conviction. Murder and hatred are everywhere. Is there hope?

God saw Noah as a righteous man (vs 9-10)

How did God call Noah in the ministry and save his family from the flood? In verse 9 "These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among those in his generations; Noah walked with God." Why did God say these are the generations of Noah? The Hebrew word for generations is Toledot. It is passed on stories or accounts of faithful men and testimonies or written documents of God's faithfulness, His miracle power and enduring relationships with His chosen people. Another way to see how the word Toledot works is the spiritual achievements of

godly people being passed on to their families and the nations they lived in who saw the faithfulness of God and how they responded in faithfulness and obedience to all God's commands in their lives.

One perfect example of passing on godly generations was Noah. Noah found favour in God. Noah received commendations from God because he was pleasing in God's eyes. God saw how Noah faithfully preached righteousness for 120 years in the pre-flood world. His obedience to all God's commands till the end of the flood was commendable faith. Noah and his family knew God as the Creator of heaven and earth and the only life giver and Saviour of their souls. Noah belonged to a righteous family line who walked with God. Who told about the stories of God being the Sovereign Creator. The passing of generations started from God to Adam and Eve and Seth. I want you to look at Genesis 5:1-32 and learn who were the people who called upon the name of the Lord.

Let us go back to Noah, his name in Hebrew is rest or Sabat. Noah was a man who brought peace and comfort to God. He was the only man who exercised faith and righteousness. Noah knew his mission in the world. He was like a measuring stick or a plumb line. He was a measurement of righteousness to God before the flood. Noah was blameless. Being blameless signifies his close communion and fellowship with God. But we know Noah was not a perfect man. We know that for the record in Genesis 9:21, "he became drunk and uncovered himself." Noah did not show integrity and disregarded God's standard of righteousness. However, what amazed God about Noah was he walked with God. Noah was 600 years old before the flood. But after the flood and for the next 350 years, "Noah walked with God." He died 950 years old (Genesis 9:28). He was like Enoch who walked with God. Enoch and Noah showed faithfulness to God. They were the true perseverance of the saints. They showed persevering faith till the Lord took them. The word walk in Hebrew is Halak which means Noah followed God in personal holiness and sanctification. He became a true follower of Yahweh who worshipped and feared God.

The author included the names of Noah's sons. As it is implied, his sons were believers of Yahweh. Verse 10 reminded his readers that Noah had a family. He has a wife and 3 sons with their wives who survived the flood and reckoned as righteous. In verse 10, "And Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth." The first son was Shem. The meaning of Shem was famous, renowned or reputable. The descendants of Shem were called Semitic people. They are the Jewish people today. The second son was Ham (warm or hot). His descendants spread in Canaan in the southern and eastern parts of Israel. They are the people in Egypt and Jordan. The third son was Japheth (the expansion or open). the descendants of Japheth lived in coastal areas of the Mediterranean Sea. They spread all over Europe.

Who wants to be like Noah? Who knows and understands biblical theology, doctrine, mission and faith? Faithful in character and morality. Faithful in marriage and family life. Faithful in church and ministry. A faithful witness for Christ. Willing to suffer and be a martyr for Christ. We are all busy building our kingdom here on earth. Save money for holidays and vacations, seekers of pleasure and happiness like buying, selling, drinking, dancing, and marrying. We have forgotten God's promise to never leave nor forsake us in times of need.

God saw corruption and violence (vs 11-13)

Now God brought us back to the issues of the depravity of man, the increase of sin and wickedness. Verses 11-12 say, “Now the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.” Now God scanned the entire world but the world was so corrupt and polluted with the murdered blood of men and women. In short, the breath of life of men was corrupt and evil. By the way, the Hebrew word for violence is “Hamas.” Violence in the world was too much. Violence and anarchy were uncontrollable. This was the state of the world before the eyes of God. After seeing the corruption and violence in the land, God determined the end of the entire flesh. God decided to end the evil system of the world. In verse 13 says “Then God said to Noah.” God Elohim the Sovereign Ruler spoke to Noah. God expressed His anger to all men. “The end of all flesh has come before Me;” This phrase was an expression of God’s anger and judgement of all flesh. The imminent coming judgment of God is at hand. The wrath of God is coming to judge all flesh. All living things. Men and women, plants and animals, birds and fish will all die. The life God has given to all flesh will vanish and die. The end of life to all flesh will cease. Regardless of their status, in the determined eyes of God, all flesh will die.

The phrase “come before me” can also mean “I want to see them die.” All of them will die in front of my eyes. If you were Noah this is a frightening statement and announcement. By implication, Noah, his wife, his 3 sons and their wives will die if they join the sins of the world. But Noah and his family stood their ground in faith. They chose to walk with God no matter what. God’s judgement is “fully determined.” This is to say, it is fixed and final in execution. God’s final call is over. No more turning back from God. No gods in this world can prevent and thwart the coming judgement of God. The grace of God has already been consumed, depleted and turned down. The sentence of the death penalty was tried and read in the courts of God. The judge gave a guilty verdict on the earth to blot every flesh and every living thing.

What was the determining factor of God’s judgement? “for the earth is filled with violence because of them;” The entire civilisation was filled with violence and corruption. This is the second time God mentioned the word violence, the inability of men to seek God and His righteousness. The depravity of man’s heart is to keep sinning and running away from God. Noah received a sobering message from the Lord. “and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.” So they have 120 years to live and repent. Noah also has 120 years to preach and build the ark, then God will destroy the earth. The words “to destroy” means to obliterate or to wipe out His perfect creation. To blot everything. Blot out or zero presence of human flesh and bones (fossils).

The Ark of Salvation (vs 14-16)

God commanded Noah to build an ark. In verse 14 “Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and you shall cover it inside and out with pitch.” What is an ark and what kind of wood is a gopher? The word ark in Hebrew is Tebah. It is an ordinary box or a vessel-shaped or rectangular-shaped box boat. The same Hebrew word was used to put baby Moses in a floating Tebah. The word gopher in Hebrew was used only once. A gopher wood is like a fir or

pine wood. But we cannot accurately know what a gopher wood tree looks like today as they were all destroyed in the flood.

Noah followed the design based on God's measurements and design. The design of the ark can fit hundreds of people and animals. Noah knew he was the only person and his family of 8 were tasked in building the ark. But most probably he asked several people to help. After 120 years with the help of God, he finished the ark. While building the ark Noah was also preaching righteousness. But no one believed God and His coming judgement. What was the inside of the ark? There were rooms. Rooms are like cells squared rooms or nesting rooms. They are like stalls for animals. Then, Noah covered all the rooms with henna or plant shrubs with a scented smell inside and outside. Moses called it pitch. The Hebrew word for pitch is kopher. This is like a paste or asphalt an organic substance to cement the entire ark inside and outside. God gave Noah the measurements of the window, the main door and the decks inside the ark.

In verse 15 "Now this is how you shall make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits." Let us measure the ark 300 cubits in length. How long is 300 cubits in our modern measurement? It is around 450 to 500 feet long or 137 meters in length. It is as long as one full and a half football field. It can fit 3 NASA shuttle rockets from nose to tail. How about the breadth or the width? 50 cubits. It is about 85 feet in width (wide). The height of the ark was 30 cubits or 51 feet which means the ark was as tall as a four-storey building from the top to the bottom of the ark. Add all the measurements of 300, 50 and 30 cubits a total of 3.1 million board feet. It is a massive wooden ship and one of its kind. The ark is in the Guinness Book of World Records. According to answers in Genesis ministry, the ark could fit 450 semi-truck trailers. It can fit 240 sheep in a semi-trailer. Around 120,000 sheep if you squeeze them all inside the 450 trailer trucks. It is a massive boat. It was a big faith for Noah to follow all the measurements and obey God's commands.

The last command of God to Noah is in verse 16 "You shall make a window for the ark, and complete it to one cubit from the top; and set the door of the ark in the side of it; you shall make it with lower, second, and third decks." God commanded Noah to make just one window with the size of one cubit so one cubit is equivalent to 18 to 21 feet. That window should be situated from the top of the ark. The highest point of the ark was the window. It is like a roof deck to see the skylight. The next design was the main door. God said, just one door on the side of it. This was an opening door or the main gate. We know the purpose of the main door, it is for Noah and his family and the only way for the animals, creeping things, and birds to enter the ark. God also commanded Noah to build three floors or three decks in total. These three decks were enough to put an average of 120,000 animals. This ark will become the ark of salvation provided by God to Noah and his family, and all the animals in each kind male and female.

Conclusion:

The enduring faith and obedience of Noah in a world of spiritual chaos and violence was a key to understanding this article. We saw how God saved Noah and chose his generations to give salvation to many. Noah's faith was tested and demonstrated in the entire flood story from start to

finish. We know Noah and his sons were not perfect people but we see the grace of God at work in their lives. Not because Noah was faithful but because God was faithful in His foreknowledge. I want to say, that God's faithfulness and His common grace and saving grace to Noah and the world we live in still exist today. We are receiving the age of grace that we don't deserve and acknowledge. God is faithful to Himself and His covenant promise as He promised the Seed (Jesus Christ) to save many like you and me who will believe. In the future, He will crush the head of the serpent (satan) in the last days to see that God is God and we are just men.

Let us end with the good news. We know the ark is a picture of God's salvation. A symbol of the salvation of Jesus Christ. He is the Good News! Jesus Christ is the only way, the only door, the only giver of life, the only Saviour of the world. The door is the door of God. Jesus said, "I am the Door" (John 10:9). Those who enter the door will be saved. We do not know how many people built the ark and who heard the preaching of Noah. But what we read none responded to Noah's preaching. People were blind and evil in their hearts. It was too late for them to repent.

Do you want to know God and enter the door of Christ to be saved? Do you want to join Noah and his family in heaven and be with God for eternity? I pray you will put your faith in Christ, the ark of salvation. Choose God, choose Christ. Christ came on the earth by a virgin birth who was the Seed and whose name is Lord and Saviour. If you will believe you will be saved from death and hell to life and eternal relationship with God in heaven.

Do you want to have a true saving faith and a growing faith? A righteous man shall live by faith. One who confesses that Jesus is Lord and believes that God raised Him from the dead will be saved. Continue to believe in God and obey all His commands. To be blameless and perfect in Christ. To walk in communion and fellowship with God, seeking His righteousness and Kingdom, imitating, abiding, and following Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. Be a teacher and a disciple of men and women in this last generation. So many will walk with God and be included in the Book of Life. Let us not waste our lives and time here on earth. Spread the Gospel and the salvation of Christ, invest our lives in ministering to one another especially the people of God. Let us not play with the world or play churches but be serious in our commitment to building His church in the power of the Holy Spirit and for the glory and honour of God. As we see the days are evil and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is near. Let us pray. . .

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