

## The Faithfulness of Yahweh

### *Genesis 6*

#### **Introduction**

Good morning!

Well, let's get the obvious out of the way: it's the day after Christmas.

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And I'll tell you, if there's ever a challenge to the task of figuring out which text to preach—

*The Day after Christmas* poses such a challenge!

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As we were working out the preaching schedule—

And it became apparent that I would preach today—

I thought about what was coming next in Genesis...

And of course it occurred to me, what's next?

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***The Judgment of the Flood.***

Nothing says "day after Christmas" like "JUDGMENT," right?

--

But Pastor Dan and I talked about it—

And since I'm actually going to be preaching both this morning and next Sunday—

He agreed that it would be good to jump back into Genesis, on one condition...

*That I make the connection for you all in a certain way.*

--

And so—

Let me try to draw that connection ...

--

There are a number of movie versions of Dr. Seuss's classic *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*—

In one of the more recent versions, "Cindy Lou Hoo" catches the Grinch—

Dressed like Santa—

In the process of removing her family's Christmas tree from their house.

After the Grinch reassures her that he's simply taking the tree so that he can repair it—

Cindy Lou asks him, "Santa, what's the real meaning of Christmas?"

Without a second's hesitation, the Grinch thrusts his head through the Christmas tree and answers—

**“VENGEANCE!”**

--

So there you go—

The real meaning of Christmas according to the Grinch—

**VENGEANCE**—

Is directly connected with our text for this morning.

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In all seriousness—

Besides the fact that I've been eager to get back to Genesis since September (!)—

I think you'll see that our text for this morning is actually in a sense very timely for the day after Christmas.

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Think for a moment—

Actually, I want you to tell me—

Especially you children—

Is the day after Christmas happy?

Or is it sad?

--

The day after Christmas is SAD, right???

--

You've had all these gifts and food and treats that  
you've looked forward to for weeks—

You've had lots of time off from school—

--

But **now** all the gifts are opened—

All the food and treats are eaten—

And the return to schoolwork—

With no breaks until—probably—MARCH—

Suddenly feels like it's coming at you like a freight  
train.

--

Even more seriously, the truth is—

For many—

That it can even be hard for Christmas itself to be  
marked by hope.

For many, the holidays don't do much to interrupt loneliness, or sickness, or other occasions for sadness.

--

Now if by contrast—

**You've** been free from care—

If you and those you love are enjoying good health—

Your work situation is good—

Your finances are exactly where you want them—

Your relationships are all going well—

**And** you've managed to keep your eyes off the news headlines—

**Then I'm really happy for you.**

--

But that's not most of us, is it?

--

Friends, really—

Just take a quick glance at what's going on in our country and in our world—

Especially relative to the place of Christians and the Bible in our culture—

And things look far more calamitous than hopeful.

In a country where it once seemed biblical morality was assumed if not consistently practiced—

It lately seems possible that Christians could soon suffer actual persecution for our faith.

The rich and powerful seem increasingly willing and able to thwart God's law without consequence.

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Friends, **I** get that picture, and I'm not even on social media.

My sense is that for those who are—

Or who give much attention to political commentary—

Things probably appear even bleaker.

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So, if this is **your** position this morning—

Whether you feel the letdown of the day after Christmas—

Or if the holiday season itself has been marked this year by sadness and difficulty—

Or if it's just that you find yourself wondering how God's righteousness has any hope of prevailing in a godless society—

Then YOU—

Like Noah in his day—

YOU need to know the truth about YAHWEH, the ONE TRUE GOD.

You need to know that YAHWEH **SEES** you in your misery—

That He **keeps** His promises—

And you need to know that Yahweh's GOOD WORD to you is full of life-giving—

Life-SAVING—

**INSTRUCTION.**

--

These are the **three PILLARS** of our salvation hope as found in our text this morning—

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If you haven't already, I want to invite you to open your Bibles with me to Genesis chapter 6—

And please stand in honor of the reading of the Word.

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The Word of God, from Genesis chapter 6:

- 1 Now it happened, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them,
- 2 that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were good in appearance; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.
- 3 Then Yahweh said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever because he indeed is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be 120 years."
- 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.
- 5 Then Yahweh saw that the evil of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
- 6 And Yahweh regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.
- 7 And Yahweh said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I regret that I have made them."

- 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of Yahweh.
- 9 These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among those in his generations; Noah walked with God.
- 10 And Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
- 11 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.
- 13 Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 17 As for Me, behold I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under

heaven; everything that is on the earth shall breathe its last.

- 18 But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.
- 19 And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female.
- 20 Of the birds after their kind, and of the animals after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive.
- 21 As for you, take for yourself some of all food which is edible, and gather it to yourself; and it shall be for food for you and for them.”
- 22 Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did.

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MAY THE LORD ADD HIS BLESSING TO THE  
READING OF HIS WORD.

You may be seated.

--

Would you please bow your heads and pray with me for God's help as His word goes forth this morning...

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### **1. Yahweh Sees Your Misery**

Here in Genesis 6—

As I said—

We find **three pillars** of our salvation hope, but—

As is often the case—

The hopefulness of good news **begins** here—

With the seeming hopelessness of **bad** news.

--

The first eight verses of this chapter complete a major section that began in 5:1—

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Now just a note about the structure of the sermon for today—

See the verse numbers that accompany the points in the outline?

You might just cross those verse numbers out—

As my study progressed this past week, I realized that these “three pillars” are kind of dispersed throughout Genesis 6—

And so, although those verse numbers line up somewhat with the points—

You'll find that we jump around a bit more than those designations would seem to indicate.

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But that being said—

We start with looking at these first 8 verses of chapter 6—

Which form the conclusion of the section that starts in chapter 5 verse 1.

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And what this conclusion shows—

In brief—

Is the *misery* of God's people.

--

And really this is a theme that reaches back to chapter 4 and the murder of Abel by Cain—

***Just as God promised, the descendants of the serpent are at enmity with the descendants of the woman.***

And as we find Cain's line with its worldly aspirations—

As it accumulates power and greatness—

Even as it commits violence and makes threats in chapter 4.

Alongside these seeds of the serpent, we find the seed of the woman, embodied in Seth's line.

We saw in chapter five how their hope in the promised Messiah culminated in Enoch—

Seventh from Adam—

As he walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

--

Then, back just a few verses from chapter 6—

In chapter 5 verse 29 we read:

29 Now [Lamech] called [his son's] name Noah, saying, "This one will give us rest from our work and from the pain of our hands arising from the ground which Yahweh has cursed."

--

From these words of Lamech we understand what the seed of the woman is looking for—

The righteous are looking for **RELIEF!**

--

Whereas Cain's line had fully invested their hopes in worldly wealth and cultural advancements and power—

The seed of the woman is characterized by calling on the name of Yahweh and hoping in the Messianic Promise.

And what we find in the beginning of chapter 6, leading up to the next major section break—

Is that what characterizes the existence of the life of the faithful is an *earthly misery*.

--

It says, verse 1, that “men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them”—

And then, verse 2, that “*the sons of God* saw that the daughters of men were good in appearance; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.”

So the question that arises here is, who are these “sons of God,” and who (for that matter) are the “daughters of men”?

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Well, although a lot of ink has been spilt on this over the years—

The answer is actually pretty simple if you pay attention to the **PROGRESS** of revelation—

You may recall that I’ve mentioned previously—

That there is a book of the Bible that was written BEFORE Genesis—

What book was that?

**JOB!**

--

The book of Job was likely written at least 500 years before Genesis.

--

And something that is generally true of *PROGRESSIVE* revelation—

Is that when something has already been written about in the Bible, a later author can come along and refer to it—

And he doesn't say nearly as much about it, because he doesn't need to—

Because it's ALREADY been written about elsewhere in the Bible.

--

Turn with me to Job chapter 1—

I want you to see this in your Bibles:

- 6 Now it was the day that **the sons of God** came to stand before Yahweh, and Satan also came among them.

- 7 And Yahweh said to Satan, “From where do you come?” Then Satan answered Yahweh and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.”

--

And then of course God has the exchange with Satan about Job—

And then we read again in chapter 2, of a very similar scene—

- 1 Again it was the day that **the sons of God** came to stand before Yahweh, and *Satan also came among them* to stand himself before Yahweh.
- 2 And Yahweh said to Satan, “Where do you come from?” Then Satan answered Yahweh and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.”

--

And so—

HERE is a case where paying attention to the added detail provided by EARLIER revelation gives a clear answer—

WHO are the sons of God?

**They are the heavenly beings, THE ANGELS—**

[And this accords with 2 Peter 2 where we read this morning, about the punishment of disobedient angels—

And similarly—

Jude, verses 6 and 7, where Jude writes of:

“angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, [God] has kept [them] in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, 7 just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, having indulged in the same way as these in gross sexual immorality and having gone after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.”

--

Notice the connections there—

If you pay attention to the details, Jude is referring back to Genesis 6—

The only place in Scripture where angels are seen engaging in sexual immorality, going after strange flesh like those did in Sodom and Gomorrah.

And so—

Jude agrees with Job—

Further confirmation that the “sons of God” here are FALLEN ANGELS.]

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Now—Back to Genesis 6—

The “sons of God”—

**The fallen angels—**

**Weren’t alone in their rebellion.**

Also involved are the “daughters of men”—

And this I would take to mean women **probably—**

Although perhaps **not exclusively—**

From Cain’s line.

--

And then we also find mention of their offspring,  
referred to as “the mighty men who were of old,  
men of renown.”

--

Without spending too much more time on this,  
the main point here is that—

Whereas men like Seth and his descendants were  
clearly looking for a **heavenly** hope—

These “mighty men”—

*(And these could be the very same men of Cain’s  
line whom we read of in chapter 4—)*

These “mighty men” were full of **earthly** strength and renown.

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What’s in view here, we might call a **conspiracy** between fallen angels and powerful great men of the earth—

**These, together, are the SEED of the serpent anticipated in chapter 3—**

By **conspiring** together these men and angels proceed to fill the earth with wickedness—

And thereby with **misery** for God’s people.

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Now, moving on to verse 5, we find the real meat of this first main point—

That **Yahweh sees the misery of His people.**

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**5** Then **Yahweh saw** that the evil of man was great on the earth...

--

In order to catch the full import of this, you need to recall what we’ve seen already—

That the wickedness on the earth was a BOON to the wicked, to the seed of the serpent—

But that it was oppression and sadness and misery to the faithful of chapter 5, whose hope was in the promise of a Messiah.

--

This understanding is further supported by looking ahead a little to verses 11 and 13, where it says that the earth was "*filled with violence.*"

That Hebrew word translated "violence"—

Is often connected with oppression.

It sometimes involves brute force—

And it is often used to describe the exploitation of the weak by the powerful or the poor by the rich.

--

So the earth was filled with *violence*—

With the oppression and exploitation of the weak by those who were great, by those who had worldly power and greatness.

--

Now that—

Along with what we've recalled from chapters 4 and 5—

Should start to give you an idea of the oppression and brutality that were filling the earth in Noah's day, and the effect this was having on the faithful.

--

[LOOK UP, PAUSE]

As we read of God's people experiencing the difficulties of life in a fallen world—

***Beloved, this should resonate with us.***

--

Sin and its effects are all around us.

If you're like me, you've seen the evidence of it in your own heart this past week.

You've seen it, perhaps, in family relationships where the strain is especially evident when the holidays come around.

Some of us have faced more than usual the sadness and hardship that come with sickness—

And even, for some of us, with death hitting close to home.

Friends, whether it's anxiety over what's happening in the world, or it's simply a matter of the darkness you see coming from your own heart—

**We can identify with Noah in a world where the evil of man is great on the earth.**

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And so—the question we might ask is: **where is God in this?**

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And with the opening words of verse 5, we get our answer.

God is not removed from us.

He is not far off enjoying Himself.

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With these words, God provides perhaps the most devastating assessment in all of Scripture, of the evil that goes on in the hearts of sinners:

**5** **Then Yahweh saw** that the evil of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

--

Then Yahweh **saw**.

Yahweh **sees**.

He **sees** that the misery of the earth is due to **what?**

Where does it come from?

He sees that it comes from the hearts of sinners.

And how many of the thoughts of the heart of man are evil?

EVERY SINGLE ONE of them.

How often?

CONTINUALLY.

--

This is an absolutely devastating assessment.

--

And see now the effect that this has on Yahweh:

- 6 And Yahweh regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

--

Now here again, we have a potential difficulty that I want to comment on only briefly.

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The text says that God “regretted,” or that He was “sorry.”

This word can be translated “to repent,” or to “change one’s mind.”

It is the same word we find in Numbers 23:19, which says –

“God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not establish it?”

--

All I want to point out here is that however we understand the text in Genesis 6—

We can't understand it in such a way as to deny God's changelessness.

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God is not affected by His creation in a way that can be said to CHANGE Him.

Whatever He has said He **will** do.

Whatever He has spoken, He **will** establish.

God is changeless and His Word is firmly established and does not change.

--

Now, that being said—

We also should be BLOWN AWAY—

By the fact that what God **sees** here has an absolutely profound effect on Him.

God looks and sees the misery of the earth—

That it is full of evil and violence—

And, it says, He is ***grieved*** in His ***heart***.

--

The word “**grieved**” itself has to do with the “innermost feelings”—

Inner feelings often connected with weeping, mourning, sorrow, and pain.

And even though this word itself carries the idea of ***inner*** turmoil, additional words are included:

To say that God experienced this ***inner*** anguish **in His heart**.

This is a **pain** and a **sorrow** that God speaks of as having ***grieved*** Him **to His very core**.

--

And God is ***so*** moved by what He sees in the misery of the earth—

That His sorrow is expressed in a way that approaches the impossible—

That **God wishes He hadn't done something which He had done**.

God is so grieved and pained over what He sees coming from man, that **He (in a sense) wishes He had never made man**.

--

Beloved, **this** is what you need to know in the difficulties you face—

You are not alone in your sorrow and pain and difficulty.

**Yahweh Sees You in Your Misery.**

And even more than that, He knows and experiences your **sorrows** even more intensely than you do.

--

This brings us to point number two in our outline for this morning—

First, Yahweh sees you in your misery—

## **2. Yahweh Keeps His Promises**

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Now not to belabor the point—

But this IS important enough to repeat—

The essence of the promises Yahweh sets out to keep here is found in Genesis 3 verse 15:

“And I will put enmity / Between you and the woman, / And between your seed and her seed; / He shall bruise you on the head, / And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

--

What we've seen so far in the misery of the faithful is a fulfillment of part of this promise—

There is indeed **enmity** between the serpent's seed and the woman's seed—

And it has intensified the longing of the faithful for their heavenly hope.

--

Now, we consider a partial fulfillment of these words:

"He shall bruise you on the head."

--

This is a promise of JUDGMENT against the serpent, and—

By extension—

Against all of those (his seed) who are joined together with him in rebellion against Yahweh.

--

Now, let me say at this point—

There are two sides to this: there is JUDGMENT, which is what we'll see first—

And then there's salvation, through the promised SEED of the woman.

That's coming a little later.

--

The first clear expression of judgment we find in Genesis 6 comes in verse 3—

Where God says these words:

“My Spirit shall not strive with man forever because he indeed is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be 120 years.”

--

Now, backing up a little—

This is best understood as Yahweh’s response to the situation in verses 1-2.

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In verse 2, the word translated “good in appearance” —

That the daughters of men were “good in appearance” —

This is the Hebrew word *tov*, which simply means “GOOD.”

--

Can you think of another place where someone looked at something and saw that it was good?

God repeatedly in chapter 1 looked at what He created, and declared that it was good.

--

But then, you may recall, that same wording was used in chapter 3—

3:6 – “the woman saw that the *tree* was good for food.”—

And she took, and she ate.

--

Whereas in chapter 1 it was clearly God’s prerogative to declare what was “GOOD”—

Eve in chapter 3 took that right to herself.

--

And here, we read that the “sons of God”—the fallen angels—

Here **they** see that the daughters of men are “good”—

And THEY take for themselves whichever women they **want** for their wives.

--

By this consistent use of language, God is showing that the **rebellion** started in the garden—

To which the parties were mankind and a fallen angel—

That rebellion is *seen* here to be **multiplying**.

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And it is this set of circumstances that God is responding to in verse 3.

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Now the *question* is, what is represented by “120 years”?

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Is it the lifespan of man, that man’s life would be limited to 120 years going forward?

The answer to this is no for several reasons.

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First, people continued living long past the age of 120 in the close context following the flood.

Secondly, even when lifespans had finally decreased to nearly what they are today—

Near the end of Deuteronomy—

We read that Moses’s brother Aaron lived to the age of 123.

--

And, more importantly really than either of those two reasons—

The answer is demonstrated in the wording of verse 3, in light of what comes next:

God says that His Spirit will not strive, or remain, with man forever—

And (by implication) that he would cease striving (or remaining) with man after 120 years.

Then—

As we'll see next week—

Most pointedly in chapter 7 verse 22—

**God—in the flood narrative—**

**Removes His spirit (or, His breath) from every living person on the earth.**

--

To this end, we read in verse 7:

7 And Yahweh said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I regret that I have made them."

--

**Here again we see the "repentance" aspect (so to speak) for Yahweh.**

These words are immediately reminiscent of the creation account—

From man, to animals, to creeping things, to birds—

Yahweh will “UNCREATE” everything He had made—

He will “blot it out,” or “EXTERMINATE” it—

EVERYTHING—

ALL LIFE HE HAS MADE, He will wipe away.

--

Jumping ahead a little—

To verses 11-14—

We find God reiterating His evaluation of the corruption of the earth.

The point God is driving home in these verses is that the corruption—

Another word that can be used (and later is, in verse 13) is DESTRUCTION—

The point is that man (who is flesh) had brought about his own **destruction**.

In verse 15, **God's** destruction of the whole world is simply going to confirm and complete the **self-**destruction man had pursued in the earth, in his alliance with the fallen angels.

--

With verse 17, we find God's summary of His plan for judgment, including some additional detail:

17 As for Me, behold I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall breathe its last.

--

Friends, as uncomfortable as this might be—

It is important to see that God's promise of salvation includes—

And is actually accomplished *through*—

His DEVASTATING judgment.

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Yahweh here promises that He will crush all of those in rebellion against Him by means of a worldwide flood.

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It is not just the serpent, but his seed also—

All who follow the serpent as his children, as the children of the devil—

**All** of these will experience the judgment stored up for the serpent whom Yahweh has promised to crush.

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*This is a fulfillment of the first half of God's salvation promise.*

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--

Alongside these indications of judgment in Genesis 6—

There are at the same time indications that Yahweh is keeping the ***other*** half of His salvation promise as well—

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This ***starts*** in verse 6, where Moses writes that Yahweh “was **grieved** in **His** heart” as He looked on the misery of the earth.

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With these words we find a connection back to chapter 5 verse 29.

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That’s the verse where Lamech names his son Noah, with the hope that—

Noah would “give us **rest** from our work and from the **pain** of our hands.”

Those two words translated “**rest**” and “**pain**”—

Those words share the same roots as the words in verse 6 translated “**regretted**” and “**grieved.**”

--

What is the significance of this?

Well, if you’ll recall:

**Lamech’s** prophecy about Noah is connected with the **earlier** prophecies concerning Seth—

And **those** are connected with God’s promise in Genesis 3:15.

Which is the promise of **what**?

The Messiah.

--

Brothers and sisters, recall from our previous point—

That God knows and experiences your **sorrows** even more intensely than you do.

--

We saw this with the description of God’s pain and grief as He looked on the sin in the world—

But here we catch a glimpse of the greatest evidence in the Bible—

That God knows and experiences your sorrows even more intensely than you do.

--

What is this proof?

It is found in the *promise*—

**Now fulfilled—**

***Connected*** with these words.

--

Beloved, God demonstrates His participation in your pain and sorrow most intensely—

As He bears them Himself in the Person of His Son on the cross.

--

And so—

Even as we read of Yahweh's evaluation of the sinful and miserable condition of the world—

He connects His own experience of this misery with the hope He has given in the promised Messiah.

--

Moving ahead to verse 8, this hope finds further confirmation when we read:

8 But **Noah** found favor in the eyes of Yahweh.

--

**Noah**—

As we've begun to see—

Is the very embodiment of the Messianic Promise.

He will become God's means of the preservation  
both of the promise, and—

With it—

Of all mankind.

--

There is one particular detail I want you to note in  
verse 8—

The word "**favor**" — is the Hebrew word (the Old  
Testament word) for **GRACE**.

--

This is the word God uses in Exodus 33, after  
Moses asks Him to show him His glory—

He says:

"I will be **gracious** to whom I will be **gracious**."

--

**God** decides on whom He will have favor—

This is at the heart of the meaning of this word—  
**favor**, or **grace**—

*Entailed in its very meaning, is that it IS  
UNDESERVED.*

--

What this means, friends, is that even Noah—

The embodiment of the promise and of  
blamelessness among his generation—

*Even Noah did not **deserve** to be spared.*

--

While this is the first appearance of this **word** in  
Genesis, it is not the first appearance of the  
concept—

Remember back in chapter 3?

What had God promised would happen to Adam  
and Eve if they sinned?

Death.

Instead, what happened?

***They found undeserved favor in His eyes—***

Such that He led them to confession, and covered  
them with the skin of His own animal whose blood  
He had spilt instead of theirs.

--

And **so** again, here in verse 8—

**Noah finds UNDESERVED favor in the eyes of Yahweh.**

--

With verse 9 we find another major section in Genesis, marked by the Hebrew word *toledot*—

Or “GENERATIONS”—

**9** These are the **generations** of Noah.

--

**This begins the section of Genesis (thru chapter 9) that is basically the account of God's faithfulness to all humanity through Noah.**

--

Continuing in verse 9, we read:

“...Noah was a righteous man, blameless among those in his generations; Noah walked with God.”

--

You see, although Noah did not ***deserve*** God's favor—

We find here that this does ***NOT*** mean that there was no difference between Noah and all the other sinners in the world—

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ON THE CONTRARY—

This is an absolutely **striking** description of a man.

Noah is described here in thorough and holistic terms, as being morally upright in his conduct.

The word “blameless” has the sense of being “full of integrity.”

Another way of saying this would be that Noah was “above reproach.”

And these words single him out also, that among those in his generations, Noah was looked on as blameless.

--

And then here’s the connection back to Enoch in chapter 5, the paradigm thus far of one with a heavenly hope—

**“Noah walked with God.”**

--

Here we find that **Yahweh is keeping His promise.**

--

In spite of the thorough corruption of mankind on the earth—

**The seed of the woman—**

And with it the hope of all humanity bound up with the promised Messiah—

**Is still alive in the world.**

--

We read further—

Verse 10—

That Noah had three sons as well—

Through whom the hope of a remnant could be preserved.

--

The hope of this aspect of God’s promise—

That He will indeed keep His promise of victory for the human seed of the woman—

Culminates with verse 18.

--

Having given in verse **17** his clearest description yet of the coming judgment of the flood, Yahweh says:

18 **But I will establish My covenant with you;**

--

While this is the first appearance of the word “covenant” in Genesis—

The way it is used here “suggests the reestablishment of something already in place.”<sup>1</sup>

--

What promise had Yahweh given, that was already in place?

The promise of the gospel in Genesis 3—

--

By “confirming His covenant,” or His “promise” with Noah—

God is establishing that even as He destroys all of earthly life under His judgment—

**At the same time, He would preserve Noah and the promise of the Messiah with him.**

***This*** is the other side of the promise.

--

**Yahweh Keeps His Promises.**

--

On the one side His promise ***is*** JUDGMENT—

---

<sup>1</sup> Willem VanGemeren, ed., *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), 748.

The relief the line of Seth longed for comes to the world in a way that reflects the ugliness of sin.

--

God's judgment against our sin is—

**Necessarily**—

Full of power and wrath.

As Malachi asks (3:2)—

“But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a smelter's fire and like fullers' soap.”

--

But on the other side of God's promise is  
SALVATION.

--

And remember that *even Noah himself did not deserve salvation.*

Noah ***deserved*** God's judgment—

But instead God promises to preserve him.

--

Now—

You might wonder—

If Noah was righteous and blameless, why **didn't** he deserve salvation?

And on the other hand: if he didn't deserve salvation, then why does God promise to save him?

--

Friend, if you are asking these questions, then praise the Lord—

These are among the most important questions that can possibly be asked!

--

We find here further development within the narrative of Genesis of how and why it is that God can and does save sinners.

In contrast with the worldly, power-hungry aspirations of the serpent and his seed—

**Noah is heir to a hope in the promised Messiah.**

--

And friend, if you do not share that hope with Noah already this morning, I say to you—

REPENT AND BELIEVE!

--

Surely you know what was celebrated yesterday,  
don't you?

--

What **Yahweh** God had promised concerning the  
seed of the woman—

And what He promises in this text to preserve  
through Noah by protecting him in the ark—

THAT SALVATION HOPE CAME TO EARTH AT  
CHRISTMAS OVER TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO.

--

Do you know what Jesus' name means?

Pastor Dan alluded to this, I think, last week—

--

Break it in two:

The J-E, in Hebrew, that's the word "Yah," which is  
the shortened form of God's covenant name  
"Yahweh."

--

The second half of Jesus' name in Hebrew is  
"*shauach*"—

"Ya-sha-wah"

(Recognize that? Joshua, another form of Jesus'  
name—)

*Shauach* is the Hebrew word for “saves”—

--

So Jesus’ name, literally, means “Yahweh Saves.”

--

Friends, how and why is it that God can and does save sinners?

NOT because we deserve it.

--

Rather, it is because the Son of God—

Who only ever existed in the form of God—

Took on flesh.

He was born a baby in the small town of Bethlehem over two thousand years ago, just as it is written.

--

And He did this, ultimately—

He took on flesh—

So that He could go to the cross for judgment.

For the judgement NOAH deserved.

For the judgment WE deserve.

--

Friends, just as the STORM OF GOD'S JUDGMENT descended on the ark—

Even as God preserved Noah and his descendants who had hoped in His promise—

Even so the storm of God's judgment descended on Jesus on the cross.

--

And everyone who is IN CHRIST BY FAITH was *spared* from that judgment—

POURED OUT AT THE CROSS—

In which *we* could never stand.

--

Now—

As we move to the final point in our outline—

I must ask:

**Do you have assurance that YOU are IN Christ?**

--

And, brothers and sisters, this question is to everyone hearing my voice.

When later writers of Scripture recall for their readers the judgment of God in the Old Testament—

They don't treat it as something from which we have fully and finally escaped as long as we are still alive on this earth and can still hear these words.

--

From 1 Corinthians 10, verse 11—

“Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have arrived. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.”

And from Hebrews 3 verse 7—

‘Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, “Today if you hear His voice, 8 Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, As in the day of trial in the wilderness...”’ (Heb 3:7-8)—

--

Friends, this word of judgment from Genesis 6 is not an idle word to us.

Whether you are hearing in detail of the judgment of God for the first time—

Or you have known Christ for decades—

This truth about God's judgment should awake in your heart the fear of Yahweh—

**The fear of the LORD.**

--

And this is what we see with Noah.

--

With verse 18, we find a shift in focus to Noah, and to **his** role in God's plan of salvation—

God says:

18 But I will establish My covenant with **you**; and **you shall enter the ark**—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.

--

The world will be judged, Yahweh says—

“But I will establish My covenant with **you**” —

--

God is saying: the promise I made back in the garden is still good—

I will preserve mankind. I will keep alive the promise of the Messiah—

And I will do it through **you**, Noah.

--

And although the emphasis in verse 18 is on God's role and **His** faithfulness—

Notice the second phrase: “and you shall enter the ark” —

This picks up on the instructions God started giving back in verse 14—

And here it builds as the emphasis through the end of the chapter, establishing the third pillar of our salvation hope:

### **3. Yahweh Gives Saving Instructions**

--

In verses 14-16, Yahweh gives some details of how the ark was to be constructed.

It was to be constructed from a certain kind (or, more likely a certain *shape*) of wood.

It was to be made water-tight through the use of a sealant.

And it was to be large enough, with enough compartments, to preserve all animal life on earth, along with Noah and his family.

--

Interestingly, commentators seem somewhat divided here over whether the details are provided for the sake of historical fact—

Or for a more *theological* purpose.

Which do you think it is?

[trick question]

**BOTH!**

As modern day apologetics ministries have rightly emphasized—

The details given here help us understand to a significant degree how it was possible for life on earth to be preserved in the ark.

The HISTORICITY of this account is just incredible—

And we'll see more evidence of that historicity in the text next week.

--

BUT JUST AS IMPORTANTLY, this detail is provided for another *theological* purpose.

Like with the building of the tabernacle in Exodus, the detail provided here shows the enormity of the task God assigns to His servant.

--

Can you imagine?

--

This would have been back-breaking work for Noah.

Accumulating the massive pieces of wood and other supplies, and then fashioning them into an ark that could survive the flood.

This is work that would have taken decades, or perhaps—

Based on the timeframe given in verse 3—

It would have been over a hundred years—

That Noah worked to construct the ark.

--

And at the same time, later Scripture says—

He preached righteousness, condemning the world both through his testimony and through his actions.

--

There would have been a whole world of people who thought Noah was absolutely crazy.

And in the midst of that kind of ridicule, he endured as one whose hope was not on earth, but in heaven with the promised Messiah.

--

In verses 19-20, God describes how he will cause the animals to come to Noah, so that he will be able to bring them into the ark to preserve them from the coming flood.

--

In verse 21, **God outlines the necessity of Noah's obedience.**

Noah was to gather from all food that was edible—

Enough food to preserve the lives of all the animals and of himself and his family for the duration of the flood.

--

Does this sound familiar?

God had given food in abundance.

And he would put the animals where they could be provided for.

And God gives **Noah** a simple choice—

**If Noah will obey, then God will save humanity and the whole world through his obedience.**

--

Think about this.

What are the chances that Noah would obey?

Try to think about it as if you didn't already know the end of the story!

--

Think again of the **absurdity** of all this from a worldly perspective.

As we'll see in more detail next week, it is likely that it had never rained on the earth at this point.

And here God was telling Noah—

And it was for Noah to tell everyone around him—

**That God was going to destroy the earth through a flood.**

--

As later writers of Scripture will point out, there seemed from a worldly perspective to be no reason at all to believe in God's coming judgment.

--

And so, how does it seem Noah would be likely to respond?

--

Consider **further** the ***precedent*** of Adam and Eve—

They, ***too***, had a simple choice: obey and live and the world will be blessed through you—

Or, disobey and die and the world will be cursed through you.

--

What had *they* done?

They had disobeyed—

And the devastating consequences of their disobedience are on full display here in chapter 6.

The sinful rebellion they started has spread through the earth, and the worldwide judgment of death is about to be carried out.

--

If past is prologue, as they say, we should expect Noah to fail—

And for him to *perish* along with all hope for humanity.

--

BUT—

Wonderfully—

Yahweh establishes His promise of the Messiah by—

*For the first time*—

**SAVING THE MANY THROUGH THE OBEDIENCE OF THE ONE.**

Verse 22—

22 Thus Noah did

--

This is one of those situations where by the equivalent of punctuation marks in the Hebrew text—

Two words are given HALF THE WEIGHT in this verse:

**“NOAH DID”**—

--

And then following that mark, the emphasis is on his **COMPLETE** obedience:

“According to **ALL** that God had commanded him, so [notice the repetition for emphasis] **he did.**”

--

This emphasis on Noah’s “complete obedience” fills out further the answer to the question I posed earlier.

*How is it possible for someone who does not **deserve** salvation—*

*Someone who is a **sinner**, as we’ll see clearly **Noah** **is** as the narrative progresses—*

*How is it that a **sinner** can be called “**righteous**” and “**blameless**”?*

--

Beloved, this is **part** of the rich inheritance God gives to His children—

Not only does He assure us of eternal life—

Free entirely from sin's presence and power and penalty—

**He also gives saving instructions—**

And He gives His children a heart to keep ***all*** of His instructions by faith.

--

Does Noah obey perfectly from a human standpoint?

NO.

We'll see all too soon that Noah's obedience is imperfect and incomplete from an ***earthly*** evaluation.

--

BUT—

As the promise of the Messiah had been handed down to him—

And as Yahweh Himself had come and spoken to him the words of life—

**NOAH BELIEVED.**

Noah feared Yahweh, and it was in Noah's heart to do *all that God commanded him.*

--

## Conclusion

And so, my friends, the choice is before **you**.

--

You are hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit this morning—

The words of Genesis 6 are the words of His just judgment against **your** sin.

**Will you turn from whatever else you trust—**

From whatever else you fear—

And **will you fear Yahweh, the one true God?**

--

Do you see that **He is not far off**, that **He, in fact, sees your misery?**

Do you see that **He has made and kept promises** that are more precious than you could imagine—

That stepping down from His glory, He entered your weakness so the He could bear His own judgment against your sin?

--

If the Lord is working in your heart this morning—

Friend—

**Do you want to know what His saving instructions are to you?**

--

Jesus said (John 6:29), “This is the work of God, **that you believe in Him whom He has sent.**”

--

**Believe in Him.**

He has sent His precious Son.

And He has given us—

In His perfect and sufficient Word—

Instructions no less detailed and life-giving than those he gave Noah for the ark.

--

Will you commit yourself and all of your ways—

Obedience with all your heart—

--

Will you commit to the glorious privilege of spending the rest of your life seeking His will, so that You can abide in His life-giving promises and bless the world with the testimony of His salvation?

--

That is His call to you today.

Do not harden your heart.

Come—

Come to Yahweh who is faithful **to see you**, to **keep His promises**, and to **give you His good, saving instructions**.

--

**Let's pray.**