

What is the picture of **God** that you think of... whenever you consider the world-wide catastrophic **flood**... that happened during Noah's day...?

Our passage this morning... which consists of this narrative... is **vivid** and forceful. ... However... it is entirely lacking the kind of graphic description... that we would come to expect from a modern-day historian... news reporter... or Hollywood screen-writer. It doesn't contain the details that we would expect to occupy the largest space.

We see nothing of the death-struggle. ... We do not hear the cries of despair from the perishing. ... We are not called upon to witness the frantic agony of husband and wife... and parent and child... as they flee in terror... and then succumb to the rising waters.

But neither is a word said of the sadness... of the one righteous man who... preached message after message of warning... to those who refused his calling... as he pleaded for them to repent and be saved. ... Noah (and his family) were safe inside the Ark... but he knew those on the outside faced their destruction – from which he was not able to rescue them.

But we must not be distracted by intense **speculation** on the many gory details... that our own minds can conceive. There is just enough detail to emphasize **that** it happened... and more than enough detail to know **why** it happened - that God was really fed-up with mankind. ... (But do you know what...?) Human reasoning often misses the **grace** that is prevalent in God's judgmental action.

Why would God do it? ... That is... why would he destroy the whole world?

Part of the answer involves the grace of God. ... (You see...) humans were well on their way to the destruction of themselves in Noah's day... but God acted first... before man completely wiped themselves out... and God's reason for creating us... would be forever lost.

Consider if God did not act first... and the conditions of Noah's day were true during our current nuclear age that we live in today... where we are absorbed with our own inventions that are able to destroy the world.

Genesis 6:5 (ESV)

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Make no mistake! ... If left alone by God... humans would terminate one another... if not literally... then certainly morally... which had already happened during Noah's time period.

God's purpose for man... is for us to seek Him. He wants for us to chose Him. We were created to have intimate fellowship with Him. ... In Noah's day... God acted first... because He wants this intimate fellowship with us... Once we see this... we can understand the validity of the flood... and the necessity of it.

"Do not be like the horse or like the mule," God counsels in Psalm 32:9... and Noah obeyed that counsel. ... The horse sometimes wants to rush ahead impetuously... and the mule wants to drag its feet and stubbornly stay back. ... But Noah walked with God... and worked for God... and (as we will see clearly today)... Noah allowed God to arrange his schedule. ... God's timing is always best. We need to have confidence in this.

Confidence in the Lord... and... faith in the Lord... seem to go hand in hand. ... Most of our fears would vanish if we would really trust the Lord with our problems and fears. Do you have confidence in the Lord to care for you and meet your every need? ... Do you trust His timing for important matters in your life? ... Noah had confidence and faith in the Lord and was a great example of faith to all of us.

Genesis 7:1,10

It has been a week of waiting for Noah. During that final week before the Flood... they finished gathering the animals and putting in their supplies. They followed the Lord's instructions... trusted His covenant promise... and knew that there was nothing to fear.

Genesis 7:11-12

The Flood is beginning now (as God said it would.) Notice what details are given to us here. (Again) there is no mention of the confusion and panic that must have been going on... outside the Ark. But (I guess) we are not supposed to focus our attention on that. Instead we are presented with time notations. ... He inserts details that are totally unnecessary... **unless** the desire is to plant the flood squarely in human history. "*In the six hundredth year of Noah's life... in the second month... the seventeenth day of the month... the massive flood began....*" If we calculate the season according to the beginning of the Hebrew civil year... this was about the middle or end of our month of November... when "*all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened.*"

The source of the flood waters was at least twofold. The flood did not come gradually—it did not rain and rain and then the people got worried after a few weeks as the water begin to inch higher and higher. ... No... the first day brought shock and judgment when (at least) two different sources of water suddenly begin inundating the earth and its horrified inhabitants.

The way that this flood is described here... there probably would not have been enough time for the scenarios of suffering flood victims... that our minds conceive. Humanity would have been very quickly (almost instantaneously) wiped out. Estimates are... that water rose all over the earth on average of 10 feet a day.

One source of water which helped bring the flooding... were violent eruptions of the fountains of the great deep... which burst forth... from subterranean reservoirs... under the earth's surface. This underground water had existed as rivers and streams and oceans... which are in existence today in great quantity. But all of this came to the surface... as sudden... and as ferocious... as thousands of volcano eruptions. Boy! How the earth must have shook... and the earth's entire geological structure must have radically changed... while torrents of waters hurled upward... and kept doing this for 150 days.

When the rain finally stopped... (after 40 days and 40 nights)... the eruptions from below the earth's surface continued churning and churning in wave after wave for another 110 days. (As Bible story-tellers have recounted the flood story... the focus is generally on the forty days and nights of rain. ... But clearly... much more was involved.) The waters

under the earth and the waters above the earth all came crashing together in one mighty crescendo.

The word translated "*rain*" (in verse 12) suggests "violent rain." The context also makes it evident that it was not a light sprinkle... but a great downpour. ... And to do this continuously for forty days (which is nearly six weeks) would result in a lot of flood waters.

When we studied the creation of the earth in Genesis chapter one... I told you that it is my belief... (based on the wording of Genesis 1:7) that the earth used to have a canopy of water surrounding it... causing a greenhouse effect... and making plants more nutritious and protecting humans from harmful sun rays... allowing them to live longer. ... Well... it is also my belief... that all of this came crashing to the earth over the course of 40 days and 40 nights... and since the greenhouse canopy no longer exists... the life span of mankind has been much shorter since the flood.

Genesis 7:13-16

Closing the ark's door signals the divine protection that kept out the raging seas. Noah and his companions did their part "as God had commanded." Now the covenant Lord does His part... sealing the door. The whole work was manifestly the Lord's doing, from first to last.

What a blessed word is this! Noah did not have to take care of himself; having entered the ark... God was then responsible for his preservation. So it is with those who have fled to Christ for refuge... we are "*kept by the*

power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (which is what ...1 Peter 1:5 tells us.)

God shut the door and made it safe. Noah and his family didn't know how long they would live in the ark. But the Lord knew! ...and that's really all that mattered.

Psalm 31:15 (ESV)

My times are in your hand...

Genesis 7:17-20

Water was above the earth's highest mountain by 22 feet (if a cubit is 18 inches.) So... with the ark coming to rest on Mount Ararat (which is nearly 17,000 feet high)... we know the flood waters were ***at least*** three miles high over the earth. (Mt Bachelor over here... by the way is around 9,000 feet.) But there is no way to know for sure... if the water was 3 miles high... since so great of a flood would change the earth's geology so drastically. Sea levels could (very well) be much different... once all the water receded... and many believe that all our tall mountains were created by seismic activity during the flood... through the upheaval of land by the fountains of the deep erupting etc.

Genesis 7:21-24

In recent years... people who want to accommodate Scripture to the views of modern science... have opted for a flood that was "limited" (a local flood)... and not universally covering the entire earth. They suggest that the writer of Genesis used "the language of appearance" and described only what he could see.

But let's look at how such accommodation would affect our Christian faith.

The clear language of the text states that God was bringing a universal judgment. God said He would destroy humans and beasts "*from the face of the earth*" (in Genesis 6:7)... and it says multiple times that "*every living thing*" would be destroyed (7:4, 21-23; 8:21). ... If the mountains were covered to such a height that the ark could float over the Ararat range of 17,000 feet... and eventually settle down on a peak... then the entire planet must have been completely immersed.

If the Flood was not universal... why did God give the rainbow as a universal sign of His covenant? (9:11-15) ... Why would people in a local area need such a sign? ... Furthermore... if the Flood was a local event... why did God tell Noah to build such a big vessel for saving his family and the animals? ... Noah certainly had enough time to gather together his family and the animals in that area... and lead them to a place where the Flood wouldn't reach them.

God promised that He would never send another flood like the one He sent in Noah's day (Genesis 8:8-17). ... But if the Flood was only a local event... God didn't keep His promise! ... Because over the centuries... there have been numerous local floods... some of which brought death and devastation to localities. ... In 1996 alone... massive flooding in Afghanistan in April left 3,000 people homeless. ... And in July of 2017... flooding in Northern Bangladesh destroyed the homes of over 2 million people. ... The same year... the Yellow River... Yangtze River... and Hai River... all flooded a total of nine provinces in China... leaving 2,000

people dead. ... If Noah's flood was a local event like these floods... then God's promise and the covenant sign of the rainbow mean nothing.

(Lastly) Both Jesus and Peter used the Flood to illustrate future events that will involve the whole world: the return of Christ (Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27) and the worldwide judgment of fire (2 Peter 3:3-7). .. If the Flood was only local... these analogies are false and misleading.

We can trust the account that is consistent in God's Word. It has so many applications for us.

In spite of the devastation on the outside... Noah and his family and the animals were secure inside the ark. No matter how they felt... or how much the ark was tossed on the waters... they were safe in God's will. Patiently they waited for God to complete His work... and put them back on the earth. ... Noah and his family spent... (now get this!) one year and seventeen days in the ark... and even though they had daily chores to do... that's a long time to be in one place. But it is "*through faith and patience*" that we inherit God's promised blessings...

Hebrews 10:36 (ESV)

For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

Noah and his dear family had plenty of work to do. ... But keep this in mind: they were enclosed in a box-like structure... three stories high and 150 yards long... the length of one and one half football fields. They had to take care of the animals and themselves for 150 days... floating within the shell

of the ark. ... They were bound to feel... cooped up... restless... confined... almost imprisoned.

Here and there—sometimes—nerves were bound to become edgy and words sharp. ... Emotions were bound to be ruffled and feelings were bound to be hurt. The little band of survivors were believers... but they were fallible human beings... sinful human beings... who had been saved only by God's mercy and grace. ... (They were, therefore, just like us, subject to such human emotions and feelings.)

There **must** have also been times when they wondered... "*How much longer will the flood last? How much longer will we be cooped up? How much longer before God will deliver us and let us step on the earth again?*" Imagine the questions they would have... the apprehension... anxiety... fear... and perhaps even trembling. ... Just four men and four women left upon earth.

Did Noah feel forsaken... as though God had forgotten him? ... Was Noah feeling pressure from the seven others... being questioned by them... feeling the full weight of responsibility... feeling all alone... wondering why God did not meet him and give some direction? ... Any or all of this is possible... and most likely the feelings and thoughts did arise at various times during the 150 days.

Genesis 8:1

How long the days... weeks... and months... must have seemed... after the silence commenced and the waters lapped ceaseless around the Ark.

Had God forgotten...? Was the experience to go on forever...? No! God remembered.

The word "remember" does not mean to call something to mind that may have been forgotten. God can't forget anything because He knows the end from the beginning. Rather, it means "*to pay attention to, to fulfill a promise and act on behalf of somebody.*" For example... God remembered Abraham and rescued Lot from destruction in Sodom (Gen. 19:29). ... The Lord remembered both Rachel and Hannah and enabled them to conceive and bear sons (30:22; 1 Sam. 1:11, 19). ...The Lord remembered His covenant and delivered the Jews from the bondage of Egypt (Ex. 2:24; 6:5).

"To remember" implies a previous commitment made by God and announces the fulfillment of that commitment.

When you're going through a storm... it's easy to feel forsaken. Feeling forsaken is a normal human emotion that most of us have experienced... whether we admit it or not. "*Why do You stand afar off, O Lord?*" asked the psalmist. "*Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble?*" (Ps. 10:1) ... Paul confessed that his troubles in Asia had been so severe that he almost gave up on life (2 Cor. 1:8)... and Jesus... Who experienced all our human trials... cried from the cross, "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*" ... Feeling desolate is nothing new to the people of God. (But LISTEN!)

God is still on the throne,
And He will remember His own!

God delivers His people through the trials of this life. Sometimes the journey may be long and hard... even as Noah's was. But God still delivers us through all the sufferings of life... if we just trust Him as Noah did. ... God delivers and saves us.

Genesis 8:2-4

Evaporation took some waters back to the skies, and other waters returned to the ocean beds or back into the ground below ground level.

The ark rested on the mountains of Ararat. These mountains, located in northern Turkey, are not far from the Russian border. The Persians have a name for Ararat. They call it ***Kok-I-Nouh*** which means **mountain of Noah**. Many of the towns and cities in the surrounding area near this mountain have names that are associated with Noah and the ark.

The mountain is very difficult and hazardous to climb because the rocks are loose and porous and there are poisonous snakes, wild dogs, and bears all over the area. The snow blizzards and ice do not make climbing an easy task either.

Many of the sightings of the ark on top of Ararat have come from the air. Russian and American pilots have given testimony of sighting the ark as they flew missions during World War Two from Tunisia to Brivan. In 1952, an American mining engineer working in the Middle East took pictures of the ark 100 feet below the helicopter he was traveling in. Six of his photographs revealed the planks and joints in the boat. Numerous other sightings have been recorded... including a man I knew when I was in

ministry in Fresno. He was a physician that sometimes attended the church that I pastored there. This respected man had a passion. He had climbed Mt Ararat twice and had glimpsed at the Ark once.

Genesis 8:5-14

At length Noah removed "the covering" from the ark and looked out. Again, the exact date is given. It was the first day of the first month of his six hundred and first year (8:13).... Now... as far as eye could see... the earth was dry. ... Surely now they could come out of the ark. - But no! For ***another*** fifty-six days the door remained firmly shut... (another eight weeks!) ...

Imagine how difficult it was for them to keep waiting and waiting! They had been inside of the ark for a year, never even allowed to go out on the deck. They were bound to feel cooped up and confined. ... And now... the water was receding. They could see the water level dropping and exposing more and more of the mountains and land every day. ... How excited they must have been! The urge to throw open the door and to step out on dry ground must have gnawed and gnawed at them.

"Do not be like the horse or like the mule," God counsels in Psalm 32:9... and Noah obeyed that counsel. ... The horse sometimes wants to rush ahead impetuously... and the mule wants to drag its feet and stubbornly stay back. ... But Noah walked with God... and worked for God... and let God arrange the schedule. ... God's timing is always best. We need to have confidence in this.

Confidence in the Lord... and... faith in the Lord... seem to go hand in hand. ... Most of our fears would vanish if we would really trust the Lord with our problems and fears. Do you trust His timing for important matters in your life?

God did not give the command to disembark until the conditions of the earth were suitable. ... God is still in this business of preparing circumstances for us. ... Some of our confinements and waiting periods are of great value. ... They keep us from getting into situations that look good and very proper for us... but God knows (what we do not know.) The circumstances may not be ready for us... or suitable for us at all. ... Act at the commands of God... not according to your emotions.

In order to evaluate the condition of the earth... Noah picked (from out of hundreds of types of birds)... a raven... and a dove... and he sent them forth from the ark. ... The raven is a scavenger bird. Noah knew it wouldn't return if the water was low enough for it to forage - and it did not return. ... Noah would have known that the water had receded (but did not know how much.) The dove on the other hand is not a scavenger bird. ... If no food supply was available... it would return. ... Doves have an amazing homing ability too.

When the dove returned the second time with an olive leaf in its mouth... it revealed to Noah that the water had now receded to the point that the earth was becoming fruitful again. ... Olive trees are very hardy and can survive extremely harsh treatment. They do not grow at mountaintop heights. They are very productive in well-drained soil beneath an altitude of 3000 feet. The olive leaf spoke volumes to Noah that the world was beginning to

bloom again. The leaf was an emblem of hope. ...Noah knew the time of departure was getting close. The dove did its job and fulfilled its mission as it brought a message of hope to Noah.

For this reason... the dove remains an emblem of **purity and peace**. It is also a type of **the Holy Spirit** of God who is our comforter and gives us hope... when things seem hopeless.

Genesis 8:17-22

Worship was the first recorded act of Noah after disembarking from the ark. This shows the priority of worship. The fact that God makes this the first recorded act of Noah after disembarking the ark puts a high importance on this matter of worship.

Noah came out of the Ark and faced a whole new world. Everything was different. There would have been so much for him to do right away. We might even think his first care would have been to build a house for himself. But it wasn't. Instead it was an altar for God. Noah's priority for worship is the priority every follower of Christ needs to have.

That offering was all for God. It was the overflow of a full heart... which wished to express appreciation for a salvation so full and free. God had saved him... and he would show his gratitude. God was well pleased with Noah's act of devotion and faith.

The worship of God by Noah resulted in God manifesting His promises to Noah. There would be no more worldwide floods as was just experienced by Noah. In a later text the rainbow will be given as a sign of the promise. Second... God promised the persistency of the **climate** and the calendar

which would make it conducive to raising crops. ... (Folks... either the “climate change politicians” are right... or **Scripture** is. Call me foolish... but I am putting all of my eggs in the basket of Scripture... not the basket of an ever-changing and fickle politicians who rely upon the equally fickle and inconsistent... non-unanimous scientific opinion.) God promised Noah a persistent climate... while the earth remains... (or until God’s final judgment – after Christ’s return.)

God is on His throne... and He is keeping His promises!

Do you have Confidence in the Lord... and... faith in the Lord... ? Do you trust His timing for important matters in your life?... Let God arrange the schedule and events of your life. ... God’s timing is always best.

"Do not be like the horse or like the mule."