Genesis 6:9-22

Noah Builds an Ark

Our daughter, Faith, is at the age where she is starting to write her alphabet

- She knows her alphabet song
- However, she is just learning to identify the letters on a piece of paper

We will write a word on a piece of paper and tell her to trace around our letters

As you know, the way that children learn is by copying an example put before them

- With Faith, she takes a crayon or pencil and traces what Mommy and Daddy write for her
- Our example is her pattern

It takes patience to write those words over and over

- Correcting her mistakes
- Applauding her progress

But eventually she will learn how to identify those letters and draw them all by herself

Conceptually, she knows the letters

- If you ask her to say the alphabet, she can repeat the song back to you
- But she is missing the practical outworking of the alphabet the identification of the letters by writing

I was thinking about this in preparation for this morning's message

- Whether we like it or not, we are a lot like our children

We can repeat a lot of theology and Bible verses

- But sometimes, on our own, we find it hard to live out

What we need is an example put before us

- Something for us to emulate

In his first epistle, the apostle Peter wrote, "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps" (2:21)

- That word for "example" is the same concept that I described earlier
- The idea of a child tracing letters on a page

Let's be honest

- It is easy to stuff our heads full of knowledge about the Bible, God, man, and sin
- Anyone can do that

The hard part is following the example of righteous men and women in practical conduct

- Thankfully, God has given us many godly examples in Scripture and in our everyday life

These men and women are the letters on the page that we are to trace

- Will these be perfect examples?
- Of course not

The only perfect example is Jesus Christ

- That is what Peter was telling his audience
- But even imperfect models can still be good for us to learn from

This morning, we will trace the example of a man named Noah

- We will focus on this man for a number of messages
- God chooses to give about three and a half chapters to the life of Noah and his family

The next few chapters will focus on

- Noah building an ark (chapter 6)
- Noah entering the ark (chapter 7)
- Noah exiting the ark (chapter 8)
- Noah living after the Flood (chapter 9)

We will learn many practical lessons from this man

- How to persevere in what God commands us
- How to maintain righteousness in a perverse world
- How to remain humble in doing something odd from a human standpoint
- How to measure success from God's perspective

Let's read Genesis 6:9-22

This passage will teach us about Noah building an ark <u>so that</u> you and I will learn about how seriously God views sin

Specifically, we will see three (3) principles

- The character of Noah (6:9-10)
- The condition of the Earth (6:11-12)
- The cause of the Flood (6:13-22)

I. The character of Noah (6:9-10)

These are the records of the generations of Noah.

This is now the third (3rd) major division of Genesis

- We know this because of the repetition of the Hebrew word, toledot
- It may be "generations," "genealogy," or "account" in your various English versions

As you remember from previous messages, toledot is a hinge or transition word

- In the second major section (5:1-6:8), we looked at the "generations of Adam" (5:1)
- Adam had been mentioned at the end of the first section
- The second section deals with him and his lineage

The second section ends with a reference to Noah (5:29-32: 6:8)

- Naturally, the third section will focus on Noah

I hope that you can see this overlap that takes place between the major divisions of the book

It is intriguing to consider the amount of space given to this man and his family

- Basically from 6:9 through 9:29, Noah is in focus
- A large part of this deals with the ark

So we will be studying the life of Noah over the next few weeks

Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.

Derek Kidner suggests that "righteous" reflects Noah's relationship with his fellow man while "blameless" reflects his relationship with God¹

"righteous" describes one who is in right relationship with God

- Noah was conforming to the moral Law of God without even having a written copy to live by!

This is similar to Abraham, who "believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness." (15:6)

- That same root word "righteousness" is used of Noah and Abraham

"righteous" nearly always stands in contrast to the wicked

- To show a contrast in lifestyle and character²

"blameless" describes a complete or flawless individual

- It was used of the sacrificial animals in Leviticus
- It was also used of Abraham

Here, the author is describing Noah as a godly, mature man

- He was a man of integrity
- He was a man of moral uprightness
- He was a man of godly convictions³

Noah was "righteous" and "blameless," but this didn't mean that he was sinless

- We know that all humans inherit a sin nature from Adam
- We also know that Noah committed a sin by getting drunk in chapter nine

What made Noah different was that he was...different!

- He separated himself from the wickedness and sinfulness around him⁴
- In New Testament terminology, he was "holy" set apart

This last description of God's character is that he "walked with God"

- Aside from Noah, the only other person that is described in these terms is Enoch (5:22, 24)

The prophet Micah told his audience, "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (6:8)

- Walking with God is not just for Noah and Enoch
- It should be the characteristic and pattern of all of us who profess to be a Christian
- Our lives should indicate this step-by-step obedience

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¹ Derek Kidner, Tyndale OT Commentaries, Genesis, 87.

² Gordon J. Wenham, Word Biblical Commentary, Genesis 1-15, 169.

³ Kenneth A. Mathews, NAC, Genesis 1-11:26, 358.

⁴ John J. Davis, *Paradise to Prison*, 117.

These two men were exceptions to the dark world around them

It certainly seems that Noah was the only person on the face of the planet who was pursuing righteousness

- Either this, or there were others – but they died off before the Flood

Imagine God's perspective captured by the apostle Peter, "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." (2 Pet 3:9)

- God was showing marvelous patience and longsuffering
- God longed for men and women to repent

However, the longer He waited, the worse that creation became

- But Noah was the exception

¹⁰ And Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Since this is the story of Noah, a brief mention of his three children is made

- Shem, Ham, and Japheth

Not much is said about them now

- But they will quickly come into the picture after Noah and his family exit the ark

It is interesting to consider that perhaps Noah's sons wrote this section of Genesis⁵

- If Noah wrote the section from 5:1-6:8 the generations of Adam he closes the section with, "But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD" (6:8)
- Assuming Noah's sons wrote the next section from 6:9-9:29 the generations of Noah they open this section with, "Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God" (6:9)

What a show of humility for what Noah wrote of himself

- What a show of honor for what the sons wrote of their father

Dr. Sailhamer has suggested that this account does not primarily show us why God sent a Flood

- Rather, it explains why God saved Noah⁶

The character of Noah was such a contrast with his surroundings

- I have heard it said, "The darker the night, the brighter the light"

The character of Noah was a bright light in a very dark world

- Let's see just how dark the Earth was from God's perspective

⁵ Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 178.

⁶ John H. Sailhamer, The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Genesis, 81.

II. The condition of the Earth (6:11-12)

¹¹ Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence.

From the Fall of man to the passage in chapter six that we discussed last week, the Earth and its inhabitants certainly are on a downward spiral of sin

- Evolution teaches that mankind will become progressively better and better
- The Bible teaches that mankind will become progressively worse and worse⁷

So far in Genesis, we have had:

- Lying
- Deception
- Blame-shifting
- Murder
- Polygamy
- Demonic infiltration into the human race

I would say that mankind was heading in the wrong direction!

God had told Adam and Eve to "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth" (1:28)

- Sin had filled the earth with "violence"
- Not what God had originally commanded!

¹² And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

Once again, we mark the contrast between 6:12 and 1:31

- "And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt" (6:12)
- "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good" (1:31)

God makes it known that "all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth"

- Sin was universal, not local
- Depravity was making itself known

It wasn't only humans who were killed in the Flood

- Genesis 7:21-22 tells us that "all flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; ²² of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died"
- Like the Fall, animals were punished because of the sin of man

God had already made it known, "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 am sorry that I have made them." (6:7, italics mine)

Notice that marine species would not all die

- God does not command Noah to bring fish onboard the ark
- Naturally, there were some that died in the Flood
- But many survived since their natural habitation would be the water

⁷ W.H. Griffith-Thomas, Genesis: A Devotional Commentary, 70.

In one sense, you might say that God destroyed that which was already self-destroyed

Mankind had ruined what God had created

Three times in these two verses, the word "corrupt" is used

- God looks at humanity and summarizes it as "corrupt"

Although mankind seemed to have forgotten God, He had not forgotten them⁸

- Remember, God is delaying His judgment so that mankind could repent
- However, that is not what we see

We have seen

- The character of Noah
- The condition of the world

III. The <u>cause</u> of the Flood (6:13-22)

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.

Now we move from the narrator's point-of-view to God's point-of-view

- We have no doubt about how God viewed the situation

God, Who could see into the very depraved mind of God, knew that something drastic needed to be done

- Mankind was not getting any better; rather, they were only getting worse
- The earth was filled with "violence"
- Mankind was becoming more and more daring in his sin
 - o Cain had killed his brother
 - o Lamech is willing to kill a young man
 - Demons had cohabited with women

Some may look at the story of the ark and think that it was just a fanciful legend

- But the Bible consistently affirms Noah as a real person and the Flood as a real event
 - o The greatest evidence of this was the Lord Jesus Christ using Noah and the Flood as an example of what the world would be like before His return (Mt 24:37-39)⁹

Also notice that during this section, Scripture portrays Noah as silent before God

- He is not trying to barter with God
- He is not trying to talk God out of judgment 10

¹⁴ Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch.

Because of the condition of the Earth is so bad, God has determined to "destroy" "all flesh"

- There is no stopping God now
- Judgment will fall

⁹ Morris, 178.

¹⁰ Mathews, 363.

⁸ Morris, 180.

^{3, 303.}

But God speaks to Noah and tells him to build an "ark"

- This is a rare Hebrew word used to describe two (2) items in Scripture
 - Noah's ark
 - o The ark that held baby Moses

The word "ark" could be called a chest, not a ship

- Its main purpose was not maneuverability or speed
- Its main purpose was functionality and durability

The ark was to be made of "gopher wood"

- The exact substance of this has yet to be discovered
- This is the only time in the Scriptures that the wood is referred to

But the wood was covered "inside and out with pitch"

- This would act as a caulk or sealant to keep the rain from getting in

It is interesting to note that both Noah's ark and Moses' basket (same word as "ark") were covered with pitch

- Both acted as a protecting agency to keep the occupants from drowning

Inside this large boat we have "rooms"

- These compartments would, no doubt, be for the individual animals
- Like stalls

¹⁵ And this is how you shall make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.

This ark – or boat – was a huge construction project

- Its dimensions are staggering even by today's standards
 - Length 300 cubits
 - Width 50 cubits
 - o Height 30 cubits

Like Bill Cosby during his videos some years back, we ask, "What is a cubit?"

- Roughly speaking, a cubit is 18 inches
- The length from a person's elbow to the tip of his middle finger

If you convert these numbers over, here is what you have

- Length 450 feet or 150 yards
- Width -75 feet or 25 yards
- Height 45 feet or 15 yards

That may or may not mean a lot to you in terms of raw size

- So I did a little measuring this week to put things into perspective

The length of the ark – 150 yards

- That is $1\frac{1}{2}$ times a football field (without the endzones)
- Or, that is the length from the credit union to RSC

The width of the ark – 25 yards

- That is the length from the fover to the pulpit

The height of the ark -15 yards

- The height of the sanctuary is about 20 feet
- So over twice as high as this ceiling would the height of the ark

That is a massive boat

It would be a massive undertaking from a construction perspective

The internal capacity of the ark was approximately 1,400,000 cubic feet

- To put that in perspective, this would be about 522 standard railroad cars
- This would hold about 125,000 sheep¹¹

It would be an understatement to affirm that it would have taken years to construct such an ark

Back in Genesis 6:3, God said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years"

This 120 years was the time left before God judged the world through the Flood

It would also be the limit of time that Noah had to build the ark 12

Even with 120 years, Noah needed Divine assistance and direction

It seems that with the detailed instructions that God gave to Noah that he wasn't a master boatmaker

Also notice that there is no mention of a rudder whereby Noah can guide the ark

On the contrary, Noah trusts God to direct them

¹⁶ "You shall make a window for the ark, and finish it to a 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.

The ark had some type of window at or near the top of the ceiling

- It was to allow light to enter
- It could also be used to allow fresh air to enter

We don't have exact specifications for every detail of the ark

Only those details that God deemed best for us to know

This ark had three separate "decks" or levels to it

- It would be like a long, three-story building
- Yet this building was a boat

If you put these numbers all together, you have approximately 96,000 ft.²

This would be equivalent to 1,396,000 cubic feet¹³

This boat was more like a barge

- Its internal structure was enough so that it would be very stable
- Almost impossible to capsize¹⁴

¹¹ Morris, 181.

¹² Leon J. Wood, A Shorter Commentary on Genesis, 46.

¹³ Davis, 121.

¹⁴ Morris, 181.

The ark was also to have a door in its side

- Note that one door
- All humans and animals must enter and exit through that one door

God spared judgment on these humans and animals through the ark

- Some have seen the ark as a type of Christ
- Christ is the one way to heaven (John 14:6)
- Christ is "the door" (John 10:7)

Imagine the absolute confusion that those watching Noah would have expressed

- They had never even seen rain and Noah was warning them of a Flood?
- They must have thought that he was going insane

But Noah was a "preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet 2:5)

- His life was a witness against this sinful generation
- His words were a witness against this sinful generation

The author of Hebrews states that Noah was "warned by God about things not yet seen" (11:7)

- What an example of simple, childlike obedience to God's commands!
- What an example of endurance in the face of great opposition

¹⁷ And behold, I, even 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 perish.

God's means of judgment would be a "flood of water upon the earth"

- The word for "flood" is a very specific term, always used in reference to the Flood during Noah's time
- It was a unique word because it was a unique event¹⁵

The only other time that this word is used outside of Genesis is Psalm 29:10, "The LORD sat as King at the flood; yes, the LORD sits as King forever."

- What a marvelous thought
- God was reigning as King Sovereign Ruler at the Flood

The Flood was not out of God's control

- On the contrary, it was all under His control

Some would say that this Flood was a local, not universal, Flood

- Listen to what God told Noah, "I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy <u>all flesh</u> in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; <u>everything</u> that is on the earth shall perish" (emphasis mine)
- Not "some flesh" but "all flesh"

This coupled with the fact that this word for flood is used <u>exclusively</u> of Noah's Flood points to a one-time, special event – never to be repeated

- As a matter of fact, God will give Noah a sign that the earth will never be destroyed with water again
- The rainbow is a promise from God that He will never destroy the Earth again with water

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¹⁵ Morris, 184.

There have been many floods throughout the world's history

- Some have been devastating in local areas

We think of the tsunami that hit Thailand on December 26, 2004

- Almost two years ago!

This Tsanami was caused by an underwater earthquake that measured 9.3 on the Richter scale

- 100 feet tidal waves ripped through the surrounding areas

This Tsunami reached out to nearly 5000 miles from the epicenter of the earthquake

- Consider that the US is roughly 2700 miles east to west
- So almost double the length of the US

But that pales in comparison to the Flood described here

- It affected everyone on the face of the Earth

The apostle Peter transitions from the Flood in Noah's day to the universal judgment

- What is the common theme between these two?
- They are both universal in scope no person is exempted or avoided

Those who believe in a local flood have to grapple with the significant question, "Why would God have Noah work for 100 years on an ark with a representative of every kind of animal for a local flood?"

- Why would God not just tell Noah to move the animals to another country?
- This would have been significantly easier¹⁶

Have you ever asked the question, "Why did the Lord judge the world by means of water?"

- Well, the best answer is that God is God and can do what He desires

But another answer is seen if you look at this passage in view of creation

- God is uncreating His creation

On the third day of creation, God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear" (1:9)

- There was water and land emerged from its midst

In the Flood, God did the reverse

- He once again covered the Earth with water

In other words, God was setting a new beginning just as He had back in chapter one 17

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.

Put yourself in Noah's shoes

- You have been told to build this crazy boat in the middle of nowhere when no one has ever seen rain!
- But you are faithful and obedient to do what God says

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¹⁶ Morris, 182.

¹⁷ Allen P. Ross, Creation & Blessing, 190.

Then God tells you something pretty amazing, "But I will establish My covenant with you"

- This is something new
- As a matter of fact, this is the first instance of "covenant" in the Bible

It is amazing that God actually enters into a covenant with sinful humanity

- God puts Himself into a binding relationship with humanity
- The same humanity that has shown itself to be untrustworthy, unreliable, and unholy

Not only was God promising to destroy all "flesh" on the Earth

- God was also promising to preserve Noah!
- Noah was assured that he would survive the Flood
- This is God's amazing, sovereign grace

So Noah and his family were safe inside this ark

- But let's keep in mind that their survival was attributed to God Himself
- God promised them even through a covenant that He would protect them
- It is also written in Genesis 8:1 that "God remembered Noah"

Remember Genesis 6:8, Noah had "found favor in the eyes of the LORD"

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* shall come to you to keep *them* alive.

Mention is made of the number of animals that went into the ark

- Naturally, there would be a "male and female" so as to continue the reproduction process after the Fall

But some have objected to this by saying that there is a discrepancy between this reference and Genesis 7:2-3, "You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female; and of the animals that are not clean two, a male and his female; also of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth."

- Why does 6:19 mention "two" and 7:2 mention "seven"?

Part of the explanation may lie in the fact that some animals would be used as sacrificial animals

- When Noah steps off the ark, "Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar." (8:20)

Abel brought a sacrifice from the "firstlings of his flock" (4:4)

- And we know from chapter three that God Himself sacrificed an animal in order to clothe Adam and Eve

Read the last part of verse 20, "two of every kind shall come to you"

- Noah would not have to go out hunting for these animals
- God would see to it that these animals would initiate the process of making their way to the ark
 - o God would initiate this mass migration toward the ark what a sight this must have been

We know that there are about 18,000 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians on the face of the planet today

- This doesn't include the approximately one million species of insects 18

This has to be God's doing!

- Imagine the process of trying to corner all these types of animals into an ark on your own
- And not allowing any of them to escape!

It reminds me of the CapitalOne commercial about a year ago whereby they were visually recreating Noah rounding up the animals

- Noah just gets into the ark when a mosquito bites him on the neck
- Without thinking, Noah slaps at the mosquito and kills it
- The next screen is Noah going out of the ark to capture another mosquito to replace the one that he killed!

But this entire series of events had to be sovereignly directed by God

- This is the same God who directed a large fish to swallow Jonah
- The same God who put money into a fish's mouth to pay taxes for Peter and Jesus

So God was able to use His creation to accomplish His purposes

²¹ And 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."

As if the process of gathering the animals into the ark seemed impossible, God tells Noah to pack enough lunch for these animals

- The rain fell on the 600^{st} year, 2^{nd} month, 17^{th} day (7:11)
- Noah left the ark on the 601^{st} year, 2^{nd} month, 27^{th} day (8:13-14)

Mothers, you know what it is like to pack for your family

- You think about a picnic for your family and it sometimes seems daunting
- Imagine packing enough food for all of these animals
 - o Food for a year

It could be that God put these animals into a hibernation mode whereby their food intake was lessened by inactivity ¹⁹

- We don't know for certain
- But we do know that God was sovereignly directing these events

²² Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did.

Last week, our passage ended with a very simple statement about Noah's life, "But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD" (6:8)

- Likewise, this last verse of chapter six ends with another simple description of Noah's life, "Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did" (6:22)

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¹⁸ Morris, 185.

¹⁹ Davis, 123.

In a word, Noah was obedient!

- He lived "according to <u>all</u> that God had commanded him" (emphasis mine)
- He wasn't selective in his obedience

Noah's life was one of obedience (6:22; 7:5, 9)

- What a contrast to Adam and Eve who disobeyed God's original commandment (2:16; 3:11, 17)

Is it any wonder that the narrator speaks of him as one who "walked with God" (6:9)?

- The author of Hebrews states, "By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." (11:7)

Noah was faithful

- When it seemed all but crazy to build a boat to avoid a Flood in a land that had never seen rain, Noah obeyed
- When it seemed like the ark would never be built in light of the largeness of the task, Noah obeyed
- When it seemed as if the entire human race was standing in opposition to him, Noah obeyed

Even though the tasks that God assigned to Noah were big, Noah realized that God was bigger

- Instead of complaining, Noah obeyed
- Instead of bartering with God, Noah obeyed

Is it any wonder that Noah is listed in Hebrews 11 as an example of faith?

We think about this worldwide Flood and shudder at God's power over creation and wrath against sin

- The apostle Peter uses this in his second epistle to point out the utter devastation that this Earth will undergo one day in the future

God sent the Flood upon the Earth to blot out mankind from the Earth

- However, the Earth itself was not destroyed

Peter remarks, "But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men" (2 Pet 3:7)

- The Flood was minimal compared to the future day of judgment

Peter continues, "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. ¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! ¹³ But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells." (3:10-13)

The apostle even provides a right response to this reminder of the reality of judgment, "Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless" (3:14)

Noah was warned of future judgment and he acted rightly, obeying the Lord in building the ark

- God isn't asking us to build an ark
- A wooden boat won't do any good in a judgment of fire

But God expects us to be obedient to Him just like Noah was

For Noah's generation, judgment was coming

- Instead of repenting, they were reveling in their sin
- They rejected Noah's example and instructions

2 Peter 3 says that we live in a similar situation

- We know that judgment is coming
- Now is the time for repentance while the Lord is patient

But many mock the Christian faith and Christ Himself, denying that there will be a future day of judgment and accountability

The Bible says that today is the day of salvation

- I would urge you to repent of your sins, dear friend, and trust Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior

I am sure that it sounded strange for Noah to build an ark in preparation for a worldwide judgment by water

- But it was their only means of salvation

Today, we don't have to be concerned with a watery judgment

- The future day of judgment will be one of fire
- Something the world has never experienced

Jesus Himself said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me." (John 14:6)