

Genesis 7:1-24
Noah Enters the Ark

Where were you when you heard of the terrorist hijacking the planes on September 11, 2001?

- Tomorrow marks the five year anniversary of the attack

Although we had heard of various terrorists and their attacks around the world, none of us expected such a grand, elaborate scheme

- To a large extent, our ignorance and lack of preparedness is what helped the terrorists to take over the cockpits of several aircraft

If you were to go back and interview those who were killed, I bet that September 10th was a normal, ordinary day

- They were not expecting to be killed the following day

I have recently read the book, [*Refined by Fire*](#)¹

- It is the story of Lt. Col. Brian Birdwell, who worked at the Pentagon

On the morning of September 11, he was watching the news coverage of the attacks on the Twin Towers

- He left the room to head toward the bathroom when terrorists guided American Airlines Flight 77 into the side of the Pentagon

Lt. Col. Birdwell was approximately 20 yards from the impact zone

- If he had remained in that room with the others watching TV, he would have been killed
- If he would have been in his office, he would have been killed

I would encourage you to read this book

- Lt. Col. Brian Birdwell and his wife Mel are both Christians
- It is a wonderful testimony of God's grace and faithfulness in the midst of severe trials

It is eerie to see some of the pictures of this man playing softball with his son just days before this catastrophe

- He had no idea of what was coming
- Hence, he had no way of preparing for what would happen to him on that Tuesday morning

Several thousand years ago, there was another catastrophe that took place on humanity

- The Flood was on a much larger scale than the attack on 9/11

The Flood was not caused by terrorists

- On the contrary, God Himself controlled and caused the destruction

9/11 was built on the premise of a surprise attack

- The Flood was announced some 100 years prior
- Sufficient time for preparation was given but remained unheeded

This morning, we find ourselves in Genesis 7

- We are discussing the life of Noah and his family

¹ <http://www.facethefire.org/refined/>

God has told him to build an Ark

- This enormous barge will be the God-given means of protecting Noah, his family, and the animals from judgment

God has warned Noah that a flood is coming

- Due to the sinfulness of mankind, God has to destroy the Earth
- But even in the midst of judgment, God extends grace

However, only eight (8) humans trust in God for deliverance

- The rest of humanity suffer the wages of their sin
- Physical and spiritual death

Read Genesis 7:1-24

This morning we are going to examine three different perspectives of the Flood

- **The Divine perspective** – the invitation from the Lord
- **The inside perspective** – the protection of those in the Ark
- **The outside perspective** – the destruction of those outside the Ark

I. The Divine perspective (7:1-6)

Then the LORD said to Noah, “Enter the ark, you and all your household; for you *alone* I have seen *to be* righteous before Me in this time. ² 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; ³ also of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth. ⁴ For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made.”

God had spoken to Noah and given him specific instructions about the Ark

- Almost 100 years pass between then and the command to enter the Ark that we find here in chapter 7

We have no other record of God speaking to Noah during this 100 year period²

- How would you fare with working on a project for 100 years when God is silent?

Noah was faithful to perform the task that God had instructed him to carry out

- He continued to proclaim the reality of coming judgment – even in the face of overwhelming rejection

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)

God even tells Noah why he is spared from destruction, “*you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this time*”

- This is the same evaluation given by his sons back in 6:9, “Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God”

² Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 189.

The difference in 7:1 is that God, not his sons, speaks of Noah as being “righteous”

- God knows the hearts of all men
- God knows Noah better than anyone, including his sons

As we mentioned two weeks ago, “righteous” does not imply perfection

- It implies conformity to a standard – God’s holy standard

Notice that God says that Noah – not his family – was righteous

- God had established His covenant with Noah back in 6:18
- It would be through this blessing that Noah’s family would be protected

Now each member of Noah’s family had to exercise faith in the LORD in order to be saved

- They could not rest in Noah’s faith
- Each and every person must make a decision for himself

The Text records that God has “seen” Noah to be righteous

- This stands in bold contrast to the fact that God has seen the condition of the Earth as “corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth” (6:12)

We have to keep in mind that the Torah had not been written at this time

- That would not come until much later

But Noah’s life was one of obedience to God’s commands

Let’s keep in mind that Noah did not earn this righteousness³

- He was a fellow sinner, just like the rest of humanity
- “But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD” (6:8)
- God bestowed a gift of grace to Noah

Noah was told very specific instructions about the animals

- Clean animals by sevens
- Unclean animals by two
- Birds by sevens

It will not be until the Mosaic Law that the sharp division between “clean” and “unclean” will be made known

- But the Mosaic Law officially recognized what had been practiced for years⁴

The reason why there was a male and a female of each species was to insure that the animal kingdom would continue to multiply and reproduce, “to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth” (7:3)

There would be three pairs of animals with one extra (the seventh animal)

- This one would be offered as a sacrifice after exiting the Ark

God told Noah that this Flood would come in “after seven more days”

- So he knew exactly how long he had to board the ark
- The window of time allowed for grace and repentance was drawing to a close⁵

³ Victor P. Hamilton, *NICOT, Genesis 1-17*, 286-87.

⁴ Kenneth A. Mathews, *NAC, Genesis 1-11:26*, 372.

⁵ Derek Kidner, *Tyndale OT Commentaries, Genesis*, 90.

Once this water began to fall, it would continue to do so for 40 days

- Imagine rain falling from August 1 until today
- Think of all the things that you have done in those 960 hours

This tremendous amount of water flooded the entire Earth

God takes full responsibility for sending this flood, “I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made” (7:4)

- I will send rain
- I will blot out
- I have made

The Flood is God’s judgment against sinners

- Only those who receive grace will escape the judgment

⁵ And Noah did according to all that the LORD had commanded him.

Noah is described by several terms in these chapters of Genesis

- He is righteous
- He is blameless
- He walked with God

But alongside these Noah is described as obedient

- “Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did” (6:22)
- “And Noah did according to all that the LORD had commanded him” (7:5)
- “as God had commanded Noah” (7:9)

This was no small task that Noah was given

- Building an ark for 100 years when there had never been rain seemed pretty ridiculous to many
- But to Noah, it was an opportunity to obey, worship, honor, and serve His Lord
- No wonder the Text says that Noah “walked with God” (6:9)

⁶ Now Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water came upon the earth.

This precise detail of the age of Noah at the time of the Flood reveals that mankind was already keeping some type of records

- Noah was 500 when he began to have children (5:32)
- Now he is 600 years old when the Flood came

Noah and his family were the only humans who could have spoken of life before and after the Flood

- They would repopulate the Earth after the Flood

We have considered the Divine perspective of the Flood...

II. The inside perspective (7:7-10, 13-16)

Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood.

Only eight (8) individuals were allowed to board the Ark

- That is an amazing statistic when you consider the amount of people alive on the Earth at that time

Of course, if you look at it from the perspective of who deserved to be spared, no one would have survived

- Every single person would have perished
- Because all were sinners by nature and by choice

⁸ Of clean animals and animals that are not clean and birds and everything that creeps on the ground, ⁹ there went into the ark to Noah by twos, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰ And it came about after the seven days, that the water of the flood came upon the earth.

This is a repetition of what we read in the later part of Genesis 6

- More details will be added later in this chapter

¹³ On the very same day Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark, ¹⁴ they and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, all sorts of birds. ¹⁵ So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life. ¹⁶ And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him; and the LORD closed *it* behind him.

This section of Genesis has many summary statements that repeat information previously discussed

- 7:13-16a repeat what we have discussed earlier

Back in chapter four, we encountered the first instance of polygamy in Lamech who had two wives

- This was clearly a distortion of God's original creation of one man and one woman

In preserving humanity, notice that God selected four monogamous relationships⁶

- Noah and his wife
- Noah's three sons who each had one wife

Once everyone and everything was inside the Ark, the Text informs us that **“the LORD closed *it* behind him”**

- What is **“it”**?

The only thing that **“it”** can refer to is the door of the ark

- If you remember from Genesis 6, Noah was to build a door in the side of the Ark (6:16)

Noah didn't close the door behind him

- He would not have been able to seal it from the outside

God closed the door

- God ensured their protection

⁶ Kidner, 91.

- God ensured their preservation

We have discussed two different perspectives thus far

- *Divine perspective*
- *Inside perspective*

III. The outside perspective (7:11-12, 17-24)

¹¹ In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. ¹² And the rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.

Once again, we have a very specific and detailed date of the Flood

- 600th year
- 2nd month
- 17th day

Early mankind had some way of accounting for a calendar year

The mention of “**the great deep**” and “**the floodgates of the sky**” remind us of Genesis 1

- Genesis 1:2 mentions, “**And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep**”
- Throughout chapter one, “**the sky**” or “**the heavens**” are mentioned repeatedly

In Genesis one, the land emerged out of two bodies of water

- One water source above
- One water source below

Here in Genesis 7 God was, in essence, reversing creation

- The land was being submerged underneath water again
 - o Water from above
 - o Water from below

What a marvelous sight this must have been

- But remember, Noah and his family were inside the Ark by this time
- If they saw anything, it would have been through the tiny window in the top of the Ark

Even though they had limited sight, Noah and his family must have heard the rushing of water

- The sounds of water crashing against the side of the Ark would have reminded them of God’s intent to destroy everyone outside the Ark

But consider these events from the perspective of those outside the ark

- For them, they would have seen the “**fountains of the great deep burst open**” and the opening of “**the floodgates of the sky**”
 - o *What a sight this must have been*
 - o *What terror this must have wrought in their hearts*
- These unbelievers must have seen the dark, billowing clouds gathering
 - o They undoubtedly saw the heavens open to pour rain on the Earth

This water canopy that existed over the Earth burst open, pouring untold amounts of water on the Earth

The bodies of water on the Earth – seas and rivers – were not formed by the run-off from rainfall⁷

- Rather, these bodies of water were formed by God Himself in Genesis 1

The same waters that caused the Ark to float also caused those outside the Ark to drown

- The same God who protected some also destroyed others
- But they were merely getting what they deserved

¹⁷ Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days; and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth. ¹⁸ And the water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark floated on the surface of the water.

Let's remember that Noah is not a sailor

- His family does not appear to know much about navigational skills, either

“If Noah is to emerge alive from the ark, it will be because of the grace and protecting presence of Yahweh – divine mercy rather than human skill will be the determining factor”⁸

¹⁹ And the water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered. ²⁰ The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered.

The amount of water that was being poured upon planet Earth is simply staggering

- Water rose high enough to lift this heavy Ark high above the highest mountain

Even beyond the height of the mountain, the water rose “fifteen cubits higher”

- About 22 feet
- Or the height of this ceiling

Remember that the height of the Ark was 30 cubits – 45 feet

- The water was high enough to keep the bottom of the Ark from hitting the top of the mountains

²¹ And 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.

With waters rising 22 feet above the tallest mountains, no land animal or human would have survived

- This is exactly what 7:21-22 says – birds, cattle, beasts, swarming thing died

⁷ Morris, 194.

⁸ Hamilton, 296.

²³ Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth; and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark.

Mankind did not merely die

- It was wiped out by the hand of God
- No one outside the Ark escaped

Noah was not delivered because of his skill or strength

- The only reason he survived was the gracious purpose of God

Did you notice how many times the destruction is spoken of in all-encompassing terms?⁹

- “all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered” (7:19)
- “And 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.” (7:21-22)
- “Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth; and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark.” (7:23)

Not everyone was killed, however

- Verse 23 says, “only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark”
- If you were outside the ark, you would be killed
- If you were inside the ark, you would be spared

God always protects His own

- With Noah, the righteous remnant would be spared
- With Noah, the hope of the Deliverer seed would continue
- All would not be lost¹⁰

²⁴ And the water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days.

God’s judgment was swift and severe

- Countless individuals lost their lives in this mass watery grave

The water from above and below covered the Earth for 40 days

- This water remained on the Earth for 150 days
- That is 5 months!

Can you imagine the sight of this great event?

- Water would have been everywhere
- No land was visible
- The only thing visible – besides water – was the Ark floating

The word “prevailed” has been mentioned several times already (7:18, 19, 20, 24)

- It is used of a strong man – a warrior
- In this case, the waters are described like a warrior who is attacking the Earth and its inhabitants¹¹

⁹ Mathews, 380.

¹⁰ Mathews, 381.

There has been some level of discussion regarding the Flood – whether it was a universal or local flood

- The Scriptures teach that the Flood was a universal, worldwide flood

Here are a few reasons why I hold to this position¹²

- The depth of the flood
 - o 22 feet of water above the highest mountain argues against a local flood
- The duration of the flood
 - o The waters were on the Earth for 5 months
 - o This would be nearly impossible from the standpoint of a local flood
- The terminology of the flood
 - o The Hebrew word used in Genesis 6-9 is a very rare, unique word that is only used in relation to the Flood of Noah's time
 - o Other Hebrew words describe other times of local, isolated flooding
- The purpose of the Flood
 - o God was judging the entire population of the Earth
 - o Anything short of a universal flood would not have accomplished this
 - o By this time, mankind must have settled far away from the Garden of Eden
- The extent of the damage
 - o Verse 21 says that “**All flesh that moved on the earth perished**”
 - o It doesn't say, “all flesh in one particular geographical area”
- The faithfulness of God to Noah
 - o Through the Noahic covenant, God promised never to destroy the Earth with water
 - o If the Flood was local, then God lied – there have been many local floods since then
- The Word of Jesus Christ
 - o Christ picks up the generations of Noah and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah to show that judgment was all-inclusive
 - o Christ also shows that when He returns, His judgment will be universal

Some would discount the idea of a Flood, saying it is myth or legend

- But the rest of the Scriptures affirm the truths of these chapters in Genesis
- The Flood was an actual, historical event that affected Earth and its inhabitants

I believe that the primary lesson for us here this morning is twofold

For those who have not looked to God for salvation, the message for you is the same message that Noah preached to his generation

- Repent of your sins or die!
- Unless you look to God, you too will suffer a terrible death in the future

¹¹ Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 140.

¹² John J. Davis, *Paradise to Prison*, 125-26.

For those who have looked to God for salvation, are you emulating a lifestyle of obedience like Noah?

- Are you walking with God?
- What is the first step that you need to take toward living a more godly, obedient life?