

## Lesson 7                    NOAH : THE RUIN OF THE OLD WORLD

READING:                    GENESIS 6, 7, 8; MATT. 24:37-39; HEB 11:7

AIM:                    To show how God punished the population of the earth because of their utter wickedness

### 1.                    BACKGROUND

In a world now full of wickedness two outstanding men, **Enoch** and **Noah** were righteous. Of each of them it was testified that "**he walked with God**". Each of them warned the wicked of the coming judgement of God.

Enoch was the "seventh from Adam" in the line of Seth. It is interesting to compare him with Lamech the "seventh from Adam" in the line of Cain, whose boastful defiance is recorded in Gen. 4:23-24.

The brief record in Genesis closes with the words "Enoch walked with God: and he was not, for God took him". The reference in Hebrews 11:5 informs us that Enoch was a man of faith having this testimony that "he pleased God".

### 2.                    NOAH, THE RIGHTEOUS AND FAITHFUL    Gen 6:8-11

Wickedness abounded in spite of Enoch's warning. Men's hearts were full of rebellion and evil and God's way, the way of truth, had been corrupted (NB: the Hebrew word for "imagination" in Gen. 6:5 signifies not only the imagination, but also the purposes and desires).

Noah and his family were exceptions. **Noah was found righteous in God's sight** (II Peter 2:5). To him God proclaimed His purpose to destroy man because of his great wickedness (Gen. 6:13). Yet mercy tempered justice, and many years of preaching and warning were permitted before the end came.

Noah was commanded to build an ark. This was a mighty vessel – not a ship in the ordinary sense for it had neither sails nor rudder. Its whole purpose was to save life when the flood came.

God spells out to Noah the dimensions of the ark:

	LENGTH	BREADTH	HEIGHT
The Ark	300 cubits (158.7 metres)	50 cubits (26.45 metres)	30 cubits (15.87 metres)
RMS Titanic	269 metres	28.19 metres	32 metres
QE2	293.52 metres	32.07metres	52.1 metres

NB: Conversion is using the longer "Egyptian royal cubit" of 529mm

Many years passed whilst Noah was building the ark and preaching to the people warning them of the trouble to come. This constituted a test, both to Noah and also the people. As year followed year and there was no fulfillment of the announced punishment so the people continued to disregard Noah's message.

There was a danger took that Noah himself might be taken off his guard by the passing of time, as there is a danger that we might also in these days prior to the return of the Master (see Matt. 24:36-39)

### 3. GOD'S INVITATION -- Gen 7

God invited Noah: "**Come thou and all thy house into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation**". Noah was taken out before the flood came (Gen. 7:4) So also will the friends of Jesus be gathered out of the nations before God finally punishes the world (Isa. 26:20-21). Though they will not escape all the effects and distress which characterise the last days they will not be overwhelmed by them.

Noah and his family (eight in all) entered the ark, also seven pairs of birds and clean beasts, together with a pair of every unclean animal (Gen. 7:2-3). And then "**The Lord shut them in**".

How wonderful to be thus protected by God! This was Noah's reward for his faith and obedience. He was securely locked in during the storm. For forty days and nights it rained and, while everything was destroyed the ark rose on the waters.

After 150 days God "remembered" Noah and made a wind to pass over the earth to abate the flood waters. Then on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on Mt. Ararat. Two and a half months later, on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains appeared as the waters continued to abate.

### 4. NOAH EVER WATCHFUL – Gen 8:1-20 -

At the end of forty days, Noah released a raven. It did not return. This bird's habits are those of a scavenger. It would probably feed on the carcasses of the flood victims. Noah also released a dove, which returned to the ark because it could not find a resting place.

After seven days, he sent forth again and the dove returned with an olive leaf. This was evidence that the waters were subsiding and that God had renewed the vegetation upon the earth. Released after another seven days, the dove did not return. The dove with its olive leaf is symbolic of regeneration, peace and life.

After a year in the ark (compare Gen. 7:11 with Gen. 8:13-14) Noah and his family were commanded to "go forth" into a new world, taking with them all the living creatures. Noah built an altar and offered burnt offerings to God in gratitude for His deliverance (Gen. 8:16-20).

### 5. GOD'S COVENANT -- Gen 8:21-22

God promised that while the earth remained, never again would He destroy all living creatures by a flood. He gave the rainbow as a token of the covenant, something to remember whenever we see a rainbow. "**I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth**" (Gen. 8:21-22; 9:11-16)

The rainbow as a symbol of judgement and preservation of God's elect takes us right forward in thought to Christ's Kingdom. John, in Rev. 4:2-6, paints a picture of the establishment of the Kingdom, with Christ the Sun of Righteousness sitting on the Throne, surrounded by his saints with a rainbow enclosing them.

Likewise in Rev. 10:1, John sees a vision of a mighty angel (representing Christ and his immortal saints) clothed with the rainbow, performing God's judgements on the nations.

## 6. THE TEACHING OF THE FLOOD -- Matt. 24:37-39; 1 Pet. 3:21-22; 2 Pet. 3:4-7

- (1) The Flood is an example of God's judgement -- **The apostle Peter refers to the flood in 2 Peter 3:4-7 and declares that Judgement will come again on this earth**, despite what scoffers may say. There will never again be a similar flood of water (Isa. 54:9) but God will send His son to purify the earth (see 2 Thes. 1:7-9)
- (2) **The Flood is a symbol of baptism** -- The flood washed away the sins of the old world and after it there was a "newness of life". This is what baptism does for us (Acts. 2:38; Rom. 6:4) Noah and his family were saved by water. Peter says it was "the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us" (1 Pet. 3:21-22).
- (3) **Jesus Christ is our Ark** -- The ark was built for safety and the preservation of life. By baptism we enter into Christ, our Ark of safety. In him there is security, peace and salvation.

When the Son of Man returns conditions in the earth will be similar to those in Noah's time, eating, drinking, marrying – heedless of the warnings of coming trouble (Matt 24:37-39). If like Noah, we are obedient and faithful we have God's assured protection when punishment comes upon the rest of the world.

## 7. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Noah found grace (favour) in the eyes of the Lord. He was a just man and perfect or upright in the midst of wicked, corrupt people. Because he was righteous, God spared him. Full of faith in God's promise Noah obeyed God and prepared the ark. Because of this act of faith, Noah is included among the faithful men of old (Heb. 11:7)

### REFERENCE LIBRARY

- “Noah’s Ark: thinking outside the box” by Tim Lovett
- “The Visible Hand of God”, chapter 5
- “Elpis Israel” by John Thomas part 1, chapter 5
- “The Bible as History”, chapter 5
- “Genesis Flood”

### QUESTIONS

1. **Why did God send the Flood?**
2. **How did Noah show his faith in God?**
3. **Select a New Testament reference to the Flood and explain it in relation to your own salvation?**
4. **Use the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 11, to demonstrate Noah's faith in God?**
5. **How was the ark a type of Christ?**
6. **What lessons do we learn from the flood?**