

Judgment and Grace
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Allen Power

Genesis 6:13-22,7:20-24 - Noah and the Great Flood

When a building is in severe disrepair and decay, building inspectors often declare it “condemned” as “no longer fit for human habitation” In some cases it is so structurally unsound that it is deemed a “tear-down” that must be demolished. In other situations, the building’s structure is sound (it has “good bones”) and reconstruction, though major, can be done on the original structure.

When God created the heavens, earth, creatures, and humans He declared it as good. Some 1,600 years later rampant sin compelled God to see the need for demolition:

Genesis 6:5–8 (ESV) — 5 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. **6** And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. **7** So the Lord said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.”

To imperfect humans like us, a total “tear-down” of civilization seems harsh. More on that shortly. If we’ve read our Bibles, we know that God is a God of both justice and mercy. The next verse says:

8 But Noah found favor (grace) in the eyes of the Lord.

In this overview of God’s judgment by the great flood we see these important things:

- Sin was rampant.
- God's judgment was required.
- God’s punishment was restrained.
- God's grace was rich.
- God’s righteousness was within reach.
- Those things were true “in the days of Noah” and are still true today.

Genesis 6:13–22 (ESV) — 13 And God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth. **14** Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. **15** This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. **16** Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks. **17** For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die. **18** But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you. **19** And of every living

thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. **20** Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. **21** Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them.” **22** Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

Genesis 7:20–24 (ESV) — **20** The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. **21** And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. **22** Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. **23** He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. **24** And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

- Sin was rampant. There was wickedness, corruption, violence, sexual immorality (6:1-4) and every thought of every person except Noah was evil.
- God’s judgment was required because God is a God of justice.
- Skip Heitzig: *“If God does not judge, He is not just; and if God is not just, He is not perfect; and if He is not perfect, He is not God.”*
- One might wonder if God’s judgment was too harsh?
- Why wipe out all those innocent people and animals? Bible scholars, what is the flaw in that question about punishing “innocent” people (Rom. 6:23)?
- People naturally find the subject of judgment unpleasant. It’s interesting how our view of justice changes based on the circumstances.
- When you hear the details of a heinous crime or atrocities like the holocaust, what is your natural human reaction about the justice that should be delivered?
- Even in a movie, if violence against a child is depicted how do you feel?
- What if someone harms or kills your loved one? Of course, Jesus commands us to forgive but humanly speaking how would you feel about judgment and justice?
- Why do we feel differently about judgment and justice in those situations?
- Back to Noah’s day. Look at verse nine. How many righteous people were left?
- Imagine raising your family in a world with only eight righteous people. Think about it; everyone but your family has rejected God and every thought they have is evil, wicked and intent on corruption and violence! That was Noah’s world.
- Do you think you would be crying out to the God of justice to do something?
- How did things get so bad? When people lived almost 1,000 years and had 10-20 kids that was a massive population explosion. In the first 1,600 years it’s estimated the population before the flood may have been 750 million to 1 billion.
- Since the flood (starting with only eight people) the world’s population is estimated to have reached one billion in 1804, two billion in 1927, three billion in 1960 and now at eight billion in 2022.
- If people continued to live 1,000 years, have 20 kids, and they were all evil where was this world headed? Verse 6:3 tells us this is why God limited human lifespans. No more 1,000 year-olds.

- Imagine the spread of wickedness if God hadn't intervened.
- Sin was rampant and exploding; judgment was required; but if we've read our Bibles, we know that God is both a God of justice and mercy and His punishment was restrained. It took between 100 and 120 years for Noah to build this huge boat on dry land far from an ocean before people had even seen rain.
- Scripture doesn't specifically say that Noah had an evangelism program but in 2 Peter 2:5, Peter called Noah a "herald of righteousness" so many of these sinful people had 100 years to hear God's warning and turn to Him.
- 2 Peter 3:9 (ESV) tells us, *"The Lord...is patient...not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."*
- God's punishment was restrained, and His grace was (and is) RICH.
- The flood was God's judgment for sin. The Ark was a safe place of escape for Noah, his family, and the animals. How does the Ark point to the New Testament?
- In 6:14 God told Noah to make the Ark of "gopher wood" which was cypress that would not rot and cover it with "pitch" which is tar (bitumen).
- Interesting: The Hebrew word for "pitch" is **kôpher**, *ko'-fer*; which comes from the word **kâphar**, *kaw-far'* [meaning] to cover (with bitumen); ... {it also means] to placate or cancel:—appease, make (an) atonement, ...forgive, be merciful, pacify, pardon, purge (away), put off, (make) reconcile (-liation).ⁱⁱ
- The Ark's covering that kept the waters of judgment from Noah and his family is a picture of Jesus' atonement for sinners through His death on the cross.
- The Ark only had one door reminding us of Jesus words in John 14:6, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*
- God's grace was rich, and God's righteousness was within reach for Noah.
- We might ask why did God choose Noah? Verse 9 says he *"was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God."*ⁱⁱⁱ
- What is the difference between blameless and sinless? (Ps. 15:2)
- Noah wasn't perfect. We know Noah wasn't sinless because after the flood Genesis 9:20–21 tells us Noah planted a vineyard, produced wine, and got drunk and was laying in his tent with no clothes on. Blameless but not sinless.
- How do we know Noah wasn't just a naturally righteousness person (Ps. 53)?
- Based on Genesis 6:8 how did he become righteous?
- Noah didn't earn God's grace for him and his family, but he did some things any one of us can do. Verse 6:9 says Noah, *"walked in close fellowship with God."*^{iv}
- What does the term "walking" with God mean?
- A. W. Tozer said the goal of every Christian should be to "live in a state of unbroken worship." This is only possible when we walk with God.^v
- Look back at Genesis 6:22. What did Noah demonstrate in that verse?
- Think about Noah's faith. Imagine the faith it took to work on a boat the size of one and a half football fields for over 100 years because God said do it?
- **Hebrews 11:7 (ESV) — 7** By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

- The end of this story is well-known. God ended the flood; the Ark came to rest on the Ararat mountain range and after a year and eleven days Noah and his family came out of the Ark to begin repopulating God's renovated earth.
- Noah built an altar to worship God and the Lord was pleased.
- God made a covenant: *"I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done."*^{vi}

So, What's the Takeaway?

- What does this account mean for you and me? How can we apply it to our lives?
- Jesus said in **Matthew 24:38–39 (ESV)** — **38** For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, **39** and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.
- As it was in Noah's day, so it is in our day.
- Sin is rampant. God's judgment is required. God's punishment has been restrained, God's grace is rich, and the righteousness of Christ is within reach for us just as it was for Noah.
- Knowing that God's judgment for sin is real and His mercy and grace are rich should motivate us to want to escape into the safety of the Ark of salvation.
- Noah was a patriarch, a hero of the faith, and technically a father to us all but he was just a flawed human being like us. That means we have an opportunity to walk in fellowship with God just as Noah did if we place our trust in Christ as Savior and Lord.
- Knowing judgment for sin is real should also motivate us to influence others to "come into the Ark" of God's grace through Christ's atoning, covering sacrifice.
- God's restraining patience gives us an opportunity to tell others about Christ but we should also feel urgency because one day, as God said in **Genesis 6:3 (NKJV)** — *"My Spirit shall not strive with man forever..."*
- We can imagine how thankful Noah and his family were to be safe and dry in the Ark as this massive flood raged. This week, let's remind ourselves to be thankful that God has provided an "Ark of salvation" through Christ so we can be eternally spared from His judgment.

ⁱ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIPU0SUIlwww>

ⁱⁱ Strong, J. (2009). In [A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible](#) (Vol. 2, p. 57). Logos Bible Software.

ⁱⁱⁱ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Ge 6:9). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

^{iv} Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Ge 6:9). Tyndale House Publishers.

^v <https://www.gotquestions.org/walk-with-God.html>

^{vi} [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Ge 8:21). (2016). Crossway Bibles.