

Genesis 6B (2011)

- Having studied the reasons for the flood last week, now we're ready to move into the Flood story
 - And the story begins with a man, Noah

[Gen. 6:8](#) But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

[Gen. 6:9](#) These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.

[Gen. 6:10](#) Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

[Gen. 6:11](#) Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence.

[Gen. 6:12](#) God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

- We remember that the earth has filled with sinful men, each left to his own conscience to choose right from wrong
 - And our conscience fails us every time, for the world is filled with violence
 - Even the demon realm has crossed a line
 - And God is regretful that His work of creation has come to this
 - So as He contemplates the world's condition and how to respond, we're told that one man gains God's approval
 - Noah finds favor in the eyes of the Lord
 - The word for favor is *chen* which is simply grace in Hebrew
 - Noah receives God's grace
 - Noah is also from the line of Seth, and so he is the seed line continuing from Adam
 - The seed line is the line through which God will fulfill His promise, and this line will be men who know and follow the Lord
 - Knowing and following the Lord is something that only God can make possible through His grace

- Here we see God taking that step again
 - He has intervened in the normal course of a man's life and brought faith into the man's heart so that he might receive God's grace
- Once God's grace has rested on Noah, we see what follows in the next verse
 - Noah is called a righteous man in v.9
 - And Noah is said to be blameless in his time
 - The Hebrew word for blameless means without blemish, with integrity and upright
 - We're not talking about a perfect person, but a godly person
 - And he walks with God
 - A man who knows and follows the living God
 - Make sure you notice the order of those descriptions
 - First Noah finds favor, grace
 - Secondly, Noah is declared righteous
 - Third, Noah leads a godly life and follows the Lord
 - This is the pattern for all men who follow the Lord
 - Hebrews says this:

[Heb. 11:1](#) Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

[Heb. 11:2](#) For by it the men of old gained approval.

- Noah, like all men, gained God's approval by faith not by his performance
 - It's been the same for OT and NT, for there is no other way
- Why is Noah in this position?
 - By God's gracious choice and so that God may be faithful to His promise to bring a seed through men

[Gen. 6:14](#) "Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch.

[Gen. 6:15](#) "This is how you shall make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.

[Gen. 6:16](#) "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.

- Noah receives his famous call to build an ark
 - First, God gives Noah the reason for the call...the end of all flesh has come
 - This announcement begins the 120 years that God decreed earlier
 - In this period of time God is going to give Noah time to prepare the Ark, collect food and animals, and enter it
 - Now we see that the point of the delay is so that a time of preparation can take place in the meantime
 - As we saw last week, the story of Noah is a shadow for a later time of judgment
 - Many of the details of this account are intended to foreshadow the coming judgment at the Lord's Second Coming
 - Here we see another of those shadows
 - The shadow is explained clearly by Peter

[2Pet. 3:3](#) Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,

[2Pet. 3:4](#) and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."

[2Pet. 3:5](#) For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water,

[2Pet. 3:6](#) through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

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

[2Pet. 3:8](#) But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.

[2Pet. 3:9](#) 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.

[2Pet. 3:10](#) 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.

- Peter says that those who ignore the signs of the coming judgment are forgetting the lesson of Noah's flood
 - God isn't slow in keeping His promise to return and judge the world
 - He is patiently waiting so that none of His children will perish
 - Just like He patiently waited for Noah to build the Ark to save his family, God is waiting now
 - When the last appointed believer has entered the family of God by faith, then the end can come
 - Because all the righteous will be safe
 - In Noah's day, the righteous were saved by entering an Ark
 - In our day, we are saved from judgment by entering Christ
 - In that way, we begin to see that the Ark itself is a picture of Christ, something we will develop more as we go through the story
- God says all flesh must come to an end
 - Flesh refers to all living creatures with the breath of life
 - Land animals and man
 - And God says He will destroy both them and the earth itself
 - We might ask why the animals are caught up in this judgment?
 - Well, all the earth was placed under the same curse when men sinned
 - And both the land animals and men came from the dust of the ground
 - So both are suffering the effects of sin

- Here we also see clear evidence that the animal kingdom is part of the earth created for man
 - And if man is to be destroyed, animals have no reason to exist apart from serving man
 - The only animals that will survive are those that accompany the family of Noah
- So Noah is told to construct an Ark
 - The word for ark in Hebrew is literally chest or box
 - The same word is also used to describe the basket that Moses floated in as a baby
 - But other than that, it's never used for anything else
 - Only after Noah heard the dimensions would he have realized this would be no ordinary box
 - Why does God call it an ark and not a boat?
 - The simple answer is that a boat didn't exist in Noah's day
 - There is no evidence that man had ventured off the land
 - Remember all land is still connected so there is no need to get in a boat
 - There was no where you couldn't travel by land
 - Traveling by boat led you back to the same land
 - And fishing was pointless as well, since people ate plants
 - So there was no word for boat, nor would Noah have understood what it meant
 - We can also assume that the exact manner of construction was something Noah received from God as Noah progressed through the project
 - He may have had great skill in wood work
 - But we can assume he still would have needed some outside expertise to construct something on this scale for the first time

- The ark itself is an impressive ship
 - It was 450 feet long (1½ football fields), 75 feet wide and 45 feet high (a four story building)
 - With three decks, it had 100,000 square feet and a million cubic space
 - Equal to 800 railroad box cars
 - In appearance, it was a floating box, very stable and almost impossible to capsize, especially when loaded
 - We don't know what gopher wood was, so the type of wood is a mystery
 - It was to be covered inside and outside with pitch, or *kopher*
 - The ark was covered with pitch or tar to make it waterproof and to seal the wood so it wouldn't become water logged or leak
 - This was an essential step
 - If the boat wasn't watertight, then even after it began to float, it would eventually sink in the judgment waters
 - Interestingly, the word *kopher* is the same word for atonement in Hebrew
 - So the Ark provided salvation for Noah and his family from God's judgment on the world's sin
 - And the key component that made Noah's salvation possible was the covering (*kopher*) or atonement that ensured they would remain safe when judgment came
 - Again, the Ark is becoming a greater picture of Christ
 - For Christ is our atonement for sin
 - Were it not for Christ's atonement, we wouldn't stand a chance when God's judgment fell
 - But if we are in Christ (like Noah was in the Ark), we are protected by Christ's atonement
- Now at about this point, Noah is probably wondering why he needed to build such a large ship

Gen. 6:17 "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.

Gen. 6:18 "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.

Gen. 6:19 "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.

Gen. 6:20 "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 will come to you to keep them alive.

Gen. 6:21 "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."

- God's explanation is that His judgment will take the form of a flood of water on the earth
 - It must be water, because God is intent on taking away the breath of life
 - Obviously, breathing will end when the flood comes
 - This is not to say that there is no collateral damage to sea creatures, but they are not extinguished in the same way as land animals were
 - As God describes this event, He uses a unique Hebrew word for flood – used only of the Noachic event
 - The Greek word used in the NT for Noah's flood is also unique = *cataclysmos*
 - In both cases, these words are not the normal words used for local floods
 - They are specific to a worldwide event, something unparalleled
 - One question to consider at this point is why does God use a flood to take everyone's life?
 - Since the Bible says that God must actively uphold life or it would end instantly
 - Col 1:17 says that all things are being held together by Christ's creative power

- If God wants to destroy life, couldn't He just make it happen instantly without using a Flood?
 - People and animals would just drop dead, except for Noah's family
 - Yes, of course He could
- But there are at least three reasons why God does it with a flood instead
 - First, the flood gives opportunity for God to create the pictures and shadows He wants so He can teach concerning the final judgment
 - Secondly, the flood waters become an effective mechanism to bury the carcasses of so many dead men and animals
 - The mass burial of all these living creatures becomes the fossils we see today in the geological record
 - Thirdly, the forces required to create the flood will tear apart the world
 - Continents will be reshaped, climate will change, and natural features like mountains and oceans will become barriers
 - These changes along with others that come after the flood will support God's purpose in making it harder for man's sin to escalate out of control again
- Since this news must have been disturbing to Noah, God also gives Noah some assurance that all is not lost
 - God will preserve Noah and his family because of a covenant
 - When Noah leaves the Ark, God will enter into a covenant with Noah in Chapter 9
 - This is the first use of the word covenant in the Bible
 - Though that doesn't mean this is the first covenant in force
 - We've already seen God make promises, which are the basic elements of covenant

- Finally, God gets to the most memorable and incredible part of the commission
 - Noah will bring along a menagerie of land creatures
 - God will ensure that a male and female of each will be included
 - Notice how God says they will find their way to the Ark
 - In v.20, God says these animals will come to Noah
 - If you've ever wondered how Noah could collect so many animals, here's your answer
 - God directed animals to Noah once the Ark was ready
 - Also, remember that all land is in one place, so all animals live on the same continent
 - Some might discredit the story of Noah on the question of how did he fit so many animals in the ark
 - People have grossly overestimated how many species/kinds of animals there are
 - Kind is a broader word than species and reflects the way God made animals originally
 - One kind would eventually diversify into many subkinds or species
 - So Noah only needs to preserve one pair of a given kind, to ensure many subkinds will eventually exist after the flood
 - Excluding sea creatures and plants, there are only about 200,000 hundred thousand species of animals and insects in the world
 - And if we assume that only two species per "kind", we could easily put 100,000 animals in the Ark and have 30% of the boat left over for the people and food supplies
 - But why don't the lions eat the zebras?
 - Because they all eat plants
 - Remember, the animals do not have a predator-prey relationship yet at this point

- That won't be established until Chapter 9
- Finally, we see Noah's reaction to God's instructions

[Gen. 6:22](#) Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did.

- Noah is perhaps the most remarkable man in the Bible, save Christ Himself
 - In the three chapters that cover the flood account from front to back, God speaks to Noah seven times
 - And in all that time, the Bible records Noah speaking back to God exactly zero times
 - Noah is never recorded to say a word to God in response to His instructions
 - No other patriarch receives so many revelations from God and says nothing in return