

Pray*Boice, p. 330***"God is a God of Judgment and Salvation."**

Remember that early on in our study of Genesis I said that all the major themes of the Bible...

find their beginning in these first 11 chapters of Genesis.

We are learning in these chapters who God is and what he is like.

We are learning who people are and what they are like... and realizing why the world is so messed up.

We are learning how God responds to human sin and rebellion...

with Adam and Eve, with Cain, and now in Noah's day...

God responds with a combination of judgment and salvation. He still responds this way today.

Why? and When does He respond which way?

I. A Contrast:**Noah is righteous.****vss. 9-10**

And we read here that Noah "walked with God" = like Enoch... **Gen. 5:21-24**

It is difficult to imagine just what this means. What did Noah do?

Is the walking figurative, or was God really there with him?

Well, both Enoch and Noah are spoken of in **Heb. 11:5-7**. The faith chapter... **Heb. 11:1-2**

This is very illuminating when it comes to understanding Noah and his righteousness.

Enoch had faith in God. Noah had faith in God.

We don't know how Enoch found faith. The text does not tell us. But, it does tell us about Noah.

Gen. 6:8 "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." = God's grace found Noah.

Grace gave Noah faith in God that allowed Noah to believe that God exists and rewards the person who seeks Him.

So, Noah's walking with God was much like ours. We cannot see God, but we believe in Him.

And, that belief leads to obedience and righteousness that only comes by faith.

We find throughout the Bible, notably in Proverbs and Psalm 1...

Obedience to God is the "way of the righteous." **Psalm 1**

So we read in Heb. 11:7 that because Noah believed God he became reverent and prepared the Ark. He obeyed.

Noah was not like all the other people around him. He did not listen to them. He did not do what they did.

In fact we discover in the New testament that Noah preached to them!

2 Peter 2:5 He was a "preacher of righteousness."

Which all means that Noah was made righteous by God's grace that made Noah believe in God and obey Him.

This is exactly how it still works today, which is the point of the whole chapter of Hebrews 11.

Like Noah, you and I need to hold on to the grace of God and believe God and obey God in order to be saved.

Because you live in a culture that is perverse and offensive to God like Noah's.

The earth is corrupt.**vss. 11-12**

In these two verses we are meant to recall what the text has just told us about God in **Gen. 6:5-6**.

What is going on? Murder, taking whatever wives they choose, arrogance and pride in their own greatness.

The culture around Noah is filled with people who do not care at all who God is and what He says.

Frankly, this could be America at the beginning of the 21st century.

And, how does God feel about this? We learned up in vss. 5-6...

Just the way a Father would feel if his sons were involved in atrocious evil, murder, adultery, self obsession.

He is sorry that they are His sons. "He is grieved in His heart."

Interestingly, we read that it was not simply human beings that had been corrupted, but "all flesh." Gen 6:12

I don't know just what this means... but I have seen some examples of it. Human sin affects animals and all nature.

Pollution, people using land and resources but caring little about maintaining or conserving them.

Corrupt humans even teach their animals, dogs, horses, chickens... to engage in corruption.

In any case, God saw the corruption affecting all of His creation. God sees the same thing today. **Rom. 8:18-22**

So, we understand that all creation now looks forward to redemption and renewal with us.

II. God says, "I will destroy them with the earth."**vss. 13-17**

God's intention: to destroy

vs. 13

God's Command to build the Ark

vss. 14-16

God's intention: to destroy

vs. 17

This section begins and ends with a reiteration by God of His intention from vs. 7.

We learn that because of what people have done the earth is filled with "violence." = hamas

In most Middle Eastern languages the word means violence to this day... which explains one terrorist group.

Now God says that because the people on earth "have corrupted their way" (vs. 12) God is about to destroy them.

Actually, there is a word play here in the Hebrew. It is like this.

"Because they have ruined their way and the earth... I will ruin them with the earth."

And in our culture the common first reaction is "Wow, that's extreme. Why is God so harsh?"

God is going to destroy everybody?!!!

And, not just all the people but "all flesh in which is the breath of life." vs. 17 = everything that breathes!

That seems extreme.

But, we think this way obviously because we do not share God's view of sin. We just don't think sin is all that bad.

After all, we think, who is God to demand such complete obedience? We don't even like the word, "obedience."

And, in our culture we sort of like the word "rebellion." After all our country started with a rebellion.

For many people today a "rebel" is a good thing to be... even if our rebellion is over something trivial, clothes, tattoos.

But, in taking this point of view on rebellion and sin in how we relate to God, we find ourselves in a very bad spot.

We think our sin is just not that bad... certainly not deserving of death.

And, we do not even wonder how it is that God has not killed us already.

It is evident that in Noah's day God waited a very long time to judge the rebellion of His children on the earth.

We get a hint of God's longsuffering in **1 Peter 3:20**... about the people in Noah's day.

But, God has His limit... and apparently in Genesis 6:13-17 He has reached His limit.

You don't want to wait until He reaches His limit with you.

So, tucked in between these two statements of Judgment (vss. 13, 17) is a command to Noah... a very strange command.

It is a command to build an Ark. The word "ark" means box. Thus, later, the Ark of the Covenant in Moses' day.

But, this "box" is to be a very big box. 450ft. long, 75ft. wide, 45ft. high... with three levels and rooms.

It will have ventilation around the top and is to be pitched with pitch inside and out... because it is a boat, or a barge.

It will be God's means of salvation for Noah and his family and some animals.

In God's judgment upon all the people, all flesh on the earth, is a plan to save one man and his family.

It turns out that many people find this too much to believe. Noah, the Ark, and the flood.

I would say that for the first 6 years of my Christian life, I found all of this too fantastic to believe.

I believed that God created the universe, that Jesus rose from the dead. But not that God flooded the earth.

We'll deal with this more next week... but I want to say just a few things about the plausibility of this big barge.

Modern science has demonstrated two things about such a structure:

1. This is just about the maximum size any wooden boat or barge could be built and not break up under stress.

2. Wave tank and computer simulation has shown that this shape is almost impossible to capsize.

Furthermore, many civilizations and our own history are full of stories from people who say they have seen the Ark.

James Montgomery Boice, in his message on the Ark lists over 15 separate accounts of people who say they have...

seen the Ark on Mount Ararat on the Turkish, Russian border. Many of these stories from unbelievers.

Just a little research and you yourself will discover scores of amazing accounts of sightings or pieces found.

In any case, the Bible tells us that Noah built the Ark, and we have no real evidence to the contrary.

Surely, a God who creates a universe can put animals on an Ark and flood the world.

But, God is doing so much more than this...

III. God says, "I will establish My covenant with you." vss. 18-22

God will establish His covenant with Noah. vs. 18a

God's Command to fill the Ark vss. 18b-21

Noah obeys all that God commanded. vs. 22

This is the first time in the Bible that the word "covenant" is used. It is a very important word.

The word covenant means a binding promise... a promise between two parties. It is a promise that God will never break.

And, we see here that this covenant is tied to both God's provision and Noah's obedience.

These two different actions, one from God and the other from Noah are going to get him to that promise.

God commands Noah to get on the Ark with his family.

God commands him to fill the Ark with animals.

God commands him to fill it with food.

And, Noah obeys.

If Noah does not obey any one of these commands, or obviously the command to build the Ark... no covenant, no promise.

And, we find this sort of thing to be true throughout the Bible.

God's covenant is always tied to obedience. Those who cling to His promises are expected to obey him.

If they do not obey, they cannot be sure of God's promise.

But, ultimately, it is God who keeps up both ends of the promise, His end and ours... for He makes us people who are able to obey.

So it is with God's promise to Noah, who was found by the grace of God, and he believed and obeyed.

So it will be for Abraham, who believed and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

So it will be for David, who found God's wonderful grace, even in his horrible sin, and he clung to God's promise.

So it is for us to whom Jesus fulfills this promise in the New Covenant in His blood... shed for us on the cross.

He pays for our sin, making us righteous by God's grace, and gives us the Holy Spirit so that we are able to obey Him.

Pray