

(Genesis #8) Safe Through Judgement

by J. Glyn Owen

J. Glyn Owen explores the themes of judgment and salvation in the flood narrative of Genesis, emphasizing God's holiness and mercy amidst human wickedness.

Duration: 51:41

Scripture: Genesis 6:3, Genesis 6:5, Isaiah 5:20, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:24-25, Romans 14:12, Revelation 20:12

Topics: "Preservation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the state of the world and the need for God's judgment. He emphasizes the social consequences of sin throughout history, highlighting the damage it has caused to individuals, families, and society. The preacher quotes verses from Genesis 6 to support the idea that God has determined to destroy mankind due to the violence and wickedness on earth. He warns that if the Creator declares destruction, it will surely happen. Overall, the sermon focuses on the state of the world and the impending judgment of God.

Transcript

Pursuing our studies in the book of Genesis, we come tonight to the epic flood described in chapters six and seven, the flood that is associated in all our minds with Noah and his ark. And I trust that as we turn to it, the Lord in his goodness will enable us to get the main susten challenge of this very remarkable episode. Judgment, of course, had to come.

It was implicit in the first and in every subsequent act of disobedience. If God is God, and man is his creature, and man is answerable to his God, then judgment is inherent in every act of sin. As James says, sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.

Sin is never finished. Sin hasn't come to full bloom in the act itself. The very act of sin, or the very attitude of sin, whatever the case may be, only comes to full bloom and to fruition when the inevitable judgment of that sin has come about.

And that, of course, is so because our God is a holy God and righteous. And he has so ordered the affairs of the universe that he requires an answer. He requires an answer from us, his creatures, concerning the way we live and concerning the way we behave, as his creatures here below.

Now, not only is it implicit in the act of disobedience, but judgment, of course, was inevitable in the announcement that the seed of the woman would tread upon the head of the serpent. But, if I'm on the serpent's side, if I'm inextricably wound up with a serpent, Satan, then I must expect to be wounded likewise. You know the lake of fire was not prepared for men.

When you come to the book of the Revelation and you read about future things, particularly the fate of the ultimately impenitent, the book of the Revelation says categorically that the lake was made for the devil and his angel. It's the devil's head that is to be bruised. But if you cling to him, and if I cling to him, and if I become inextricably bound up with him, then I share in his fate.

So that when God said that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head, the judgment of all the friends of Satan was involved in that very act. So also was judgment involved in principle in the excommunicating of Adam and Eve from the garden and in the expulsion of Cain from the presence of God to live away, as it were, from his recognizable presence. And here at last has come about a judgment not of an individual, nor of a family, but of the whole family of mankind.

Pursuing our policy then of letting Genesis speak for itself, we can, I believe most conveniently, speak of the entire message of Genesis 6 and 7 under three main heads. We look first at the state of the world that required the judgment of God. The state of the world.

Now, the narrative in describing the condition of life in these days, immediately preceding the flood, seems to focus attention upon two main issues. There are two stresses here. There was, first of all, a particular cause for the divine judgment, and then there was a general, a particular and a general.

Now, we look first of all at the particular aggravation of God's holy wrath and anger, and you find that described very succinctly in chapter 6, verses 1 and 2, what is here referred to as the intermarriages of the sons of God and the daughters of men. Let me read. When men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took to wife such of them as they chose.

I believe the Jerusalem Bible puts it, as many as they chose. Now, this reference has been generally understood in one of two ways. Who are these sons of God who come to marry the daughters of men, eliciting the very vital indignation of God? You and I know from the very beginning that marriage was ordained of God, so this is not judgment upon marriage as such, but rather it is the judgment of God upon something quite illicit, something entirely outwith His own will and His own purpose.

What is this? Now, some people have interpreted the reference to the sons of God marrying the daughters of men as if it applied to a fallen race of angels. Some of you may be familiar with this. Those who take this approach to things believe that Jude, in verse 6 of his only one chaptered epistle, has reference to this, when he speaks of the angels who kept not their first estate, and they go on and they do some terrible things.

Now, the idea then is this, that you have here a community of fallen angels who lusted after the daughters of men and became, as it were, incarnate in the sense that we have demons possessing men. So that you have here, in this context, according to those who understand it in this way, you have a whole community of demon-possessed, supernatural men, men who are referred to here as men of renown. Doesn't tell us renown for what.

You know, there is always something supernatural about a demon-possessed. There is always an element of something which is beyond the normal. Your Hitlers and your Neros and your Czars, they all have some power which appears to be beyond the range of the normal.

And, of course, that is equally true on the plane of the physical. People who are demon-possessed are very often those who have tremendous physical power. Do you remember that man in the Gospels that they tried to bind up? They tied his hands, they did this and that to him, but he tore them all.

He had power that was beyond the normal. Now, it is most generally believed, however, that the reference here to the sons of God is rather to the godly line of Seth that has emerged in the course of this early history. The Sethites, if we may speak of them in that way, were almost apart from the Cainites and others.

These were the people who began to call upon the name of the Lord, as we read of it in chapter 4 and verse 26. In the midst of the sin and decadence of the age, there was a little community that appeared to call upon the name of the Lord for the first time. I don't know whether we would rightly understand this as a kind of meeting for public worship for the first time in the history of mankind.

Probably so. Now, they were the Sethites. But by this time something has happened.

We are to understand, if this is the right interpretation of it, we are to understand that God always intended that godly people and God-fearing should marry godly and God-fearing people. That the godly line of Seth should keep itself apart from the ungodly line of Cain. Now, this is a principle which we have in Scripture.

You have it in the Old Testament. The children of Israel were forbidden to marry the ladies of Canaan. And the womenfolk of Israel were forbidden to marry the menfolk of Canaan.

They were told that they must marry from among themselves the covenant people of God. And you have exactly the same in the New Testament. In 2 Corinthians 6, Paul tells the Corinthians that Christians should never be mismated, that's the word, with unbelievers.

Unequally yoked together with unbelievers. It never works out. God has ordained that some people should be kept apart.

And his people are to be kept apart from the ungodly in terms of intermarriage. Now then, apparently, because of this kind of thing, the saline properties of Seth and his descendants became lost. Evil swamped the godly heritage which was found among Seth and his family.

And largely because of intermarrying with outright unbelievers. And because of this, the righteous indignation of God blazes forth and says, for this reason in particular, for other reasons in general, as we shall see in a moment, my spirit shall not always strive with man. I suggest to you that it is a point well worth looking into.

How often civilizations have come to an end because of sensual and sexual abnormalities. That is not my theme tonight. But it's a very challenging study.

And in an age such as this, perhaps it deserves a little more attention than it is getting, especially from historians. There then is the particular cause for God's judgment. There is a line of demarcation, a line of separation that man has forgotten about.

And the godly line of Seth has become intermingled with the ungodly of the day and of the age. Now there is a more general cause of divine displeasure. And you find that referred to in verse five.

I think that this first five in chapter six of Genesis is one of the most devastating verses in the Bible. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth. That in itself is sufficient.

But listen. And that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Now you grammarians, take a good long look at that and pause it when you have time.

I'm not going to do that tonight. But you will find it's a most remarkable utterance. First of all, there is reference here to the outward behavior, what men can see.

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth. It's something swelling, something coming right into the open. It's glazzy, it's open for everybody to see.

And if you want to go on as far as verse eleven, you will see that this is qualified by the statement that, to quote, the earth was filled with violence. Now we saw the beginnings of violence with Cain and Abel. Violence has not ended with Cain and Abel.

That was but the beginning. Sin always leads to violence. Our world is a violent world tonight simply because sin is reigning in the hearts and in the lives of men and of nations.

Do you have it here? You know, this book explains almost everything, doesn't it? The earth was filled with violence. The Lord saw the wickedness of man was great upon the earth. Now, I'm not attempting to expound that, simply to note it.

But now look, if that is the outward behavior of man, look at the underlying condition of the heart of man. That's what we have in the second part of verse five. Man's every imagination was exclusively evil.

Just look at it for one brief moment. This commentary upon human life is humbling. It betokens a deep disorder.

Now, it does not say that some of man's thoughts were evil sometimes. It doesn't even say that some of man's thoughts were evil all the time. What it says is that all man's thoughts were only evil and were only evil all the time.

Now, you can't go worse than that. You can't go beyond that. The whole imagination of the mind of man has become solidly and exclusively and totally evil.

Here says the inspired writer of the book of Genesis, here is what has happened to the fair creature of whom God said that he was very good. In whom, at his creation, the almighty God saw the reflection of his own moral and glorious being. Now, see him from the inside.

And everything he thinks about is tainted with evil. And, of course, this kind of judgment upon mankind is pursued by all the writers of Scripture. Some put it more cryptically than others.

We all know the words of Jeremiah when he says, The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. But Jeremiah is not the only one to say that. All the prophets say it in their own words.

Supremely does our Lord. Out of the heart of man, he says in Matthew 7, Out of the heart of man there proceeds evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, lusts, lasciviousness, an evil eye, and a whole host of other things. They all come, he says, from the heart of man.

Briefly, but clearly then, the lines are drawn that describe a world turned upside down. A condition of moral topsy-turviedom that must, sooner or later, call forth the judgment of the holy God. And the hour has arrived.

The state of the world. Now, the next thing I believe we see woven into these chapters is the sentence of God. The state of the world calls for the sentence of God.

Let me just quote two verses which take us to the heart of this. God's sentencing the world in judgment. I refer to verses 7 and 13 in chapter 6. So the Lord said, I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the ground.

For I am sorry that I have made them. I have determined to make an end to all flesh. For the earth is filled with violence through them.

Behold, I will destroy them from the face of the earth. Now, at last it has arrived. The announcement is solemn in its tones and in its content, because the creator says that he is going to destroy.

My good friend, you and I know full well that if the creator who created us says he is going to destroy us, he can destroy us. Now, this is a sentence which the circumstances evidently demanded. Take one supporting reference.

Only one out of the many things that we could refer to here. Take this very remarkable statement, to which we've already referred in part, in verse 3 of chapter 6. Then the Lord said, My spirit shall not always, in some of the versions says, abide in man. Others would say, strive with man.

For he is flesh. But his years shall be an hundred and twenty years. Now, the first thing to notice there is this.

You notice how God, by the Holy Spirit, you notice how God describes man at that present time. God says, he is become flesh. Now, God made the physical flesh, of course.

And there is nothing inherently wrong in the physical flesh, in the body as such. And that is not implied in what we have here. I believe that the term flesh is used here in a very similar way to the way it is used by the apostle Paul, when he speaks of the flesh lusting against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh.

In other words, something has happened in human life and man has become fundamentally body and nothing else. When God made man, he was a bipartite being. There was a spiritual and there was a physical part of him.

God made both. God made his body, God breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living soul. He was body and he was soul.

But God's commentary now is this. He has become and he is at this point in time, I will add the words, but I believe that they are called for here, nothing but flesh. I wonder what the verdict of God is upon our world tonight.

I hazard the guess that if God were to speak as loudly as he did at this time, he would say almost identically the same. In describing twentieth century man, he is become flesh. God describes man then as become flesh.

But now, notice, as a man that has become hardly anything else but flesh, God says, my spirit shall not abide within him or alternately continue to strive with him. Now this can appear to the near human spirit that God gave him. What we call the human spirit, the spiritual part of a man, his thinking, his powers of reason and his spiritual being generally.

And God may be saying in these words, look, judgment is coming. Man has made himself nothing but flesh, then very soon I'm going to bring the whole thing to an end. I did not make man to be flesh and flesh alone.

On the other hand, it may mean this. It may be a reference to the Holy Spirit. My Holy Spirit shall not always strive with man.

Man has begun to wrestle with me. And not only begun, he's continually wrestling. He's fighting against me.

He started in Eden and he's been doing it all the time. And my spirit will no longer wrestle with man. Now if that is the case, what God is saying is that he's going to withdraw his spirit from the earth and from among man.

Now if you notice that the statement ends with these remarkable words again. More remarkable words. There are so many remarkable utterances here.

But his days shall be 120 years. For which reason I believe that what God is saying here is this. Man has completely spoiled his spiritual life altogether.

The life of the soul entirely. He's become nothing but flesh. And because of that, I am bringing judgment upon him.

But even in bringing judgment upon him, I'll have mercy upon him. I'll give him 120 years to repent. Charles Adams Spurgeon once said that God runs to exercise mercy on the penitent.

He's always on the run where there is a sinner crying for mercy. But, says Spurgeon, when God is about his judgments, he walks with leaden feet. You know it's true.

He is slow to anger. And I want to underline that. God announces judgment.

He says it's coming. Nevertheless, he says, not for 120 years. I'll give this generation 120 years to hear the prophet that I have sent into the midst of them.

Preaching righteousness. And if at the end of that 120 years they have heard the sound of righteousness and the call to repentance and they have not obeyed, then, says the Lord, my spirit will no longer strive. Now, this is a sentence that must have been eminently just.

I'm not going to discuss this. I just want to make three statements and leave it there. I believe that this was just in the light of the social consequences of sin from Eden right down to this present time.

There are about 1600 years at least, at least I say, at least, telescoped together here in these first six chapters. Know the social evil, the spoiling not only of individual life but of family life and of social life that has come into existence in this space of time. The sin that is responsible for that deserves the judgment of the God who made man and made him for himself.

It is just in the light of the personal damage caused by sin in every creature of God. God made us to reflect his glory. God made us to worship him in service.

God made us to be like him and he made us to be for him. But sin not only mars the image but incapacitates man from being what God made him to be. It would be just in 120 years if, having been divinely warned of its coming, the rebellious race preferred its sin to obedience to God and treated the sovereign warnings of God with disdain and disgust.

And this is exactly what happened, as you know. Noah preached righteousness. The generation laughed and slid deeper and deeper into its sinful ways and its miseries.

Noah stood alone among the populace. He alone was upright and God-fearing. He built the ark and he preached to them.

They laughed into scarlet and the rain began to fall. The state of the world, the sentence of God, and the third strand here is the salvation of Noah. Now the stay of execution for 120 years then came to an end.

That was a measure of grace, of grace indeed, allowing creatures that have spoiled the whole of his creation, that have polluted the bloodstream of the race, allowing them 120 years in which to come to terms with reality. God's threatened judgment fell. It was a universal catastrophe with only one man, one head of a family, only one man of faith apparently, but he gathered his family with him and those for whom he was spiritually responsible came under his wing.

My dear friend, I hope there are those of us tonight who may be very young and have godly parents. I hope that we appreciate the value of having a priest in the whole. There is nothing here to say that any of Noah's children were godly like their father.

Not a word, but by faith Noah. And God had mercy upon his family apparently for the sake of this one man, the head of the family, the priest of the family, who had responsibility for the whole. Now what I want us to look at for the moment is this, is the salvation of Noah in and through the judgment that God sent, which was catastrophic in every sense apart from what involved Noah and his household.

Now if ever the words sovereign grace are applicable, I believe they're applicable here. God chooses. God is sovereign over creation.

It's all his. Every man has sinned. Noah has sinned.

His wife has sinned. His children have sinned. Everybody sinned.

Everybody deserves to die. But in sovereign grace, God says, I'll have mercy on this man and his family, particularly on this man and on his family apparently, because it is Noah's family. Now I want you to see the choice of God.

God's sovereign choice. God's gracious choice. God choosing.

There are many elements in this. Now I can't enlarge upon them. I don't mean to do that tonight.

The first, of course, is this. We read in verse eight of chapter six, Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. Mark those words.

Found favor. Found, literally, grace. Grace in the eyes of the Lord.

God looked upon Noah with sheer grace and had mercy upon him. Now, corresponding to that, if Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord, God found faith in the heart of Noah. In Hebrews chapter eleven and verse seven, we read, By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning events yet unseen, took heed and constructed an ark for the saving of his household.

Did you notice that? Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. God found faith in the heart of Noah. I'm not saying that God did not kindle that faith.

He made promises and He gave His Spirit and elicited that faith. But it was brought forth. There was a response in Noah's heart.

Noah believed God. Noah responded to Him. But still, as important, if not more important, God and Noah found fellowship together.

I read in verse nine, Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. We were thinking last Sunday evening of Enoch walking with God.

He was the first man. Here is the second. Noah likewise walked with God in the midst of this adulterous and wicked generation.

Now, God chose this man to be saved from the death of the wicked. And just imagine the grace of God. He comes to Noah and He announces exactly what He is going to do.

And He tells him of His intention to save him. And He shares it with Noah and tells Noah precisely what He is to do. And Noah, when he heard, obeyed.

Obedied because he believed. And that, we are told, was accounted to him for righteousness. He became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Noah was not saved because of his own graces, but because of God's grace. He believed God and he became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. In other words, Noah was justified by faith just as a man is justified today if he comes to Jesus Christ as Savior.

God chose him. And this is all involved in the choice of God. Grace chose him.

Look at verse 18 in chapter 6. Grace covenanted with him. I will establish my covenant with you, says God to Noah, and you shall come into the ark, you and your sons and your sons' wives with you. This was evidently uttered before the deluge.

Now, I know there is a covenant with Abram which follows the deluge, follows the flood. But this was written before and this was stated before. The terms are so evident, you see, so obvious.

I will establish my covenant with you and you shall come into the ark. In other words, says God, oh, how gracious. This is grace, you see.

Judgment is coming, He says. But I've chosen you and I'm covenanting with you that you shall come into the ark with me. Grace covenanted to save.

You know, this is the grace of God. It was so back in the days of Noah, it's the same tonight. Our grace is covenanted grace.

God goes on oath to save those who believe and trust and obey. Grace covenanted to save Noah. The next thing I want you to notice is that grace conceived the whole concept of the way of salvation.

God devised the means to save the object of His mercy. In verse fifteen of chapter six we have a passage that begins telling us how the ark was to be constructed. The only thing I want you to notice now is this, that the idea came from God.

And the blueprint was made out in His own hand. He communicated to Noah how Noah was to be saved. He gave him the details.

Just as later on God gave the law to Moses on Mount Sinai, and God told Moses how the tabernacle was to be built, all its dimensions and all its needs. So God comes to this man and He says, You build the ark, I'll give you the dimensions, I'll tell you what to do. And all the instructions were given.

This is grace. The grace of God is concerned with all the details necessary to your salvation. And then grace called Noah and his family into the ark ere the flood descended.

Mark, nothing is left to chance here. Grace does everything that's necessary. And the Lord said to Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark.

Verses one and seven in chapter seven. And Noah went in and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives into the ark. Oh, I hope we're getting the thread of it.

Grace is doing everything. Grace chose him, covenanted with him. Grace conceived the whole idea of the ark.

Grace called him into the ark. And now listen. Most precious of all to me, Grace closed him in the ark.

I read in the last part of verse sixteen in chapter seven, And the Lord shut him in. Oh, blessed be our God. Can you imagine dear Noah and his family going into this strange thing that they've never seen the like of it before? And here they're going in and the floods are beginning to come and Noah's closed the door behind him and tried to lock out the water.

Make himself safe. But I guess he might have had many qualms of conscience. There's no need for it now.

Because God locked him in. God locked him in. Now I don't know how this took place.

Don't ask me. It may well be that God manifested himself in human form as he often did in the Old Testament in order to assure his child, the object of his grace, that he's safe in this ark of his. I don't know.

But one thing I know. The writer of the book of Genesis wants us to get the message, God shut the door. Nothing was left to chance.

Grace locks him in the ark. Puts him there. Closed the ark behind him.

And lastly, but by no means least, the course of the ark and its covenant persons is a course that grace chose. Not only for the benefit of Noah and his family but of successive generations because it speaks symbolically even as it saves this first family. Salvation necessitated being within the divinely appointed ark.

There was no salvation outside of it. Now there are three things I want you to notice and I'm not enlarging upon them. First of all, this was a salvation out of something.

Secondly, it was a salvation through something. Thirdly, it was a salvation into something. First of all, it was a salvation out of.

Out of the throes of judgment and out of the corruption of a condemned world. See the picture. Use your imagination for a moment.

See Noah and his family going into this ark. And they're going into the ark and then the reign and the judgment of God is coming upon the earth and they're going to be conveyed out of the judgment of the holocaust. Out of the corruption of that old world.

And they're going to be conveyed secondly through judgment. Now this is a thought that we've got to stay with. I said they were saved from judgment.

Yes. And yet they were saved through judgment. Look at it.

Did Noah pass through the judgment or did he bypass the judgment? Well the answer is he did and he didn't. Both. He actually went through the judgment.

He went through the flood but the flood didn't touch him because he was in the ark. The point is this, you see. Noah was circumscribed by the ark.

He was enveloped. He was in the ark. On the outside the flood is coming down and coming up.

The waters are rising and the flood is coming down. And whatever storm there was it beats on the outside of the ark. Noah's passing through it.

He's going through the judgment and yet he's untouched by it. Unscathed by it. This became alive to me one day when I was talking to a Christian.

And I really didn't know that this person was a Christian but in doing some personal work I discovered that he was. And I was questioning him about certain things and his reply to one question was most unexpected. Quite correct of course but unexpected.

He was talking about the judgment of God coming upon the sinner. And I can't remember exactly the order or the sequence of reasoning but I asked him, but aren't you going to be judged? You say you're a Christian but what about your sin? I just wanted to know a little bit more about him. Know really whether he was trusting in the righteousness of Jesus Christ and in his blood.

And he turned around with this reply. Well yes, he said, but I have been judged. Now I thought I knew what he was getting at but I said, well, what do you mean? Oh, he says, I was judged.

My sins have been judged. You know, he said to me, he wasn't sure what I was at that point either. But he said, you know, he says, when Jesus Christ died on the cross of Calvary my sins were there in his body and all the judgment and the wrath of God fell upon him and he bore it and my sins were judged.

I was there and yet I wasn't. But my substitute was there. What a beautiful picture of it.

All the flood, all the fury came upon the ark but Noah was in the ark and he escaped it all. A man in Christ is a man who was judged on Calvary. In his substitute, Savior, in the one who volunteered to take his pledge, in the Son of God, our great High Priest, we were there and we were judged and yet we were not.

He took it all. How beautifully it is illustrated here. The flood came upon the ark.

Jesus, our ark, took the floods of God's fury and holy indignation. They were saved out of something, they were saved through judgment and they were saved into a new world. Now, I don't think this new world is a very good symbol of the new world into which we are served because there was so much sin, as we discover, that went into the new world.

And even Noah himself did some very stupid things in that new world into which he was served. No picture is complete. No symbol is equal to that which it symbolizes.

The new world into which Noah was redeemed is no patch to the new world into which we shall be redeemed ultimately. Now, my friends, these are the main threads in the passage before us tonight. The state of the world.

The sentence of God. The salvation of Noah. Now, as we close, a state of the world is still exactly in principle what it was here.

Let me say negatively, and I'm quite sure none of us will want to again say this, the world has not changed for the better morally and spiritually since Noah's day. Though we've advanced in many other respects, and thanks be to God for all that the ingenuity of man, aided by the providence of God, has placed at our disposal, but morally and spiritually we are in exactly the same condition as Noah's generation was. Around us there is violence and corruption, and in our hearts the evil of the imagination is such that we may say again about our age, as God said about this, it is only evil continually.

That is, evil is in every thought. It doesn't mean to say that every thought is as evil as it can be, but it means that no thought is as good as it ought to be. The world has not changed.

Has God changed? Now, that's a very important question in the light of what we said, because, you see, if God has not changed, then in principle you and I living here tonight may expect judgment too. And the Bible tells us that God has not changed. He is eternally and unchangeably the same, the Holy One and the Just and the Righteous, all full of mercy and compassion, and He still chooses men out of the floods of disaster.

And I want to close, my friend, by reminding you and reminding myself, for I certainly need to be reminded of it, that every one of us will give account of himself to God, and there is a day of judgment coming in which all men and nations will be gathered before God to give account of what we have done in the body, whether it be good or whether it be evil. You will remember that in principle our Lord Jesus Christ, early in His ministry, began to speak of judgment. The theme of judgment comes oftener in the teaching of our Lord in the New Testament than in any other writer or author.

He began it early, you know, at the end of the Sermon on the Mount. You remember these words. Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock, and the rain fell and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall because it had been founded on a rock.

And everyone who hears these words of mine and does them not will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand, and the rain fell and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house. Of course. Says Jesus, what you make of your life will be tested.

There is a judgment that is coming. I turn over to the second epistle of Peter and I read words like this. The day of the Lord will come like a thief.

Then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burnt up. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be, he says, in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire. When I come to the book of the Revelation, I read some words which are very challenging.

Do you remember these words? When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth and full of... the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The sky vanished like a scroll that is rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the generals and the rich and the strong and every one, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains, and the rocks fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne.

And from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath has come, and who can stand before it? My good friends, I would like to say in the words of another from this pulpit as I conclude tonight, flee from the wrath to come. Come into the ark. Come and your family.

Come as you are, for the invitation of the gospel is, come to... no, no, come into. And come now. Let him lock you in.

And though the day of judgment be terrible as it will, blessed rock of ages, we are hiding in thee. Will you come? Let us pray. Our God and our Father, illumined by thy spirit and the writings of thy word, we have been thinking of this most solemn of all events that is ordained in the future of civilization and of nations, the day when the dead shall be raised from their graves to give account before thee who didst make us, hast sustained us, forewarned us, and sent thy servants to preach righteousness in the whole world.

O God, solemnize us to the extent that we may flee from the wrath which is to come and find our way in penitence into that one and only ark of the heavenly covenant and eternal where we may hide ourselves until the fury of the gale is overpassed and he brings us at last to his home. O gather us all as the objects of thy grace. Thou who hast ordained that we should hear the invitation at this time, grant us thy spirit that we should heed and obey and respond for thy great glory and our salvation.

Amen.

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