

(Genesis) 16 - the Great Flood and the Saving Ark

by S. Lewis Johnson

The Great Flood and the Saving Ark demonstrate God's judgment and salvation, and the importance of obedience to God's commands.

Duration: 51:13

Scripture: Genesis 7:1

Topics: "Great Flood", "Faith and Obedience", "Divine Judgment and Salvation"

Description

S. Lewis Johnson emphasizes the significance of the Great Flood and the Saving Ark in Genesis 7, illustrating Noah's unique righteousness and obedience to God's command. He highlights that Noah's faith and actions serve as a model for believers, showcasing the importance of responding to God's Word amidst ridicule and skepticism. The sermon draws parallels between the flood as a historical event and the salvation offered through Jesus Christ, underscoring the necessity of faith and obedience in the face of divine judgment. Johnson also discusses the implications of the flood for understanding God's sovereignty and grace in salvation, urging listeners to trust in the promises of God.

Transcript

The scripture reading is found in Genesis chapter 7. Genesis chapter 7, and we'll be reading the entire chapter. Then the Lord said to Noah, End of the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before me in this time. It is to be noted that for you alone is designed to represent the fact that that second U is singular.

The opening U is singular, but included with it is all the household. And so there is evidently some special stress to be placed upon the fact that it is Noah alone who is seen to be righteous. And so the translators have added the word alone in order to stress the fact that it is Noah who stands for his family.

More will be said about that later. You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female, and of the animals that are not clean, two, a male and his female. Evidently there were to be three pairs of the clean animals with one extra.

And the extra is in order that a sacrifice may be made as chapter eight, verse 20 suggests. And further that there may be a larger number of the clean animals than the unclean in the world that was to come.

Also of the birds of the sky by sevens, male and female to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth.

For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth 40 days and 40 nights. And I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made. And Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him.

Now Noah was 600 years old when the flood of water came upon the earth. Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood. Of clean animals and animals that are not clean and birds and everything that creeps on the ground.

There went into the ark to Noah by twos, male and female as God had commanded Noah. And it came about after the seven days that the water of the flood came upon the earth. In the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month on the 17th day of the month, on the same day, all the fountains of the great deep burst open and the floodgates of the sky were opened.

And the rain fell upon the earth for 40 days and 40 nights. On the very same day, Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark. They and every beast after its kind and all the cattle after their kind and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind and every bird after its kind, all sorts of birds.

It is rather striking as you read through this account of the flood to notice the solemnity with which these repetitions are given. And many have commented upon it and it is perhaps true that the reason for this is that the account is designed to create in us the impression that it is something like an epic poem. In other words, the solemnity is something that the Holy Spirit designs that we catch as we read it.

Verse 15. So they went into the ark to Noah by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life. That is an expression that pertains to the animals, the spirit of life.

And you can see from this that there is a very definite connection between the animal world and the human world. And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him, and the Lord closed it behind him. Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted up the ark so that it rose above the earth.

And the water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. And the water prevailed more and more upon the earth so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered. Notice the stress upon the alls.

All the high mountains, which were under all the heavens literally, were covered. The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered. And all flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth.

And all mankind, something like every man or all man, of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life. This expression, nishmeth ruach chayim, is an expression that probably distinguishes human beings from other beings that have breath of life. But there is a debate about that.

That happens to be my opinion, and there are some strong oppositions to it, and so I wouldn't want to force it upon you. But I do think that that probably refers to human beings, in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life. Thus he blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth.

And only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. And the water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days. May God bless this reading of his word.

Our subject for today in the exposition of the word is The Great Flood and the Saving Ark. The Great Flood is of immense importance to biblical Christianity. If it is historical, the assumptions of uniformitarianism are shattered.

It is something like this that Peter speaks about in his second epistle, in the third chapter, when he warns that there are coming in the last days scoffers. He writes, Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 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. 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, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

But the present heavens and earth, by his word, are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. If the Flood is historical, as the Apostle Peter evidently believes that it is, then the assumptions of uniformitarian philosophies are shattered. If the Flood is historical, the unwelcome doctrine of divine retribution does exist.

Judgment is to come, and as Peter went on to say in verse 7, by that same word, there shall come a fire, and the heavens and the earth shall be destroyed. And furthermore, if the Flood is historical, then we have, as Peter also believes, writing of this in his first epistle as well, that salvation finds a beautiful illustration and also a pledge of itself. In the 8th and 9th verses of that same third chapter of 2 Peter, which I read, the Apostle goes on and says, But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you. Now he has just spoken of those who are beloved, so he's writing about believers. He says, The Lord is patient toward you, not wishing for any, that is, any of you, believers, to perish, but for all, that is, all of you who shall believe to come to repentance.

And so the reason for the delay down through the years is that God is gathering his elect body into one company. And near the end of this chapter he adds, And regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation, just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you. Evidently then Peter thought that the period of time which would elapse in the present day was the time when God would be gathering his elect together.

And inasmuch as it has stretched over this lengthy period of time, we should not think that God shall not intervene again. But he has other purposes in the meanwhile, for which I for one am deeply grateful. There are certain scientific questions that arise in the section, Was the Flood Universal? How did God bring it off? And we'll try to say a word or two about them, but not to answer those questions, I cannot answer them.

Perhaps there are some who can. Remember the situation. God had spoken indirectly in Methuselah's name.

When Enoch had his son and called him Methuselah, which we said meant something like, When he is come, it shall be sent. Or when he is dead, it shall be sent. So that God had spoken indirectly in grandfather Methuselah's name.

And for all of these years, 969 years, Oh, when he is dead, it shall be sent, had gone around. There probably had been a great deal of speculation about the real meaning of the name of Methuselah. But finally, 120 years before this, God had spoken directly to Noah.

And we read in Genesis chapter 6, verse 3, My spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh. Nevertheless, his days shall be 120 years. And he had gone, in the further context, he had continued by enjoining upon Noah that he build an ark.

And so now for 120 years, Noah and his family have been constructing this giant vessel. Grandfather Methuselah is on his deathbed. Noah is now 600 years old, and his grandfather is still living.

But his grandfather is on his deathbed. Oh, when he is dead, it shall be sent, is about to die. And so after a century of silence, God speaks again.

And we read in Genesis chapter 7, verse 1, Then the Lord said to Noah, Enter the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before me at this time. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews thinks a great deal of the faith of Noah, because he is included in the Westminster Abbey of the Faithful. By faith, Noah, having been warned of God, prepared an ark for the saving of his house.

Well, the ark for the saving of his house has now been completed, and the time has come to enter it. The Authorized Version opens the seventh chapter by saying, Then the Lord said to Noah, Come into the ark, as if it was an invitation from God to come join him in the ark. The idea lying back of it, being that God is within the ark himself, and that therefore they come to join him.

Unfortunately, while the idea is good, and perhaps the theology is true, the verb go, which is used here, is a word that is rather neutral in its connotation. It means to come, but it also means to go, or enter. And most translators have given it that latter sense here, and so we read in the New American Standard Bible, The Lord said to Noah, Enter the ark.

Now we know, of course, that God is fulfilling his promises. He has already said in the eighteenth verse of chapter six, But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall enter the ark. So we do not have any question about the divine initiative in the preparation of the ark, and the divine initiative in Noah and his family entering the ark.

But nevertheless, it's probably pushing it a little too much to say that he said, Come into the ark, because that is where I am. Incidentally, one of the purposes of the flood is to preserve offspring alive on the face of all the earth. And that purpose would be irrelevant if the flood was not universal.

Another commentator has made a great deal over the fact that God said, Enter, and that therefore Noah and his family were faced with a choice. And he goes on to speak rather strongly about the fact that men have free choices, and God also elects in grace, and affirms that there are these two doctrines, or two doctrines, that we may hold, though we cannot fully understand them. Now, I for one do believe that man has free agency.

That is, the decisions that he makes, he feels, are his own decisions. He does not feel any divine compulsion to make this decision. He's not dragged screaming into the kingdom of God.

But from other passages in the Word of God, it is evident that it is God who works upon our wills to will toward him. Dr. Barnash used to like to say, We do not make a decision before God with our wills until God has jiggled our willer. Now, we do make that decision.

It is our decision. We should never say that because we believe that God is sovereign in his salvation that men do not make a decision. They do.

But the decision is one that is prompted by God, and it does not arise sovereignly in the heart of man. But the commentator wanted to make a great deal over that, and he did. Now, you do not ordinarily get good, sound theology in Reader's Digest.

But occasionally, even there, some truth may slip in. And in the current issue of Reader's Digest, on the quotable quotes page, there is an interesting statement concerning free will. Now, I'm sure the author of this did not have any meaning like I'm going to make out of it, but you will notice that he has understood what is involved in free will.

Because if it is true that we do have free will, then we do not have God sovereign in grace. We have man sovereign in the way of salvation, for it is to be traced to him the decision that we make. This is the quote, free will is God's gift of a do-it-yourself kit.

Let me read it again. Free will is God's gift of a do-it-yourself kit. It's interesting to me that this man, unspiritual, at least it's not in the context of anything spiritual, has understood, however, that free will is a doctrine that means that we do it.

So the scriptures speak strongly against free will. You cannot believe in grace and believe in free will unless you are inconsistent. Now, of course, there are many people who affirm free will and at the same time affirm grace.

But as Professor Gordon Clark says, it's something like a charley horse between their ears when they do that. They're inconsistent, but I would not want to deny they're strong affirmations of the grace of God, and so I welcome those that believe in grace but have not yet come to see that free will is not in harmony with it. We are Christians together if they believe in grace, and I hope that through the process of time some sanctifying influences may bring them to the doctrine of God saving us from beginning to the end.

So the entrance into the ark is an invitation of the Lord or a command from the Lord, and Noah responds. He gives some reasons, incidentally, why Noah should come into the ark. He says, first of all, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before me at this time.

Now, I take this to be a reference to forensic justification. Noah, incidentally, is the covenant head of his family group. That's the reason why we have for you, singular in the Hebrew text, I have seen to be righteous before me at this time.

All of you enter in because I have seen Noah, singular, Noah himself righteous before me at this time. Because the covenant is established with the covenant head, and thus we have an illustration of our great covenant head, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose activity is the basis by which we escape the judgment that is to come. Now, he says he has seen him righteous.

I take this, though there is some question about it among the students of Genesis, I take it to be a forensic statement. That is, Noah was not inherently righteous. When the ark has passed through the flood and come out on the other side, we'll see Noah in a sad state ultimately.

So it is evident he is not a person who is inherently righteous, but his standing before God is the standing of a righteous person in grace. As we read in verse 9 of chapter 6, these are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time.

Noah walked with God. And again, the righteousness that Noah possessed is a forensic, a legal, a standing before God by which he is acceptable through the sovereign grace of God. William Cunningham used to say, the righteousness of God is that righteousness which God's righteousness requires him to require.

And that's what Noah possessed. He possessed a standing before God that was acceptable to God, perfect righteousness. For God is not satisfied with 95 percent perfection or 98 percent perfection.

He demands righteousness, the righteousness of God. But he supplies it through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ to those who receive it through the instrumentality of faith. Noah then is a righteous man and he is invited into the ark because he has been justified by grace through faith in the promises of God.

Now, we also read of another reason. Verse 4, for after seven more days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights. Incidentally, it would be impossible for it to rain forty days and forty nights in our present world everywhere in the world.

That would be scientifically impossible, which suggests that the world before the flood was quite a bit different physically from our world today. Now, he gives Noah some time. We read, for after seven more days I will send rain on the earth.

And so seven days are given in grace. It's almost like a week of grace before the flood is to come. These are perhaps for last minute details and for last minute admonitions, for Noah was a preacher of righteousness and consequently he was no doubt extremely fervent in this last week in his warning to his generation.

Now, Noah's conformity to this is described in very significant ways. Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him. In other words, the supreme standard for Noah was not what people thought, not even what the theologians of his day thought, but rather, what does God say? And so Noah did as the Lord had commanded him.

And we read in verse nine, there went into the ark to Noah by twos, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. Now, this was not easy for Noah to apply because remember, not only was the ark a strange vessel to construct in a world which may never have even known rain we do not have any indication of rain before this. It was constructed on dry land.

It was constructed evidently many miles from a sea. We do not have any record of any rivers nearby in which it might have floated. And not only that, he, as people asked him what he was doing and he said he was building a boat in order to escape from the flood of waters.

They said, well, why is it so large? He said, well, I want the animals in too. So I'm sure that there must have been some unusual things said about that queer old man, 600 years old, and certainly he has gone

round the bend. Strange.

And furthermore, he's building this job vessel and for the animals as well, wasting all of that money when he could have put it in General Motors and be rich by now. So you can just imagine the kind of ridicule that might have been something that Noah had to contend with. So it wasn't easy for Noah to obey.

But I want you to notice carefully that the thing that Noah was responsive to was one simple thing, but oh how important it is for you and for me. It was to the Word of God that Noah was responsive. That cannot be overemphasized.

I could never, if I had the tongue of a Spurgeon, I could never make clear to you the significance of obedience of the Word of God. Now the beginning of the flood is described in verses 10 through 12. Moses writes, and it came about after seven days of grace were over that the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

In the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, can you not see how careful the scriptural writer is in dating the flood? You can see from this that he did not regard this as a myth, as a religious myth. He did not think of this as just a story designed to communicate spiritual truth. But even these little temporal or these little chronological details seem important to him.

It's a communication from him of the significance of this event in the biblical history. So about 1655 years after the creation, according to the chronology set forth in the Bible strictly, there came the flood. Careful, solemn dating of this event.

The phenomena are described in verses 11 and 12. When we read, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open and the floodgates of the sky were opened and the rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights. I wish it were possible to tell you how God pulled it off, but I cannot.

I've often thought if I had to go back to university, I would take another major. When I went through university, college, I majored in the classics. I took eight years of Latin.

I'm not sorry for that. I took classical Greek long before I was saved, because when I was saved, I was able to read the New Testament immediately in Greek. And when I came to seminary, I was able to sit back and relax while the other fellows were trying to learn Greek.

I already knew it. So I spent my time learning Hebrew, which I had not taken. Now, if I had to do it over again, I think I would like to have another major in the sciences, because it would be of tremendous benefit in the exposition of the Word of God, I do believe.

But I would still want a major in the classics, too. So I would be in a quandary. I guess I would still be going to school.

But I wish I could explain to you exactly what happened. It seems to me, however, that the language of the book of Genesis is written very simply, perhaps for the reason that it might be difficult to comprehend scientifically. And so we simply read that the fountains of the great deep burst open and the floodgates of the sky were opened.

Now, I said a worldwide flood lasting 40 days would be quite impossible under present atmospheric conditions. And so it's clear that there have been some changes since the days of the flood. And after the

flood, the world was never the same again.

We do know from the reading of the book of Genesis that it is in harmony with it to say that the antediluvian hydrologic cycle was quite different from that that we have today. It was controlled, it seems, by the two great reservoirs of water, resulting from the primeval separation described in Genesis chapter 1, where we read in verse 2, And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep. And the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

And then in verse 6, God said, Let there be an expanse, or a firmament, in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters. And God made the expanse and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse. And so the world of that time had waters above and waters below, and Noah and others lived in the world between.

It has been even suggested that it was something like a giant greenhouse, and so there were not the extremes of temperature that we have today. And it's, of course, entirely possible that there were some types of subterranean waters which came to be disturbed at this particular time by God so that they burst forth from below, and then affecting the atmospheric heavens above caused them to burst. And so we have tremendous water from above and tremendous forces of water from below, and that would account for the flood.

Well it's an interesting thing, and I suggest if you have a chance that you read some of the commentators who have sought to describe it in great detail. One of the commentators whose book I've been reading through, the book of Genesis this time, says it would be helpful to keep in mind Occam's Razor. The simplest hypothesis which explains all the data is the most likely to be correct.

He's writing this against a number of different kinds of suppositions, such as the Earth's axis was tilted, the Earth was bombarded by asteroids or meteorites, the Earth's crust slipped or nuclear explosions detonated by extraterrestrial space travelers. These are some of the theories that have been suggested. Gravitational and electromagnetic forces, etc.

But he goes on to say it would be helpful to keep in mind Occam's Razor. The simplest hypothesis which explains all the data is the most likely to be correct. And second, the principle of least action.

Nature normally operates in such a way as to expend the minimum effort to accomplish a given result. And the theological principle of the economy of miracles. God has in his omnipotence and omniscience created a universe of high efficiency of operation and will not interfere in this operation supernaturally unless the natural principles are incapable of accomplishing his purpose in a specific situation.

So it would be wise for us to bear these things in mind in attempting to explain the cause and results of the Great Flood. It is interesting too that if this is the explanation that we have waters above and waters below and there is a disturbance such that these waters from up below and above create the Great Flood, that would account for a puzzle that scientists have reckoned with for some time and that is the sudden death of large numbers of great mammoths and other animals found embedded in ice. They have discovered by the thousands, been discovered by the thousands and some estimate even the millions in the Arctic regions.

Evidently at one time the area was tropical but it was suddenly plunged into sub-freezing temperatures of such intensity that animals immediately perished frozen in a quick deep freeze, as someone has said, that

preserved them through the centuries since. They were discovered with bits of grass still in their mouths, unchewed. So sudden was their death.

Well we do know, even if we do not understand the how and the why, that Noor and his family entered the Ark and for forty days and forty nights were in the Ark in the midst of the flood. When Noor sailed the waters blew he had his troubles, same as you. For forty days he drove the Ark and could not find a place to park.

Someone has said, what instruction did Noor give his sons about fishing from off the Ark? And others have suggested, go easy on the bait boys, we have only two worms. I just wanted to see that you were still awake and I noticed that some of you are. The description of the entrance of Noor into the Ark is given us in verse thirteen through verse sixteen.

And we read that they entered with their family and all of the beasts and cattle and the creeping things and all of the birds. They entered incidentally, it says, on the last day, verse thirteen, on the very same day that the flood came. That is, the week of grace was just over and it is at that very point that they enter in.

Isn't it striking? They waited until the last day and then calmly entered as if they were not fearful of the fact that they might miss the Ark, nor were they presumptuous and stayed outside until they were forced in. But they calmly went in because there is evidence that there is trust in the Word of God. So they did not fearfully enter in early nor presumptuously delay.

This may be a lesson for those who like to arrive for airplanes two hours before the plane leaves, but I won't make any application to that. The activity of God is the important thing. And look again at verse sixteen, And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commended him, and the Lord closed it behind him.

The Lord shut the door. The Lord sealed it. I do not know any figures to describe this.

When you enter one of our giant jets, it is the duty of the steward or the stewardess is to secure the door from the inside. And it is almost as if God is responsible for the securing of the door from the inside. And you will notice though that it is done without any help from nor.

It is God who closed the door behind nor. Now I think that this is designed to stress the fact that it is the work of God by which we are safe and secure in our ark, the Lord Jesus Christ. Isn't it interesting too that once nor entered into the ark and once God secured the door, by the way there was only one way into the ark and that was through that one door, suggestive of the one door to salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

But once they were in that ark, the whole world became dead to nor and to his family. It was as if that transformation of entrance into the ark severed his connection with the world that then was. Now that too is analogous to what happens when a person believes in the Lord Jesus Christ because there is a severance between the believer who lives in the new world, a citizen now of heaven, and the old world in which he still finds himself physically.

The waters of judgment come for forty days and forty nights, but the waters which were judgment upon the world are the means for the deliverance of nor and his family and the inhabitants of the ark because the waters that slay the others are the waters that buoy the ark up and preserve the ark through that tremendous cataclysm as the New Testament describes it. Now I do think that there is an important point

that we shouldn't pass by and I'll just mention it because we cannot speak in detail about it, but Peter in 1 Peter chapter 3 compares the flood of Genesis chapter 6 through 8 with the baptism of a believer in the new age. He says that baptism is a like figure.

In other words, the first great baptism is the flood of Noah and the salvation of the eight souls who were preserved through that flood, but that is like baptism which figuratively is the means of the salvation of the saints of God in this age. Now he goes on to stress that it is not the water of baptism that saves. He said it is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh.

He goes on to say it's through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and he says that baptism saves us as an earthly counterpart of a heavenly reality, which is the meaning of the Greek word *antitupos* that is used there, but he makes the analogy between the salvation of those who were in the ark and those who have come to be in the true ark, our Lord Jesus Christ, and have manifested that by their water baptism. So the figure of water baptism is a figure suggestive of the deliverance that Noah and the inhabitants of the ark experienced in the great flood. Peter saw or he evidently thought rather deeply about the flood.

Now the remaining verses of chapter seven described the prevailing of the flood. The nature and historicity of the flood are set forth here in some detail. The question of the extent of the flood has occupied the attention of biblical interpreters.

Some saying the language is phenomenal. In other words, we're not to take it literally, but when the flood is spoken of as being somewhat universal, we're to take this as phenomenal language, human language. It seemed as if it were universal to them, but it was not.

Probably widespread, but not universal. The language of the accounts does seem, however, to favor universality. About 30 times, someone has estimated, universal terms are used.

I didn't bother to count them. There are many. Forty days of rain, night and day, would have produced a universal flood.

Further, if you wanted to describe a universal flood, how could you describe it in other ways than is found right here in Genesis six through eight? It would be difficult to find any better language other than to say in a footnote, I am not speaking phenomenally, but I'm speaking literally. So it's difficult to see how we can get around this universal sounding language. Migration might have been better if the flood was not a universal flood.

The depth of the water favors it, because we have reference to the waters covering the mountains up to 20 feet. And we know that the ark ultimately rested on Mount Ararat, which is a mountain of 17,000 feet in altitude. So it would seem from that, that we have universality.

In addition, God promised that he would not send another flood. Do we mean another local flood? If so, there have been local floods. Do we mean a flood that's just a little more than local, but not universal? Well, that would be difficult to find or define.

So I think in the light of these things, plus the teaching of the New Testament, and Peter says the world that then was perished, we are probably justified in thinking of this as a universal flood. A local flood lasting for 150 days, two and a half months before the mountaintops appeared, that would be quite a local flood. Let me say just a couple of things in conclusion.

The New Testament use of this event is rather striking, because in the New Testament it is a picture of the divine severity. In the passage that I read from you from 2 Peter, it is evident that Peter believed that God does interfere in the affairs of men, and he does judge. And so divine severity is set forth by the flood.

The divine salvation is also set forth. The same ark that brought severity for the world of Noah brought safety for those who were in the ark. And Peter, I'm sure, would make the application in detail by saying the same ark, the Lord Jesus Christ, will be the means of safety for those who are in him when the great judgments of God are poured out upon the ark, upon the world.

And those who are not in the ark will not be saved. Are you in the ark? Is your position that of being in Christ? Have you come to trust in his merits and his merits only? And then I'd like to close by just stressing for a moment or two something I think is extremely important. Did you notice that there is in this account the complete absence of any other warning to Noah's day than the word of God? That is all.

The word of God and the construction of this giant vessel by this strange, queer, odd old man. That's all. Noah was not able to say, now look, he is going to bring a flood and there is going to be a giant outpouring of water.

Just a minute, I'll ask him to have a few lightning flashes across the sky so you'll believe it. Or a few claps of thunder. So far as we know, everything continued as it was until the flood came.

The question with the men of Noah's day was simply this, response to the word of God. That's all. The word of God.

The word that came from God through God's prophet Noah. So the issue is the word of God. Now that is always the issue in the Bible.

We are inclined to think that there are other kinds of issues, but the issue is always the word of God. Listen to Luke chapter 16. But he said, No, father Abraham, if some of you goes to them from the dead, they will repent.

But he said to him, If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead. Too many people think that they are not going to respond to the word of God until they've had a second heart attack. But then it's often too late.

The issue is the word of God right at the moment. And the word of God has given us a full revelation of the judgment that is to come. It is coming.

Judgments to be poured out upon the earth, and furthermore, ultimately, there is the lake of fire. There is the great white throne judgment before which the lost shall have to appear. It's all set forth in the word of God.

Do not ask for any indications or signs of it. It has already been written fully and plainly in God's word. That's the issue.

Men ridicule the Bible just as they ridicule Noah. But Noah had the last word. The Bible has the last word.

Friday night I was coming home from Toronto. The airport was crowded, crowded with people trying to get out of Canada, I think. But anyway, they were there.

I couldn't even get in the waiting room. I arrived so early. Members of my family have often accused me of waiting until the last moment.

I arrived early and I don't see any advantage. I had to wait in the corridors outside. They were so crowded.

So I sat down over on part of the heating system, which fortunately was not working. And as I looked down the corridor, here comes a young man about twenty-five years of age and he's swaying back and forth like he was three sheets to the wind. And he was.

And he comes down and there are people sitting everywhere and by whom do you think he should sit? So he sat by me. He looked at me and we began to talk and he said, my wife is going to kill me. My wife is going to kill me.

I'm supposed to be home in Akron already and she's going to kill me. I said, have you called her? He said, yes, I called her and she said she would meet me and that's all she said. She's going to kill me.

And he looked at me and he said, how old are you? I said, I'm sixty-three. He said, I thought you were forty-five. He was a good fellow.

And he said, how old do you think I am? I said, twenty-seven. He said, I'm only twenty-two. He said, I've been drinking.

I said, you didn't have to tell me that. So we engaged in conversation and he kept saying, my wife is going to kill me. She's going to kill me.

Well finally when our plane was called and we could at least go in and sit in the waiting room, we walked and he motioned to me, come sit with me. So I went in and sat with him and then we inevitably came to the discussion of spiritual things. He said, by the way, what do you do? And I said, I'm a preacher.

So that launched us into an interesting discussion. He said, I don't believe anything. You're a preacher.

And he laughed out loud and he was getting just a little loud and so everybody in the waiting room began to listen because this was an interesting conversation. And so I launched into the preaching of the gospel with him, reminding him that we were all sinners and that Christ died for sinners. He said, do you believe the Bible? I said, yes, I believe the Bible.

Oh, nobody believes the Bible now. And then as I noticed, everybody was quieting down and it was quite an interest in what was going on while we went on for a lengthy period of time. And I noticed, I took his ticket to look to see where he was going to sit and where I was going to sit because I did not honestly want to sit all the way to Chicago with him.

So I saw that he was in seat 15 something and I was in seat eight or nine or three, I believe it was. And so we weren't going to sit together, but we carried on quite a conversation and it was total ridicule of the word of God. And so finally I had to go on in and he went in before me and I noticed when I came by where the stewardesses usually stand and they had him in conversation.

Evidently they had picked him out of the crowd and then I waited to watch him come in and he never came in. I had sympathized with his wife from the first time I saw him. When he said, she's going to kill me, I thought, well that is really too good for you.

Well, I know that he did not ride on that plane. He did not get in. They picked him out and so far as I know he's still in Toronto and his wife is thinking up even worse things about him now.

But the important thing that I want to bring home to you is the ridicule of the word of God in the final analysis, God will have the last word. It is the word with whom we have to do. May God through the Holy Spirit bring home to us the truthfulness of the word of God and of the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

He has died for sinners. May God bring home to us the knowledge of our sin and may we flee to salvation through our ark, the Lord Jesus. Let's stand for the benediction.

Father, we are so grateful to thee for the warnings and admonitions that we receive from the word of God and also for the indications of divine sovereign grace. How wonderful it is to have had the scales removed from our eyes by the grace of God so that we see Christ as the atoning sacrifice for sinners. Oh God, if there are some in this audience who have mocked and ridiculed the scriptures, even if only in their hearts, by thy grace turn them to him who is able to save to the uttermost through the blood of the cross.

Now may grace, mercy and peace go with us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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