

# God and Noah and the Flood

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[ 0 : 00 ] Father, some of us here this morning need a miracle. Some of us, Father, need several miracles. And Father, we ask that you help us to believe that you hear our prayers, that often you say no, sometimes you say not yet, but sometimes you say yes, and that you can hear and answer our prayers.

For Father, we know that every one of us, whether we need a miracle today or not, there will be times in our life where we do need you to act. So, Father, we ask that you grant us a humble dependence upon you in prayer and a humble dependence to trust your word, both your warnings and your promises.

Father, may your Holy Spirit do a mighty work within us this morning, and we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. Amen. So, this is sort of, I felt really bad after my sermon last week, and I'm not saying that so you can all give me comfortable words afterwards.

I'm not saying that at all. You know, guys like myself who get up and have to open the word, and then, you know, there's different things you have to deal with afterwards. And as I was preaching last week and as I finished, I didn't think I'd done a very good job.

And, you know, I think the points were good, but I think I had too many, and I didn't quite make it clear why some of the points that I had to make were actually really important points.

[ 1 : 29 ] So, one of the things you can do for me every week is just pray. There's an old saying that mist in the pulpit creates fog in the pews.

Mist in the pulpit creates fog in the pews. So, if you could just pray not only for me, but for every one of your small groups for the Sunday school, that we will be mist-free zones, and that God would do a mighty work beyond what we humanly are capable of.

That would be a great benefit for me and for others. So, we're going to look, I'm going to go back and look at a few of those other things connected to the flood. It's a very, very complicated, it's not a complicated story.

It's complicated for a lot of us nowadays, just to be honest. It's complicated for a lot of people, and even as I'm going to speak about the flood again, and we're going to talk about it again next week, because that's where we are, going through Genesis 1 to 11, some of you are sitting back thinking to themselves, is George going to show himself to be one of those kooky fundamentalists?

And others of you are going, is George going to show himself to want to be one of those liberals who dances around the scriptures? Well, before we get to that, you know, the flood story raises all sorts of other problems.

[ 2 : 48 ] I'm going to get to that, as to whether the flood happened and how we're to hear this part of the Bible. But, you know, there's another big part of this whole thing about the story. In the story of the flood, God destroys all the animals, everything that has the breath of life.

So, is God crazy and bloodthirsty? Is he crazy and bloodthirsty? So, let's look.

We're going to go back to chapter 6, verse 1. We're going to go through some of these things fairly quickly. Just to try to bring into a context what the Bible is saying about the flood and why it's there in the Bible.

So, if you have your Bibles, go to chapter 6, verse 1. And so, what's happened in the Bible? God has created all things out of nothing. Then there's sort of a, he teaches us different things through the first creation story.

The second creation story, we have the fall of Adam and Eve wanting to be like God. We have Adam and we have Cain and Abel and murder.

[ 3 : 46 ] We have the entrance of polygamy. We have the genealogy. And now we get to this. And here's how it goes. When man, meaning here the human race, began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive and they took as their wives any they chose.

Now, just pause here. Somebody shared this with me that when he first read this, he just thought this is crazy. Why on earth would God get mad at people for men for finding women attractive? One of the things which is going on in the Bible here is that because there's some complexities in the Hebrew, the translators here have chosen just to translate this part quite literally. And in the rest of the Bible, generally speaking, when sons of God are mentioned, it's referring to angels as a general rule in the Old Testament.

But what on earth is going on here? Like, is God just saying, all you Christian men don't find women attractive? And if you don't find women attractive, then you're going to please me because we're going to get right into everything being destroyed.

[ 4 : 54 ] So what's going on here? Well, what we have to do, the Bible actually usually interprets itself. It's just really a matter of trying to read very carefully and also using your imagination and your curiosity, but to read carefully.

And so this whole little story here of the end of the world that was before the flood, the key verse is verse 5. So you go down to verse 5, and it's a very, very striking verse.

It's a very important verse to meditate upon. And here's what it says. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

So whatever we're going to think about when trying to understand the sons of God text, the Nephilim, all of the other things, even the whole story of the flood, and even the story of the judgment, this verse is what helps us to understand, oh, okay, we should interpret this earlier thing this way, and these other things this way.

And just before we go anything further, there's a big problem we often have with the word the heart. Because, well, actually, Andrew, could you show me the Care Bears picture, please?

[ 6 : 22 ] I like to make sure I get the best of Latin scholarship and Greek scholarship to try to illustrate things. So some of you of a certain generation and parents of kids of a certain generation, this is the Care Bears.

And, you know, one of the things when they have to deal with no heart is all their positive emotions flow out of their chest. And because it's just all about emotions and positive emotions.

And so for a lot of Christians today, when we hear the word heart, we think of feelings. So here's the thing. If you could put up the next image. Okay, that's a bit of a clue.

How many people recognize what this is a picture of? Okay, this is a picture of the captain's seat in the Starship Enterprise. This is the command center of everything that goes on.

So when you hear the word, or when you see the word heart in the Bible, don't think of Care Bears. Think of where Captain Kirk sits. Because every human being has a command center.

[ 7 : 32 ] Every human being has a command center. And from the command center, the things that we believe to be true, how the way our mind works, the emotions that we feel, our plans, our desires, everything emerges from a command center.

They all go back to one command center. And so generally speaking, in fact, I would say 99.9% of the time, there's going to be little nuances, but it's always, whenever you see the word heart in the Bible, think where does Captain Kirk sit?

And think of the fact that underneath who you are, at the very center of who you are, you have a command center. And then you can ask yourself, and see, one of the things about the Bible is the Bible is regularly asking us to figure out who we are at that command center of our lives.

And what, at the command center of our lives, we're thinking, believing, planning, feeling, emoting. So that's the thing. So look at verse 5 again. In light of this, the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart, everything that went on in the command center of his heart, was only evil continually.

So that is how the world before the flood is described.

[ 9 : 03 ] If you could put up the first point, Andrew, some of you, if you've never read The Lord of the Rings, you've never seen the movies, you won't understand this. But what the Bible is describing in a very, very few deft strokes, you know, have you seen some artists who can just use

five lines that they just do like this?

And you can see a horse running or a bird flying or the face of a person that you recognize. And that's what the Bible is doing in the Hebrew in these first things here.

They're just drawing a few lines. But what it's trying to describe is something akin to Mordor. The earth has become Mordor. Mordor has won.

So mindful of that, let's look up again at verse 1 and 2, okay? Look up again at verse 1 and 2. When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, these demons saw that the daughters of men were attractive and they took them as their wives, any that they chose. And then just sort of skip down to verse 4. The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward when the sons of God came into the daughters of man and they bore children to them. [10:17] They were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, that some great evil of demonic presence on the earth, which is more, just think of Mordor.

Some great rupture had happened that human beings also desired. And as you go back, and we're going to look at it in a moment when we read it, it's a description, as it goes on, of not only all of the thoughts are evil, but that ruination is upon the earth, and violence is upon the earth, and that the only way that you can understand human beings and what's going on in the creation order, and even we're thrilling to animals, is destruction and ruination and violence and evil and fell forces. Mordor. So, you see, right off the bat, if you're wondering, is God being really mean to destroy the earth?

If you understand that it's painting something like Mordor, all of a sudden you realize, maybe God isn't going to be mean. But you know what? This whole text is going to show time and time and time again God's mercy.

Look at verse 3 of chapter 6. Then the Lord said, My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh. His day shall be 120 years.

[11:43] Now, two things. This isn't saying that God's Holy Spirit lives in every person. In the creed, we said we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life.

In other words, the Bible is saying, and this is one of the passages that would use to, why that's in the creed, human life has a Lord and a giver. Life comes from God, and God, not man, is Lord of life.

And this text here, when it's saying, then the Lord said, My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh. In other words, my time for dealing with this generation is coming to an end.

And then it says, His day shall be 120 years. Spirit, it's a little bit unclear in the English, but in the Hebrew, in 120 years, I will bring an end to Mordor.

Now that's actually pretty patient. God is going to give that generation, that time, 120 years to repent.

[12:49] 120 years to repent. And as we're going to see in a moment, what is it that God does to help that generation know that they need to repent? He's going to have a guy build a huge wooden structure for 120 years.

And when they ask Noah, Why are you building it? As we're going to see in a moment, he says, Because God, the true God, is going to bring an end to this created order. And this is the means of rescue.

For 120 years, there's a task given to Noah, and 120 years, he speaks. And as we'll see in that, part of the speaking of Noah, part of what God says to Noah, is that a new covenant will be offered to you and to your family, to you and those in a sense who follow you, who heed you.

120 years. So what we can see here is that it's not the case that God is mean. In fact, if you could put up the next point, here's the thing, which is how the Bible reveals how we read, how we really are working at the level of our heart.

The next point. You see, it's very easy. Every time we read about judgment in the Bible, our hearts, which are in rebellion against God, instantly jump to a particular worry.

[14:10] Why? Because the gods of our imagination kill ordinary people. But what does the Bible reveal from beginning to end? And especially in the cross, the real God died for ordinary people.

You see, for us as Christians, there's going to be things of mercy here in the text. That's always the thing. Every time we read a text of judgment and instantly we think that God is mean.

Instantly we think that God is unjust. Instantly we think that God is capricious. Instantly we think that God is just going to kill ordinary people because that shows where our heart still is. But the Bible tells us that the true God, the real God, died for ordinary people.

That even in justice, there is always mercy. So, did this all happen? Well, let's keep reading.

Verse 6. And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him to his heart. Just pause there. What it's saying here, the Bible doesn't say that God doesn't feel emotions.

[15:13] God does feel emotions or whatever that would mean in God. The main thing is that emotions never drive God like they do you and me. That's the big thing. And what we see here is God says, I want to go a different direction.

That's what regret and I'm going to go a different direction. See, one of the things the Bible is telling us about the flood is that in the flood, God reverses creation and then recreates or resets creation. And so right here, we see that God says, I want to go a different direction. This whole thing has gone terribly wrong. So the Lord said, I will blot, verse seven, I will blot out man, blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens for I am sorry that I have made them.

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. In other words, in Mordor, only Noah is not of Mordor. only Noah. So, did the flood happen? Is this a recounting of what happens in nature?

[16:34] Or is it, in fact, something different? Let's keep on reading. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation.

By the way, blameless here doesn't, righteous means that God has made him right with himself. God made Noah right with himself. And blameless doesn't mean you don't do any sin.

Blameless means that Noah had a tender conscience, unlike Mordor, and tried to keep his relationship fresh and real with God. In other words, he'd repent.

But first, God makes him right, and then Noah, as being made right with God, keeps his relationship fresh and penitent and going towards God.

Noah walked with God and Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now, the earth was corrupt in God's sight. Remember I said that there's more about how the earth is like Mordor after this.

[17:32] Here it is. The earth was corrupt in God's sight and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth and behold, it was corrupt for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

And God said to Noah, I have determined to make an end of all flesh for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Notice that again. I will destroy them with the earth. And there's something really important here. If you could put up the next point, Andrew, that would be great.

One of the important things here that God says to Noah is, and this is really important because, you know, we all know when we live in a culture and everybody in the culture is saying that certain things are right, certain things are fine, and we just know that they're not right and fine, it's so important to hear God's word to remind us that it's not right to take innocent human life or that there's a certain way that God has designed sexuality where there's a certain way that human beings should be treated.

How important was it for Wilberforce in the time when he was fighting for many, many decades to abolish slavery, to constantly be refreshed by God's word, that even though the culture and the economy and the politics said it was fine, that God's word kept reminding him what normal is deeply and tragically evil.

[19:02] See, that can go on in a society that, and that's what's saying here, before the flood, the normal has become deeply and tragically evil, and so for God to reveal to Noah that it's all evil, it's all wrong, is very important for Noah to continue to press on to God.

It's one of the reasons why we need God's word to press on to him, because there will always be things in a culture that the normal, and it just seems normal, and it just is a casual commonplace, whether it's the citizen or the Globe and Mail, or whether it's the blogs that we like to read or the Disney movies that we like to watch that are normal, and God's word has to keep coming into the normal to remind us it might be normal, but it's evil.

That's not a contradiction. It might be normal, but it's evil. It's wrong. And that's one of the things that goes on here in this text, which is very, very important. And it's another thing, you know, look at this again in verse 13, and God said to Noah, I have determined to make an end of all flesh for the

earth is filled with violence through them.

Behold, I will destroy them with the earth. And the language of them having made things corrupt and making things destroyed and of ruined, and the same word is here of what God is going to do. In a sense, if you could put up the next point, here's what God says. God says, you have wanted ruin, ruin you shall have. This is so important to understand about most of God's judgment.

[ 20 : 28 ] You know, most of God's judgment is human beings' desire. What is it that's, in a sense, what is hell? A lot of human beings say, God, it's my way or the highway to God.

God, it's my way or the highway. God, it's my way or the highway. And at the end of the day, God says, you have consistently told me to leave, I will be gone.

You will get what you want, but it's hell. And that's how God's judgment is going to work.

Mordor is eating itself. It's destroying itself. It's ruining itself. It is choosing demonic powers over God. It is choosing its own way over God.

And God says, at the end of the day, I will give you what you desire. Ruin you will have. God is still sovereign. He does this.

[ 21 : 39 ] And in an unbelievably tragic way, he does what they desire, which brings, is also God's judgment. I mean, what a profound thing. To meditate upon.

What if God's judgment of me was to let me have what I want? You have wanted ruin.

Ruin you shall have. But notice here, notice here, that, he goes on to say something else.

Verse 14, he says to Noah, make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Now just pause here. Do you want to know the one other place in the Old Testament where the word ark appears?

It's not the ark of the covenant. The one other place in the Old Testament where that word appears, other than the flood story, is when Moses' mother, because she doesn't want him to die, she puts him in a basket, and the word for basket is actually, she puts him in an ark.

[ 22 : 53 ] Only other place in the Old Testament that occurs. And then it says, so make yourself an ark of gopher wood, make rooms in the ark. Do you know what the word in Hebrew literally is for rooms?

Nests. In the midst of death, you are to build nests. And then it says, make room in the ark and cover it inside and out with pitch.

In classical Hebrew, not modern Hebrew, but in classical Hebrew, and remember, in classical Hebrew is what the Old Testament is written in, or the Tanakh, and for most people, they're hearing the Bible read, they're not reading it.

So the word for pitch is the word for pitch, but when they hear it in classical Hebrew, the word pitch sounds identical to another Hebrew word, and the other Hebrew word is atonement.

So for a Jewish person listening to this at the day in classical Hebrew, it says, make yourself an ark of gopher wood, and a Jewish person would say, ark.

[ 24 : 03 ] Moses was saved from murder by the Egyptians in an ark. Make nests in the ark and cover it inside and out with atonement.

Cover it inside and out with atonement. So there's an option between desiring ruin, ruin you shall have.

For 120 years, an ark is to be built, and the ark that is to be built is to have nests to deliver from death and to be covered inside and out with atonement.

Did it happen? So, one of the things, if you go back and listen to my first and third sermon, it's always good to listen to my sermons if you're having trouble falling asleep.

You just put them on nice and low and soothing voice, you know, just help you fall asleep. But if you go back and listen to the first and third, in particular, I talk a little bit about the doctrine of creation and how that is important to understand why the naturalistic understanding of evolution is wrong and how it helps us to think.

[ 25 : 20 ] And here, what I want to say is that the same thing, if we want to try to understand whether this happened or not, what we need to do is think about New Testament teaching about what happens in miracles.

And I'm going to use one miracle in particular to help us to understand this. And Andrew, if you could put up the next point. Here's the big point. The flood. The big God does a big miracle which is believably historical.

Oh no, George jumped the, ah, he's a crazy brain-dead fundamentalist. Not at all.

The flood. The big God does a big miracle which is believably historical. So, why do I say this? Okay, well, here's the thing. In John 9, let's think about a miracle in the New Testament.

In John 9, there's a famous story in John 9 where God, where Jesus, heals a man who is born blind. Very, very, very, very wonderful story to read later on.

[ 26 : 25 ] Read it and meditate upon. I'm not going to read it. Just, that's what happens. He's born blind. Jesus says, I'm going to heal you. Jesus heals him. Just like that. Now, imagine for a second that what Jesus does, he doesn't do healing, but he does something like surgery.

Maybe he's just like a very advanced surgeon. And if Jesus was like a very advanced surgeon, then, I don't know, he knocks, you know, he puts the man in a, you know, knocks him out. And with his, all of a sudden, I don't know, lasers that come out of his fingers, he makes an incision and he's able to go back and he sees the stuff that's getting in the way of the eye scene and he uses his laser fingers to remove the parts that have to be taken away.

And then he sees that maybe the optic nerve hasn't been attached to the cornea, I think. I hope I have the medical stuff right. And so, you know, he uses his ability to move things and he's able because he's a brilliant surgeon, he has laser fingers and he's doing surgery and he's able to go and he's zap, zap, zap and the cornea's, you know, fixed back up to the eyeball and then he sews everything up with, you know, whatever stitches or whatever and then the man has a, you know, a scar maybe somewhere or other, maybe he doesn't because I don't know enough about it, but, you know, he's done surgery and the guy can see.

And then, you know, later on, we send, Jesus allows a time machine to go back in time and after the man who's been, you know, born blind that Jesus had done the surgery on where the scientists and physicians are allowed to do an autopsy on the man and they go back and they do the autopsy on the man and when they do the autopsy on the man they say, oh yeah, you know, this guy obviously has had surgery because when you do the autopsy you can see some of the stuff that wasn't good still there, you can see surgical scars and you say, yeah, somebody went and actually did surgery on this guy.

Here's the big thing about understanding the flood. Miracles are not surgery. Miracles are not surgery.

[ 28 : 20 ] Here's, if you could put this up the next point, this is something for you to try to meditate upon and try to understand miracles in general but this is this, in most miracles as the laws of nature flow on, cause and effect, cause and effect, cause and effect, cause and effect, cause and effect, cause and effect because that's the way that God designed the universe, in most miracles God creates something new in his creation and or he removes something out of his creation.

Right? Because God creates, it's his creation, he made it, he sustains it and he made it all out of nothing. He didn't have to use materials. He makes it all out of nothing.

So in most miracles, so here's what happens then in the miracle, here's what I would say if we understand, and this comes from some philosophers and theologians who study all of the miracles and try to understand how they work and how it fits in with knowledge.

So if you go back and you think about the miracle of Jesus healing the man who's born blind, Jesus, because he is God, the son of God, the second person of the Trinity, as he reaches, I can't remember if he reaches his hand out or not, but however he does, even if it's just a matter of speaking the word, as he speaks the word, things within that man's eye which are stopping seeing, gone.

Gone. God removes them from the creation. The parts of the body that need to be there for sight to happen, they're there.

[ 29 : 58 ] You see, the more we know about medicine and the more we know about science, no medicine and no science disproves miracles. Medicine and science increase the wow.

Medicine and science increase the wow when God does miracles. Now here's the thing, if in a miracle, Jesus doesn't do surgery, he does a miracle.

The things which stop the sight, gone. the things that need to be there for the man to see, there. Scientists go back now after the man has died, they do an autopsy and what do they find?

The scientists would say that this man was not born blind. Because unless God chose to leave some sign inside, like a little message, Jesus healed the man born blind.

I'm just joking. Unless he does that inside, the autopsy will show that the man had never been blind.

Do you see the difference? So here's the thing, I think the big, and I'm an apologist, as you can gather, I love apologetics and I am not trying to diss all of these very faithful Christians who study

Genesis 6, 7, 8, and 9 and try to look for geological proof and proof and myth.

[ 31 : 18 ] I'm not dissing them at all, but I think that most people have made a mistake because they think that God has to work with stuff, that it's a little bit like God using Ikea stuff.

Like when I make a bookcase, I buy something from Ikea and I have to put it back together. And Christians keep slipping back into thinking that when God does things, it's like me working with Ikea.

God doesn't need stuff. Speaks, it's gone. Speaks, it's there. So if we see that when Jesus heals the man born blind, there's no sign afterwards that a miracle has been done physically, I would suggest that what goes on in this miracle, this text says that God is going to do this.

And in fact, when you go through, we're going to skip through a bit of Genesis 7 and 8 because it's already 31 minutes into the sermon. We're going to skip through it. You can read it later on. You'll see constantly, I will do this, I will do this, I will do this, I sent this, this comes from heaven, I did this, I did this, I did this.

The text, about 12 times, says God's doing a really big miracle. Now, why is it that we believe that Jesus healed the man born blind? It wouldn't be because you could go back in time, maybe find the body and do a test historically to see whether or not Jesus healed man born blind because a miracle means that there's no physical evidence afterwards.

[ 32 : 45 ] How do we know? Testimony. Human testimony. Now, not always in the resurrection of Jesus, which is the big miracle, it's the big battleground miracle and the big battleground miracle, there is other types of things apart because of the nature of the miracle, apart merely from testimony, but the testimony is spectacularly important that can also help us to understand why it's reasonable to believe that Jesus predicted that he would die upon the cross, that he would rise upon the, from the dead and that on the third day, the grave was empty.

He was risen from the dead. He had defeated death. Death no longer has any power over him and his death upon the cross and his resurrection was not for himself, but for you and me that on the cross, my doom was laid on him and his destiny is offered to me if I receive it by faith and if you receive it by faith.

But for most miracles, the evidence we have is human testimony, which is what we have here. And if you even think about it, we're going to just look at something very, very, very briefly.

I'm mindful of my time and I might not get through all of my points or just really have to gallop at the end, but this is a really, really big thing because you see, so many of us, rather than trying to just try to listen to the text and even just dwell upon the fact as I just did with verse 14.

The ark is what Moses was in. The ark nests covered inside and out with atonement and the world like Mordor and rather than just trying to get our minds around that and be fed by it and to understand that, you know, you and I, we need miracles in our lives.

[ 34 : 33 ] That's why we pray. We'll pray that we will be a prayerful church that calls out to God for direction and doesn't try to figure out whether we should do things because we have the resources, although we have to be wise, but sometimes you only, Peter only was able to walk on the water when he got out of the boat and sometimes every church, you got to be willing just to trust God's word and get out of the boat if you want to walk on the water.

And this text says time and time again, there's a miracle. Even if you think about it, God destroys everything. He says you're going to blot out everything. I'm going to show you in a moment how it's a reversal and a recreation. And if you even think about it, God's, Noah shut up in the ark, even if he's looking out, when he's looking out, everything that God is doing to recreate the earth is done underneath the water.

And the text even says the water doesn't come from the earth, it comes from God. That's what the text actually literally says. So in other words, if scientists go back and calculate that there's not enough water to do this, that's not a disproving of it because you say, one moment, we didn't say there was enough, we didn't say this was a natural thing.

The Bible doesn't say this just happened. The Bible says that God does a really big miracle. That God does it. So taking the feeling that we have to know enough geology and biology and all that, you can let that aside.

It's on the big strong shoulders of the God who's created all things out of nothing, who preserves and sustains all things, will bring all things to their end. The God who does miracles in his creation.

[ 36 : 12 ] And if there's geology and myth and other stuff that helps and there are stuff in that that all helps to give little hints, but you can say this side, God is a God who does miracles. Brothers and

sisters, if we are here today and we need a miracle, I don't know if God is going to do that miracle for you or if the miracle is going to be how you endure.

You know, a friend of mine who died, what he would tell people is that as he prayed for healing, he believed one of three things. He believed God was going to heal him.

That God would heal him slowly through medicine. God would heal him quickly through a miracle. Or God would heal him finally and perfectly, eternally, when he died.

And in Christ's arms, he appears before God for all eternity with a resurrection body. to live in the new creation, healed eternally.

But we need miracles. So let's go back to the text. Let's go back to the text.

[ 37 : 20 ] Sorry, let's go back to verse 15. I'll look at my time. You know what we're going to do? We're just going to, you know, so I'm going to say one thing. You could put up the next point here, Andrew. I'm going to try to run through a few of these things.

Oh, no, yeah, the next point. Here's the thing which I think the text shows. The flood, in the flood, God first reverses, then recreates his creation.

So, if you go back and you look at, later on in your spare time, read chapter 7. And what you see at the end of chapter 7 is that, you know, God says, Noah, I'm going to do this.

Noah actually builds the ark. It describes how after 120 years, God says, Noah, it's going to come in seven days. You have time to get it in. God sends the animals. God shuts Noah into the ark.

It's funny, if you go back, actually, let's look at verse 11. Yeah, verse 11 of chapter 7. In the 600th year of Noah's life in the second month and the 17th day of the month. Doesn't that sound like history?

[ 38 : 19 ] On that day, all the fountains of the great deep burst forth and the windows of the heavens were open and the rain fell on the earth 40 days and 40 nights and often commentators, and I'm, you know, people can handle those different ways.

If you actually take it very literally, what it just says is that Noah looks out and all of a sudden he can see this, the waters just rising but more importantly, he looks out and it's even, even in the rest of the text, it talks about celestial waters and God looks out.

Maybe it's actually being literal rather than being something to be embarrassed about. Maybe when Noah looked out, he saw a hole and out of the hole water comes down. And in the rest of the text, when it says that the waters subside, really it's actually literally saying the waters go because God creates things out of nothing and he takes things that exist and just makes them go away.

And look at the, just to jump ahead, look at chapter 8, verse 1. This is the key verse in the whole story of the flood. God remembered Noah.

Sorry, look at the verse just before that. And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days. We now have a picture. There's only water and this one boat bobbing along on the surface.

[ 39 : 41 ] But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark and God made a wind blow over the earth and the waters go, begin to go.

And in the Bible, the word remembered, in the Old Testament, the word remembered is a very important word. It's not like we usually use it. You know, Louise will say to me, George, did you remember to get that at Loblaws or at Costco?

And I'll say, dang, I forgot. Or I remember because I'd forgotten and I remembered. That's not what it means in the Bible. In the Bible, when it talks of God remembering, it's always used that God, who has made a promise to somebody, is now about to complete the promise.

That's what it means. And here we have a little boat relative to a planet on the water and the wind is blowing.

Now, what does that remind you of? Those of you who know your Bibles, Genesis chapter 1, verse 2, waters cover the earth. And the word for wind and the word for Holy Spirit in Hebrew is the same word.

[ 40 : 53 ] And in Genesis chapter 1, 2, before the first creation story and before the second creation story, there's only water in the Holy Spirit.

God has reversed creation. And now he's going to recreate it. And if you go back later on and just take the first creation and the second creation story, and the first and fourth days which refer to lights aren't present, but all of the other things in the second, the third, the fifth, the sixth, the seventh day in the second creation story reappear in the next 19 verses.

They all reappear. The rest of the text is going to describe how the world is both similar and different than before, but God has recreated the earth.

And there's going to be a new covenant. So it's 41 minutes. Let's just, could you put up the next point? Let's just wrap this up. One of the things about the text, if you go back and look, one of the things in our heart, I was just sharing the gospel with somebody just about a week and a half ago. And one of the things I was trying to share with her is that religion and spirituality tells you that if you do enough rules, God will love you. And the gospel message is that you never do enough rules for God to love you, but what happens is that grace comes first.

[ 42 : 23 ] And if you go back and look at this story, when it says that Noah is made righteous, God makes him right with himself. And God makes the promise of deliverance.

And after God makes the promise of deliverance, then Noah obeys. You see, God's grace nurtures our obedience.

Human obedience does not produce grace. And it's all the way through the story. Our fallen command centers want to keep trying to not see how the, in fact, this young woman that I was witnessing to, she brought up the Ten Commandments and I said, I'm so glad you brought up the Ten Commandments.

Go back and read them. I am the God who has redeemed you. So, you shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make an idol. I am the God who redeemed you. grace nurtures obedience.

[ 43 : 29 ] Obedience does not create grace. And as we all know, rule-based systems of spirituality and religion are always ultimately self-justifying, self-righteousness, and ultimately rooted in anxiety.

But when we realize that, well, in fact, can you put up the next point? God keeps his warnings and his promises.

That's just a freebie. I'm running out of time. Next one. You can look it up on the web if you want to write these down. It says, at best, we human beings want an ark, but God loves us truly.

He provided Jesus Christ crucified. You see, a lot of us at the best, most of us, what we want to just say to God is, it's my way or the highway, God. It's my way or the highway. You can't tell me how to live.

You can't tell me how I should identify myself. You can't tell me. You can't tell me. It's my way or the highway. The best we have is when things go bad is we want to get into an ark. At the end of the ark, as we're going to see next week, we come out of it delivered from judgment but unchanged.

[ 44 : 35 ] God does something so much better. He sends his son to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He comes to be the one who will bear our doom and give us his destiny.

He is the one who will pay for everything that we have done wrong. He is the one who will clothe us with his righteousness and his perfect obedience. He is the one who does that for us in a new covenant.

God does something better than an ark, a true and greater Noah. Next point. Oh yeah, please stand.

Please stand. One of the things that I've been thinking about as I looked at this text is I'm not going to live 120 years.

And who knows, maybe Jesus will return tomorrow and then I don't have to worry about in the next 120 years. But maybe he won't come for a long time and God sometimes asks us to do things which will take 120 years to complete.

[ 45 : 56 ] To pass the baton. and God is calling us not out of a fear of him because if we obey perfectly he'll finally love us but as we're gripped by the gospel as we're gripped by the gospel as the gospel is what is sitting the person work of Jesus is what is sitting at the command center of our lives so that how we look at things, how we feel, how we think, how we plan, how we do everything, it's the command center, at the very command center is Jesus and what he does for us on the cross and God's power that makes us his when we believe it and trust it.

That one of the things as grace nurtures obedience is we undertake things that might take 120 years to complete. A long obedience in the same direction.

So I invite you to pray this with me. If you have never given your life to Jesus, this is a conversion prayer. But a conversion prayer is the same prayer that we need to spend all of our lives praying. Not that we have to be saved over and over and over and over again. But every human being needs to be gripped by the gospel. So I invite you to pray this out loud with me.

Heavenly Father, please pour out the Holy Spirit upon us and make us disciples of Jesus gripped by the gospel, living a long obedience in the same direction as we live for your glory.  
[ 47 : 32 ] In Jesus' name, Amen. Father, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us. Make us gripped by the gospel and use us to make disciples of Jesus gripped by the gospel, living for your glory.  
And we ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.