

PM Genesis 6:9-7:24 Come into the Ark

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Date: 06 February 2022

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[0 : 01] Our reading tonight is from the book of Genesis, chapters 6 and 7. I'm going to be looking at one particular verse in all this, but it is of course the story of the flood, which maybe seems rather appropriate at the moment with all the rain we've had.

But so that we get a good chunk of this story, I'm going to read all the way from chapter 6 verse 9 through to the end of chapter 7.

These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.

And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. Now 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.

[1 : 27] Behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.

This is how you are to make it. The length of the ark, 300 cubits. Its breadth, 50 cubits. And its height, 30 cubits.

Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above. And set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks.

For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh, in which is the breath of life under heaven.

Everything that is on the earth shall die. But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.

[2 : 38] And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female.

Of the birds, according to their kinds. And of the animals, according to their kind. Of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind. Two of every sort shall come to you, to keep them alive.

Also, take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you, and for them. Noah did all this.

He did all that God commanded him. Then the Lord said to Noah, Go into the ark, you and all your household.

For I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate.

[3 : 52] And seven pairs of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth. For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights.

And every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground. And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood.

Of clean animals and of animals that are not clean and of birds and of everything that creeps on the ground, two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah as God had commanded Noah.

And after the seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth. In the six hundredth year of Noah's life in the second month and on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth and the windows of the heavens were opened.

[5 : 15] And rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights. On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark.

They and every beast according to its kind. And all the livestock according to their kinds. And every creeping thing that creeps on the earth according to its kind.

And every bird according to its kind. And every winged creature. They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh, in which there was the breath of life.

And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the Lord shut him in.

The flood continued for forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters.

[6 : 27] And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth, that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep.

And all flesh died that moved on the earth. Birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind.

Everything on the dry land, in whose nostrils was the breath of life, died. He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground.

Man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark.

And the waters prevailed on the earth for one hundred and fifty days. You know the sequel, of course, but there we will leave it.

[7 : 38] Let's sing. We're going to sing before we do come to the word. Let me ask you to turn, please, to Genesis chapter 6.

And we're going to be looking at verse 18. Where God says to Noah, Before Christmas I began a series of studies on the great invitations of Scripture.

Verses in which God says, Come. Well, here is another. God says to Noah, Come into the ark.

I've called it an invitation because of that word, come. But it is really a command. You shall come into the ark.

If Noah wants to be saved from the coming flood, Then that is what he must do. If he refuses, He hasn't merely missed out on a blessing.

[9 : 13] He has condemned himself to death. It's an invitation that he dare not turn down. Now this is a fascinating story in its own right.

But it's doubly fascinating because of the obvious parallels with our salvation. The New Testament itself draws out some of those parallels.

Luke 17, 26, for example. Jesus himself draws the comparison between the sudden coming of the flood upon an unprepared and unconcerned world and the sudden coming of judgment in the last days.

Just as it was in the days of Noah, he says. So it will be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage until the day when Noah entered the ark.

Hebrews 11 and verse 7 lists Noah amongst the heroes of faith.

[10 : 36] By faith, Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear, constructed an ark for the saving of his household.

By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. 1 Peter 3.20 makes a comparison with baptism.

God's patience, he says, waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is eight persons, were brought safely through water.

Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you. Peter is not suggesting there that baptism itself has some magical power to save, but just that it represents salvation by faith from the waters of judgment.

And again in 2 Peter 2 and verse 5, Peter describes Noah as a preacher of righteousness.

[11 : 59] God preserved Noah, he says, a herald of righteousness with seven others when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.

So the New Testament amply supports us in seeing this whole story as a picture of our salvation.

Now there's so much that we could say about Noah and the flood. But I want to focus just on our text and to consider God's covenant with Noah and God's command to Noah to come into the ark.

And I want us to compare that with us coming to Christ. First though, let me remind you of the story, familiar though it is, it's good to have it fixed in our mind as we study this passage.

Many people, when they think of Noah's ark, think perhaps of those nice friendly stories that they'd heard as children.

[13 : 16] Kindly old Mr. Noah with his long white beard, with all the animals queuing up two by two to go into the ark, the giraffe leaning over the side, everyone smiling, maybe even a rainbow already there up in the sky.

We used to have a wooden Noah's ark painted red and white, quite a big thing about the size of that reading desk. We had lots of wooden animals that went into it and our children used to play with that when they were small.

We had a problem in our house at Knapp Hill with the conservatory. It had been built by the previous owner himself out of doors and windows that he'd found on a council tip and you can imagine it wasn't very well constructed and when it rained heavily it would always flood.

We decided to make the best of it by floating our Noah's ark and letting the children have a realistic game with the flood. Later on when we lived in Lincoln we often used to go to the nearby town of Newark and there was a pet shop there rather ingeniously called the New Ark.

Now these childhood images they often focus on the animals that were saved don't they? They completely forget about the animals and the millions of people who were lost.

[15 : 03] There is some truth in those childhood stories of course there is but the real story is much more shocking. We're told here in verse 11 that the earth was corrupt in God's sight and the earth was filled with violence and God said in verse 13 I have determined to make an end of all flesh the whole lot of them everyone and everything thing.

That's what the flood was all about not friendly Mr. Noah with his animals but total judgment on a fallen world and it is a terrible warning to us today that description the earth was corrupt in God's sight and the earth was filled with violence couldn't that be said equally of our own day wouldn't God have every reason to destroy the earth today why you might say should God destroy the animals as well as men well the fall of man had corrupted the whole of creation and there was nothing for it but to make a fresh start and God planned to make that fresh start with Noah Noah we're told in verse 8 we didn't read that verse but just before our reading

Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord and by God's grace he was different verse 9 says he was a righteous man blameless in his generations who walked with God God's plan was to wipe out the old world and to start again with Noah and his family along with representatives of every living creature seven pairs of every clean creature one pair of every unclean and that is what he did Noah is given very precise instructions how to build an ark to be made of gopher wood covered in pitch with a roof on the top a door in the side three decks and rooms for all the animals and then he is told to come into the ark don't know how long it took him perhaps a very long time perhaps years he'd been building that ark there it was out in his garden as it were and day by day they would hammer away at it when would the flood come no one knew but now the countdown has begun in seven days

I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights chapter seven verse four and after seven days the rain came God doesn't make idle threats the fountains of the great deep burst forth the windows of heaven were opened the waters rose for forty days and everyone and everything outside the ark was drowned and the waters remained for a hundred and fifty days before abating when Noah finally went forth from the ark into that new and cleansed world what a strange sight it must have been to him first all he saw was the top of Ararat gradually as he saw the rest unfolding how empty it all was but this was the new world in which God would encourage him to go and settle to raise family to occupy the whole earth to replenish it again to start afresh it's a daunting task but God gave him a sign and you well know what that sign was the beautiful sign of the rainbow as a seal to his covenant

I could say much about the flood itself it's a fascinating subject I'll content myself with just one remark that it is fascinating to see how there are stories of the flood in every civilization they're often very distorted stories but they do show that the memory of a worldwide flood remained everywhere understandably so who could ever forget an event like this so let's come now to our text first and first the covenant that God made with Noah I will establish my covenant with you this is the first time that the word covenant is used in the

[20 : 53] Bible covenant is simply an agreement and there are a number of them throughout the Bible there's the covenant with Noah here there's the covenant with Abraham there's the covenant with Israel on Mount Sinai which we call the old covenant there's the covenant with David and of course there's the new covenant under which we live as Christians God's covenant with Noah was essentially a promise to save him from the flood and to repopulate the world through him the world will perish but God has chosen Noah and his family to be his people in a new earth that promise is only implied here in chapter 6 in our text but it's made plain later the end of the chapter after the flood has subsided

God makes that famous promise while the earth remains seed time and harvest cold and heat summer and winter day and night shall not cease a promise that the world would not disintegrate again in the way that it had under the flood the God of order is in charge it will be a world which will be able to be farmed a world which Noah will enjoy living in a good world a world ordered by God immediately after that promise about the earth God says to Noah in chapter 9 and verse 1 be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth where have you heard that before that's what he said to

Adam isn't it be fruitful and multiply Noah is effectively the new Adam restarting the human race and then he confirms the covenant with Noah chapter 9 and verse 9 behold I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you and with every living creature that is with you and he promises never again to destroy the earth with a flood and he gives them the rainbow as the sign of the covenant these covenant promises are still precious to us today we are after all ourselves the descendants of Noah the whole human race is so that we can claim this covenant for ourselves in the depth of winter as we are now we know spring will come what would be the point of sowing seed if we didn't know that every time we see the rainbow it's a reminder to us of God's promises here is a covenant that belongs to us as well as to

Noah but for Noah himself it was especially important it was God's covenant that gave him the courage to build that ark it was God's covenant that sustained him as the waters rose it was God's covenant that gave him the confidence to go out into that new world God had promised and he knew that God would keep his word but this covenant promise would only come about if he went into that ark building it was great that was a good start but he must come into the ark he would only be safe from the rising waters of the flood inside the ark let's look now at the command to come into the ark you shall come into the ark you your sons your wife and your sons wives with you that was the vital step coming into the ark and it was a step of faith

Noah showed faith throughout this story he showed faith in believing God's word in the first place he showed faith in building the ark no doubt people had mocked him for that but he believed God's word he believed that God meant what he said but he still needed to go into the ark in order to be safe there's no use simply keeping it in the back garden just in case he needed it keeping it for a rainy day literally there's no good waiting until the rain came before he went into that ark once the waters came they would come as a great deluge and there would be no time to go in then he must go in now when God told him to go in or else it would be too late and that's what he did chapter 7 verse 5

[26 : 55] Noah did all that God commanded him that included going into the ark and then rather beautifully in chapter 7 and verse 16 God shut him in it's the ultimate lockdown wasn't it there he was inside that ark the door is shut and he must not go out not even for any necessary exercise he must stay in that ark with his family and they will be locked down there for many days until the flood is over but once inside that ark he was completely safe completely secure the water was not going to come inside the ark was never going to sink he was safe in the ark now Noah could have found many things to worry about he could have worried perhaps there was water seeping in somewhere maybe he would run out of food maybe the animals would turn on him could have worried about all sorts of things but

God really had thought of everything and there really was nothing to worry about where we live near Glen Capel we get flood tides several times a year there was one today not quite the same as Noah's flood I know but it certainly reminds us of it we see the water rising up right to the edge of our garden sometimes we have the rain lashing against the window as it did today the wind rattles the window panes but there's no cause to worry that house has been well built and in the right position and we know we're perfectly safe and the water will not come in so likewise with Noah the ark had been built according to the pattern God had given him and inside the ark he was perfectly safe perfectly secure and so was his family it's an interesting feature of all of those biblical covenants that they all contain some promise for the family they're not unconditional promises

Noah's sons and his wife and their wives couldn't just sit back and say we're okay we're Noah's family he'll look after us they also had to come inside the ark if they wanted to be saved if they'd refused to come in they would have been drowned along with everyone else but God was saying to them also come into the ark with Noah and so long as you come in you will be safe too from the day of judgment I would like to say about this invitation that the very word come implies that God himself was there in the ark inviting them to come in with him I can't say that grammatically because I know that the Hebrew word can be translated either come or go and in fact in the

ESV translation in chapter 7 verse 1 it is translated go into the ark but surely God was with them and they were safe in his care but here's the important thing how can we apply this to ourselves very nice for Noah but what about us I want us finally to compare this with our salvation in coming to Christ some of you I'm sure have already noticed all kinds of similarities and maybe you'll point out some to me afterwards that I haven't spotted but there are innumerable similarities between this and Christian salvation we too live in a world that is facing judgment it's true God has promised that he will never again send a flood on the earth but we are still warned of a day of judgment total judgment on the whole world 2 Peter 3 verse 7 says that by the same word that God sent the flood the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly and the

Bible repeatedly warns us of this judgment Jesus warns us the apostles warn us judgment day is coming how can we be safe on the day of judgment only in Christ he is in effect the ark of our salvation and God says to us commands us pleads with us come into the ark our salvation also rests on a covenant under the new covenant in Jeremiah 31 God promised four things first I will write my laws in their hearts second I will be their God and they shall be my people third they shall all know me from the least to the greatest but fourth also

[33 : 11] I will forgive their iniquities and their sins I will remember no more and that means if our sins are forgiven we will be safe on the day of judgment but how can that be only through Christ who died for our sins our sins are washed away in Christ in his blood and on the day of judgment we shall be appearing before God clothed in the pure white robes of his righteousness he is the mediator of the new covenant he holds that salvation as it were in his hands and his hands alone and therefore we must come to him to be saved Peter urged the crowd on the day of Pentecost Acts 2 38 repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus

Christ for the forgiveness of sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit for the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are afar off everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself what is he saying there but rest on the covenant forgiveness the Spirit of God those are the promises of the covenant but to receive them Peter is saying you must come to Christ every one of you must come to Christ you your children and all the vast multitudes beyond if they want to be saved they must come to Christ in other words Peter is saying come into the ark and that also means effectively come into the church

Acts 2 goes on to speak of 3,000 being baptized and joining the church you see you can't have Christ without his church if you're in Christ you are in the church for that reason some preachers have preferred to see the ark as the church Calvin I think takes that line but as Calvin himself would insist it's not being in the church as such that saves you but being in Christ the Lord of the church in Christ we are safe perfectly safe but only in Christ outside of Christ we will be overwhelmed now by all the storms of life and one day in the great storm of judgment we will be utterly destroyed but in

Christ we're safe like Noah we could find all sorts of things to worry about but there really is no need for the Christian to worry no need to worry whether the blood of Christ will be sufficient the blood of Christ cleanses us from all our sins no need to worry whether faith in Christ will be sufficient the word of God tells us believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved no need to worry that you might not be among the elect many Christians do worry about that don't they but if you are in the ark if you are trusting in Christ you are elect God himself has shut us into this ark and therefore there's no need to worry that we might somehow fall out of it as if somehow being in the ark we've got to huddle ourselves close in case we fall out of the window oh no no possibility of that

God has shut us in of course we've got to be careful not to wander away from the Lord you won't be saved if you jump overboard though even then the Lord is soft and gracious and pulls back foolish Christians out of the water come into the ark then and if you're in the ark enjoy life there you're in a safe place and you are with the very best of people I wonder what life was like for Noah with his family inside the ark I hope it was a great blessing lockdown was a strain for some people wasn't it being enclosed with their families for so long but I hope for Noah it was a wonderful time having fellowship with his family speaking of the greatness and the glory and the grace of God and so it should be amongst

[38 : 48] God's people we should enjoy good fellowship with each other strengthening and encouraging one another during these days while we wait until Christ returns the waves will rise around you even in this life but they can't harm you as in the parable the rain fell the floods came the winds blew and beat on that house but it did not fall slightly different image yes but the same idea you're safe in Christ sometimes you might feel as if it's all too much for you Psalm 69 says I have come into deep waters and the floods sweep over me I'm sure some of you have felt that at times but we won't go under if we're trusting in Christ he went under the floods of judgment came over him so that we might not go under and in that greatest flood of all in the day of judgment we are completely safe as Paul says in

Colossians 3 your life is hidden with Christ in God and when that judgment day is over at last then we will emerge like Noah into a glorious new world may God bless all these thoughts to us Amen have O to Jesus to to Christaper