

DATE: May 18, 2008

TEXT: Genesis 6: 5-14

TITLE: "Genesis VII: Noah I"

This morning we begin looking at the story of Noah. I will continue looking at Noah next week. I have had the opportunity to study and think about Noah for two weeks. Let me say this: the first lesson I will share with you this week is a very hard lesson. As a matter of fact, I tried to think of a way to not share it. But to be true to scripture, it must be shared. I believe the danger is this: selectively studying scripture in order to gain a perspective on life and on God that fits your comfort level. It is a natural tendency of every one of us. As we saw a few weeks ago, it was the sin of Adam and Eve. Satan said "Did God really say not to eat of the fruit?" The answer was yes; but Adam and Eve selectively heard God. We must recognize this path of sin that every one of us faces. We try to twist God into our own image. My first lesson is a lesson that is found on almost every page of the Bible and yet it is ignored by most people and even most Christians.

One more word before I launch into my lessons. The story of Noah is the primary focus of

this section of scripture. It is longer than the creation story, longer than the story of Cain and Abel. The story of Noah as written by Moses, also, is intended to be a reminder of essential lessons for the nation of Israel. The story purposely parallels the creation story. It could be entitled “The uncreation of the world.” The story obviously parallels the story of Israel in the wilderness and the parting of the Red Sea; the drowning of the Egyptians and the saving of the Israelites. Even the word ‘ark’ has a parallel. It is a word in Hebrew that is only used one other time in all of the Old Testament. It is used in Exodus 2 and it is translated in Exodus 2 with the word ‘basket’. It is the basket that Moses was placed in by his mother in order to save his life. Moses came out of water to save the people as Noah came out of water to save humanity.

I will share three lessons from the 6<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Genesis.

**Lesson # 1** Notice the justice of God. *Genesis 6: 5, 11-13*

**The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. 6 The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. 7 So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them.".....11 Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. 12 God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. 13 So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.**

This is a difficult lesson. It is a lesson that is found in almost every book of the Bible.

God is a God of justice and judgment. Note the absolute corruption of humanity. Our text tells us **“and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.”**

God created humanity with a purpose in mind. The purpose was to be in relationship with the Creator. The purpose was to worship the Creator. The purpose was to honor the Creator.

Humanity had chosen the path of Cain. Humanity had chosen to worship themselves. Humanity had chosen to ignore God. Let there be no doubt about this: to ignore God is to dishonor God.

To live a life with God on the side of life is to provoke the anger of God.

I think we understand this. As parents we rightly expect our children to honor, respect and obey us. What happens when our children talk back to us? We punish them for their disrespect.

What happens when a child ignores us? We punish them for disrespect. I truly believe the most important lesson we teach our 2, 3, 4, and 5 year olds is to respect parents and adults. This is also true of our 12, 13, 14, and 15 year old children.

God is the Creator. He has every right to expect and demand respect, honor and

obedience from His creation. We were created for the purpose of being in relationship with God.

God has the right... and God acts on the right... to punish and destroy any part of His creation that does not act in obedience to that purpose.

This indeed is a difficult lesson and yet it is the central lesson in Scripture. When Moses presented Genesis to the Israelites, they had just witnessed the Red Sea. God destroyed the Egyptians. Israel was about to enter the Promised land. God was going to destroy the Canaanites. It is also the central message of the New Testament. The most famous verse in all of scripture is probably *John 3:16*. It says....

**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.**

But the text does not end there. It continues...

**18Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.  
19This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.**

Yes, this text promises God's love but it also promises God's wrath and judgment. The Book of Revelation also teaches the judgment of God. *Revelation 3:16 states*

**So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my**

**mouth.**

*Revelation 20* gives this prediction of our future...

**11Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. 12And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. .... 15If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**

God is just. He will judge those who reject Him. Again, let me say God desires worship, honor and obedience. We live in a day that is not unlike the time of Noah. People pursue their own goals. People pursue pleasure. They believe in God and think God should be satisfied with their belief. They are wrong. God destroyed the world in the time of Noah; God continues to judge those who do not walk in obedience to Him.

**Lesson # 2** Notice the wonderful grace and love of God. *Genesis 6:9 states...*

**This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God.**

This, too, is a central theme found on almost every page of Scripture. God loves His children. God has patience with His children. God saves His children. We see that this is the lesson taught by Moses to the Israelites as they wandered through the wilderness. We see this is the central theme of Paul as he talked to the different churches of the New Testament . This was

the central message of John as he wrote the Book of Revelation. I previously read from

Revelation 20. Let me now read the very next section from *Revelation 21*

**Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."**

**5He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.**

Isn't that magnificent? We, the church, are the bride of Christ. He is our God. We worship him for ever and ever. The Garden of Eden with the presence of God will be reestablished on earth. We will dwell in the Garden in the presence of God.

Noah was from the line of Shem. God had promised Adam and Eve that they would be the parents of a promised people. God still has a promised people. God continues today to have his covenant children. It was the nation of Israel... now it is the true church of Jesus Christ. We are the children of God surrounded by His love and care and eternity.

**Lesson # 3** Notice the obedience of Noah *Genesis 6:9,22*

**This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God.....Noah did everything just as God commanded him.**

The first two lessons were these: God judges those who walk a path away from or indifferent to God. God is just and He will judge. But God loves His children. He died on a cross for them. He promises eternity in His presence for them. So the question is this: How do we become the children of God? This, too, is on almost every page of Scripture. *Mark 12:29*

**(Jesus said) 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.**

*John 1:12 says...*

**12Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.**

*Psalm 51:15 says*

**O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. 16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.**

**17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

Noah was a “righteous man” who “walked with the Lord.” Noah “acted in obedience”.

For a second imagine what this was like for Noah. The world around him was corrupted. Even before he began building the ark imagine the anger of his neighbors. Unrighteousness does not like to see righteousness. Maybe you have experienced this truth yourself at work or at school.

Noah shared his faith with his children. Imagine the children who were different than their friends... what that was like. And then Noah began building the ark. The mockery, the laughter, the anger at the statement that he was making. But Noah obeyed God. Noah had faith in God and was a child of God. Through Noah the promise of God is fulfilled.

We, too, have a choice. Do we follow the world or follow our Lord? *Romans 12:2*

*commands*

**2Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and prove what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will**

That is always the question... the world or Jesus Christ. And if a person thinks “What minimal acts do I have to do to be acceptable to Christ?” Know they have chosen the world. We were created to worship, honor and obey God. The world or Christ? Destruction and judgment of love and eternity in His presence. Isn't it amazing that so many people choose the wide path. Jesus said (*Matthew 7*) **"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it."** Choose the narrow gate.

AMEN