

In the Beginning

Noah and the Flood

Genesis 6:9-9:17

Rev. Freddy Fritz

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Scripture

We are currently in a series of sermons on Genesis 1-11 that I am calling, “In the Beginning.” I am preaching only six sermons on these 11 chapters. It is just an overview of redemptive history.

So far, we have looked at the Creation of all things in Genesis 1:1-2:3, the Fall of man into sin Genesis 2:4-3:24, God’s faithfulness in the account of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4:1-26, and God’s faithfulness in the account of Adam’s descendants in Genesis 5:1-6:8. Today, I want to examine the account of Noah and the flood in Genesis 6:9-9:17. This is a long account, and I am sure you are familiar with what happened. There are many important themes in this passage, but I want to examine God’s judgment on sin and his grace in preserving a people for himself.

Our text for today is Genesis 6:9-9:17. However, I shall read only selected texts from this narrative. I encourage you to keep your Bibles open as I refer to various passages. I shall read Genesis 6:9-14, 18-19; 7:11-12; 8:1; 9:8-10:

⁹These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. ¹⁰And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹²And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. ¹³And 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. ¹⁴Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. ¹⁶Make 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. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ **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.** ¹⁹ **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.** ²⁰ Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. ²¹ 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.” ²² Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

⁷ 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. ² 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 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. ⁴ For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.” ⁵ And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

⁶ Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. ⁷ 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. ⁸ Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, ⁹ two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰ And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

¹¹ **In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, 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.** ¹² **And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights.** ¹³ On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the

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three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, ¹⁴ 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, every winged creature. ¹⁵ They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. ¹⁶ And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the Lord shut him in.

¹⁷ The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. ¹⁸ The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. ¹⁹ And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. ²⁰ The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. ²¹ And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. ²² Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ²³ 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. ²⁴ And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

8 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 subsided. ² The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, ³ and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, ⁴ and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵ And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

⁶ At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made ⁷ and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. ⁸ Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face

of the ground. ⁹ But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. ¹⁰ He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. ¹¹ And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. ¹² Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore.

¹³ In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. ¹⁴ In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out. ¹⁵ Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶ “Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. ¹⁷ Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may swarm on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” ¹⁸ So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. ¹⁹ Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark.

²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹ And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man’s heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. ²² While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”

⁹ And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. ² The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. ³ Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as

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I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. ⁴ But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. ⁵ And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man.

⁶ “Whoever sheds the blood of man,
by man shall his blood be shed,
for God made man in his own image.

⁷ And you, be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it.”

⁸ **Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him,**
⁹ **“Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you,** ¹⁰ **and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth.** ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” ¹² And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷ God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.” (Genesis 6:9-9:17)

Introduction

In 2014, the movie *Noah*, starring Russell Crowe, was released. The movie was directed by Darren Aronofsky, and was

panned by viewers and critics alike. I recently watched the movie again, and it was even worse watching it the second time! Critic David Denby of *New Yorker* magazine summarized the movie *Noah* as follows, “In a single sequence, Aronofsky combines creationism, Darwinian evolution, original sin, the end of days, and radical environmentalism.”¹ I would add that the movie *Noah* contains numerous Biblical inaccuracies. Nevertheless, there is one area that the movie seems to portray with some accuracy, and that is in the area regarding wickedness and sin.

Genesis 1-11 teaches us about the origin of sin in the Garden of Eden, which began the battle between the offspring of the serpent and the offspring of the woman. That battle led to Cain’s murder of Abel (in Genesis 4:8) and Lamech’s murder of a young man (in Genesis 4:23). Moses described the ever-increasing wickedness and sin in Genesis 6:5, 11 as follows, “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.... Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence.” So, in just 10 generations from Adam, God decided to judge human sin and wickedness with a worldwide flood, and Noah was God’s instrument through whom God would work.

Lesson

God’s judgment in Genesis 6:9-9:17 teaches us that even as God judges sin, he is also gracious and preserves a people for himself.

Let’s use the following outline:

1. God’s Man (6:9-10)
2. God’s Judgment (6:11-8:19)
3. God’s Grace (8:20-9:17)

¹ <https://itunes.apple.com/US/movie/id834786516>.

I. God's Man (6:9-10)

First, let's look at God's man.

I mentioned previously that Moses, the author of Genesis, divided the book of Genesis into ten sections. Each section is introduced by the Hebrew word, *toledot*, which means, "These are the generations of..." Today's lesson introduces the third of ten *toledots*, the generations of Noah. Moses said in verse 9a, **"These are the generations of Noah."** And then in verse 10 Moses said, **"And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth."**

Between these two sentences, Moses described Noah in verse 9b, **"Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God."** Earlier, in the previous verse, Moses said, "But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8).

Noah is described as **"a righteous man"** not because he was perfect or was internally righteous but because he was living in a right relationship with God. That is, he believed in God, like Abram after him who "believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness" (Genesis 15:6). Noah was **"a righteous man"** because of his faith in God, as the writer to the Hebrews confirmed in Hebrews 11:7, "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.*"

Commentator Kent Hughes notes,

The statement that "Noah was a righteous man" is the first mention of righteousness in the Bible and sets the standard that righteousness comes by faith. The biblical doctrine of imputed righteousness began before the flood. This is the first of the Old Testament expressions that are made more explicit in subsequent Old Testament texts (cf. Genesis 15:6; Psalm 32:2) and are given full flower in the New Testament (cf. Romans 1:17; 3:21, 22; 5:17,

19; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 11:7; 2 Peter 1:1).²

Noah is also described as **“blameless in his generation.”** This describes Noah’s moral character. He was not sinless, since all people sin. And, in fact, Noah’s sin is described after the flood. Nevertheless, at this point in his life, Noah walked with integrity before God and people. No one could make an accusation of sin or wickedness stick on Noah, because he walked in accordance with God’s truth. He was a bright light in a dark generation.

Finally, **Noah** is described as a man who **“walked with God.”** Enoch is the only other person in the entire Bible who is also described as a man who **“walked with God”** (see Genesis 5:22, 24). Noah and Enoch experienced a closeness with God that was something like what Adam had prior to the Fall. Noah loved God, worshiped God, served God, and walked in the same direction as God.

Noah was counter-cultural. He lived whole-heartedly for God in a corrupt generation. Let us make a commitment that regardless of what others around us say or do, we will live as Noah did, so that it may be said of us, **“_____ was a righteous man/woman, blameless in his/her generation. _____ walked with God.”**

II. God’s Judgment (6:11-8:19)

Second, let’s examine God’s judgment.

In sharp contrast to Noah, the people in his day were filled with sin. Notice the threefold description of the sin that contrasted Noah’s righteousness, in verses 11-12, **“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**

² R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 134.

flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.” What a sad and rapid decline. Earlier, after God had created the heavens and the earth, he said Genesis 1:31, “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.” But now, just ten generations later, **“God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth”** (6:12).

So, in response to the sin, wickedness, and corruption that God saw, he **said to Noah** in verse 13, **“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.”** God had decided to pronounce judgment on sinful men and women. He was going to **destroy them with the earth.**

And yet, even in this pronouncement of judgment, God’s grace is seen. God intends to save a remnant, for he told Noah in verse 14, **“Make yourself an ark of gopher wood.”** This was followed by instructions about how to make it, and what God was going to do, as he said in verse 17, **“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.”**

After a long time of building the ark, Noah completed his work. Seven pairs of all animals and birds were gathered on to the ark. And then God sealed all of them into the ark of safety, and sent the flood. Genesis 7: 23 says, **“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.”**

The lesson I want us to see is that God hates sin and judges it. This very dramatic judgment of God on sin is like a giant, blinking neon sign telling us that God hates sin and judges it. And, even after the flood, again and again we see God’s judgment of sin. For example, God judged sin at the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:9). God

judged sin at Sodom and Gomorrah, and destroyed those cities (Genesis 19). God judged an entire generation of Israel when they rebelled against him in the wilderness after they left Egypt, so that all those older than twenty years-old did not enter the Promised Land (Numbers 14:20-23). God judged Israel in their deportation to Assyria in 722 BC. God also judged Judah in their deportation to Babylon in 586 BC. God's judgment of sin is seen supremely at Calvary, where Jesus died for "the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). All these examples of God's judgment of sin point to God's sudden, final judgment of sin when people, like people in Noah's day, will be "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage," and unexpectedly, Jesus, the Son of Man, will come again (Matthew 24:36-39) to judge the living and the dead (25:31-46).³

So, let us be warned: God hates sin and judges it. The reason people do not take the warning seriously is because God does not usually judge sin immediately. He does not do so because he is patient toward us, as Peter said in 2 Peter 3:9, "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." However, a day will come when it is too late. So, don't delay! Repent and turn to the Lord today!

III. God's Grace (8:20-9:17)

And third, let's observe God's grace.

During the flood, we have a beautiful statement in Genesis 8:1a, "**But God remembered Noah....**" Of course, God did not forget Noah. Kent Hughes explains what Moses meant in verse 1:

God's remembering is more than a recollection because when God remembers, he acts. When God remembered Abraham, he saved Lot (Genesis 19:29). When he remembered Rachel, she conceived (Genesis 30:22). As Brevard Childs said, "God's

³ See Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 114.

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remembering always implies his movement toward the object... The essence of God's remembering lies in his acting toward someone because of a previous commitment."⁴

God now began to reverse the impact of the flood, because he **“made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided”** (8:1b).

Eventually, the waters receded, and after 370 days in the ark, Noah, his family, and all the creatures came out of the ark. Notice the very first thing that Noah did after exiting the ark, in verse 20, **“Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.”**

And what was God's response to Noah's sacrifice? Verse 21 says, **“And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, ‘I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done.’”** Moreover, in Genesis 9:1 we read, **“And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.’”**

Then, God's grace is seen in the establishment of a covenant with Noah. In Genesis 9:8-11 **God said to Noah and to his sons with him,**

“Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

⁴ R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*, 142.

The covenant of grace has several supporting covenants, of which the covenant with Noah is the first. The other covenants are the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and the new covenants. The *Catechism for Young Children* defines a covenant as “an agreement between two or more persons.”⁵

Note that this covenant with Noah is universal, unilateral, and unconditional. The Noahic covenant is *universal* because it encompasses all humans (both believers and non-believers) and all animals. It is *unilateral* because God alone is the initiator. Twice he calls it **“my covenant”** (9:8, 11). The covenant does not require any assent, action, or ratification on our part. In fact, it does not even require our acknowledgment. God produced the covenant, and he will fulfill the terms of the covenant. And finally, the Noahic covenant is *unconditional* because God will never again destroy the earth by water, no matter what we do.

The sign of the covenant was a rainbow, as Moses said in verses 12-17,

And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

The rainbow is a sign of new beginnings. In a wonderful way,

⁵ http://www.reformed.org/documents/index.html?mainframe=http://www.reformed.org/documents/cat_for_young_children.html.

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God expresses his grace in a visible way for all to see. Every time we see a rainbow in the sky, we are to think of the mercy and grace of God. He will never again destroy the world with water. And, just as he saved Noah and his family in the ark, he will save everyone who finds shelter in Jesus. Instead of being destroyed at the final judgment, all who look to Jesus in faith and repentance will be saved from the coming destruction.

So, if you have never done so, turn to Jesus today. “Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Conclusion

Therefore, having analyzed God’s judgment in Genesis 6:9-9:17, we should examine ourselves, to see whether we are in the faith (as Paul said in 2 Corinthians 13:5).

Soon after the publication of John Stott’s 1971 revised edition of *Basic Christian*, he received a letter that read:

Dear John,

Thank you for writing *Basic Christianity*. It led me to make a new commitment of my life to Christ. I am old now – nearly 78 – but not too old to make a new beginning.

I rejoice in all the grand work you are doing.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie Weatherhead

Leslie Weatherhead was one of the most respected and influential Christian leaders in the United Kingdom. Thousands heard him preach at City Temple, his books were read widely, he pioneered in the field of pastoral counseling, and he was president of the Methodist Conference. Yet at 78-years-old he was not too proud or too worn out to make a fresh commitment of his life.⁶

⁶ Adapted from Roger Steer, *Basic Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2010), 153.

Whether you are old, or young, make a fresh commitment of your life to the Lord. Ask God to give you faith in Jesus and repentance of your sins. And then ask him to enable you to walk with God, as Noah did in his generation. Amen.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church is:

*To bring people to Jesus Christ
and membership in his church family,
develop them to Christlike maturity,
equip them for their ministry in the church
and life mission in the world,
in order to magnify God's name.*

Sermons by Rev. Freddy Fritz

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Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church (PCA)

Answers for Life!

Address: 19911 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., Tampa, FL 33647

Telephone: (813) 973-2484

Fax: (813) 973-4673

Email: Office@TampaBayPresbyterian.org

Web site: www.TampaBayPresbyterian.org