

Lessons from Noah

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Recorded July 8, 2017

We know that from the recreation of the earth until the coming of Jesus Christ covers approximately four thousand years. For much of that four thousand-year history recorded in the Bible, the Bible only hits the highlights. For example, the first five chapters of Genesis covers 1,650 years, beginning with Adam and Eve and ending at the end of Genesis, chapter 5 with Noah being five hundred years old. We can get this approximate 1,650-year timeframe from counting the genealogies in chapter 5. So, the first five chapters covers roughly thirty-six percent of human history, from the time of Adam and Eve until the first coming of Jesus Christ, just in five chapters. But then something extraordinary happens beginning in chapter 6, because the next four chapters are focused on a singular event and those chapters cover it in minute detail. That one event is the biggest single disaster that has ever happened on this earth up to this point in time. It is remarkable that God would take one event and devote four chapters to it.

By way of introduction, let's look at that event. We'll be coming back to Genesis, chapters 5, 6 and 7 over the course of the sermon.

Genesis 6:13. *And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. (KJV)*

Here He gives Noah instruction, and notice the detail.

14) Make thee an ark of gopher wood ... (KJV)

There's a great deal of argument about what gopher wood is. We don't need to go into that, but God told him that He wanted it built out of a specific wood, not just any wood.

14b) ... rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. (KJV)

The Hebrew word basically means *asphalt, as a sealant*. I am sure God gave Noah very specific plans, blueprints if you will, of how to make the ark, how many levels, how many rooms and what the size of each room would be.

15) And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. (KJV)

How long is a cubit? It's impossible to say for a certainty because there is a long and a short Hebrew cubit, there is a Babylonian cubit and then there is a long and short

Egyptian cubit. A cubit was basically the measure from the elbow to the tip of the finger. So, if you do some research, it varies between 17-1/2 inches and 20-1/2 inches. So, what we'll do is take the median at 19 inches. If it's 19 inches, that makes the ark approximately 450 feet long and 80 feet wide. In modern terms, that's about 1-1/2 football fields in length and about a half of a football field in width. This was no small boat.

17) And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die.

18) But with thee will I [God] establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

19) And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

...

22) Thus, did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he. (KJV)

If God inspired and focused this much attention on one singular event as He did on the prior 1,650 years, then there are reasons that He wants us to pay attention to this event and there are lessons we can learn from this. We're going to see great parallels between the time shortly before this event occurred and what is happening in the world today.

The title of the sermon is

Lessons from Noah

We're going to do two things: We're going to look at the account of Noah and the ark and what actually happened. Then, in the latter part of the sermon, we're going to look at lessons that we can learn and apply in our lives that will help us today.

The first thing we're going to do is look into the event, the account of Noah and the ark. However, before we do that, we want to cover some facts about oceans, ocean waves and currents and shipwrecks to give us an idea of what actually went on.

The largest wave that has ever been recorded, since such records have been kept, was roughly one hundred feet high. That is about ten stories. That is a big wave. Let me quote from the Smithsonian Institution.

An earthquake followed by a landslide in 1958 in Alaska's Lituya Bay, generated a wave a hundred feet high, the tallest tsunami ever documented. When the wave ran ashore, it snapped trees 1,750 feet up slope.

That's over a quarter of a mile up slope. That is a lot of power and a lot of energy.

Now let's look at the sinking of the ore carrier, Edmund Fitzgerald. Those of you who lived in the 70s remember this because it was memorialized by Gordon Lightfoot in a song. "The Mighty Fitz", as it was called, was launched in 1958 and it was 729 feet long, half again as long as the ark. Its beam was 75 feet, so it was about the same width as the ark and it had a gross tonnage of 13,600 tons. It was not a lightweight ship. It was the largest ship on the Great Lakes until 1971. It was powered by a 7,000-horse power steam turbine. It set a record at the time of tonnage on the Great Lakes. On one trip, it hauled 27,400 gross tons of iron ore.

On November 9, 1975, The Mighty Fitz left Superior, Wisconsin, which is right next door to Duluth, Minnesota, after it had been loaded to the gunnels with iron ore. It was heading east to the locks in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, which is located on the eastern end of Lake Superior. So, they were sailing from roughly Duluth, Minnesota to Sault Ste. Marie, east across Lake Superior. That is a big lake if you've ever been there. I was stationed near Sault Ste. Marie in the Air Force back in the 1960s, so I'm familiar with the Lake and the locks and also the tremendous storms that can occur over that lake. They headed out on November 9th, and a storm was starting to move in and it was starting to turn gray and there were a few snowflakes in the air as they pulled out of port and began to sail east. Over the next few hours, the storm increased dramatically in strength. It went on all that day and into that night. The winds by midday were up to 85 mph and the waves were up to 55 feet. That's between five and six stories slamming over the bow and the sides of that ship. It sank the next evening with the loss of all 29 aboard. The wreckage revealed later, as divers went down, it was broken in two.

More recently, on October 15, 2015, the 790-foot cargo ship, El Faro, sank off the coast of Florida in just a category 4 hurricane. But the winds that it faced were 155 mph, and it sank.

Now the ark that God commanded Noah to build was roughly seventy-five percent as long as these two ships that sank, with about the same width. So, we see here that normal earthly weather sank these two ships bigger than the ark and they were made of metal and not wood.

With that in mind, let's analyze what the wind and the weather might have been like at the time Noah encountered the flood. We're going to see some unique things happened that have never occurred since.

Genesis 7:11. *In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up ... (KJV)*

It has never happened before or since.

11b) ... and the windows of heaven were opened. (KJV)

There's a website by the Institute for Creation Research. If you go there, it talks about this. I will quote a few sentences from their website.

As "the deep" in scripture usually refers to the ocean, so the "great deep" which was broken up, evidentially speaks of great subterranean chambers deep inside the earth, all of which spewed forth their contents at the same time ... water.

The reference to "broken up" merits attention, for it implies wrenching of the earth's crust, a great tectonic event; the same word used in Numbers 16 to describe the supernatural opening up of a great pit into which the rebellious Korah and his followers and their families fell.

So, it's the same word that indicates the earth opening apart at the time of Moses and Korah. It talks about the great deep, the ocean floors breaking up in a similar manner.

Any such breaching of the earth's crust results in earthquakes, and if occurring under water, results in devastating tsunamis traveling through the water at speeds approaching the speed of sound.

Tremendous events. Can you imagine the fear and the horror of the people at that time when it started raining in a way that had never occurred before and the earth starts rumbling and tearing apart? Then the tsunamis come and winds and currents come and the tides add to all of that. It's just amazing.

Genesis 7:12. *And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.*

...

17) *And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.*

18) *And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.*

19) *And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.*

20) *Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered. (KJV)*

So, the waters, we gather here, covered the earth approximately to the level of twenty-four feet above the earth.

21) *And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth, and every man [human]:*

22) *All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.*

23) *And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. (KJV)*

It doesn't say anything about the fish, just those animals that were on the earth, on dry land.

24) And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days. (KJV)

Genesis 8:2. *The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; (KJV)*

We see here that verse 2 ties in both rain and the fountains of the deep breaking up. So, it appears that it not only rained for forty days, but also these underground aquifers began to open up and the earth's crust was wrenched for forty days also.

It could be that because of the earth's crust breaking up and the gigantic wave action that occurred that we just can't even comprehend, that the earth's surface was totally restructured at that time. It's possible that mountains were reduced in height, so that if there were gigantic mountains at that time, they were just brought down.

There's another possibility that before the flood there were no great mountains. We don't know. If there were no great mountains, and then you have the weight of all of that water on the crust of the earth, that it began pressing down in certain areas and then causing other areas to pop up, like Mount Ararat where the ark landed. That mountain today is 17,750 feet. We don't know how tall it was in the time of Noah, but it's a tall mountain. It could have been created by the waters of the flood. We see that in chapter 8 and verse 4.

Without doubt, this was the most violent storm in the history of mankind up to this point. So, if rain and wind and tides can produce hundred-foot waves today that sink metal ships, much, much larger than Noah's ark, how big were the waves that occurred during the flood? Were they twice as high, two hundred feet? What about a thousand feet? The Empire State Building is 102 stories. A thousand feet is a hundred stories. Can you imagine waves that high and what that would do to the face of the earth and mankind on the earth? This went on not just for a few days as with a hurricane, this went on for nearly six weeks.

People would ask how many people died during the flood. I've done some research and the low estimate I found was about 750 million. The high estimate was over ten billion. Remember, people were on the earth for 1,650 years. They lived to a very long age and they had many kids. So, it's possible that it could be that high. But the average of the numbers I looked into was about four billion or about half of today's population. Nonetheless, it's the biggest catastrophe in the history of mankind up to this point. We've got another one coming. We know about that.

So, because of this, there must be some powerful lessons that God wants us to learn, devoting four chapters to this one singular event.

Now we're going to talk about five lessons that we can learn from the example of Noah and the flood.

1. God gave Noah a part to play in his own salvation.

He gave him specific instructions on how to build this boat, exactly how He wanted it formed and the materials to be used. This seems strange because there is no boat strong enough to withstand the flood and the tsunamis and the waves. No boat could survive that, and yet God gave him specific instructions. If God was going to miraculously save Noah, which He did, God could say, "You can just build any old boat you want. You could build a raft if you want, because I'm going to save you and take care of you." But God didn't do it that way. He told Noah exactly what He wanted him to do and He told him specifically how to do it. He gave very specific instructions. So, God gave Noah a part to play in his own salvation. He had to go to work. He had to build this ark. Then God, after giving the instructions, He patiently waited to see what Noah would do. Was Noah going to obey Him or was Noah going to alter the plans and maybe do it his own way?

What is the lesson for us? We too have a part to play in our salvation. We have specific instructions given to us as to what we should be doing.

Here a man approached Jesus Christ and asked Him a specific question that is the question for all of us.

Matthew 19:16. *And, behold, one came and said unto him [Christ], Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? (KJV)*

That's the question.

17) *And he said unto him, Why call thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, [here's the instruction] keep the commandments. (KJV)*

Then He goes on to enumerate the commandments, so there's no doubt what He was referring to when He mentioned the commandments. So, one instruction is, we have to keep God's word, keep God's commandments.

Then there's the issue of what goes on between our ears. This is our mission, our marching orders as Christians. Here it addresses what goes on in our head and what our motives are.

Ephesians 4:22. *That ye put off concerning the former conversation [conduct] the old man [person], which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;*
23) *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; (KJV)*

This means you have a new spirit in your mind and you get rid of the old spirit.

24) And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (KJV)

You see, we have to have a new spirit, and that spirit is the spirit of God, His mind, His motives, His intentions, His thoughts, His words, His deeds. We have the spirit of God in us. We imitate God as we read in Ephesians 4. Here Paul tells us:

Philippians 2:5. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (KJV)*

The mind of Christ in us. Remember Christ said the night He was taken. He said, "We will come and dwell in you. We will make our abode in you." That's exactly what this is referring to. The Father and the Son make their abode in us and we have their mind, the mind of Jesus Christ.

12) Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed ... (KJV)

Obviously, obedience is a huge part of this.

12b) ... not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. (KJV)

So, you see, working out our own salvation is our part to play, just as God gave Noah a part to play in his salvation. God gives us specific instructions on how we need to work to fulfill our part in achieving our salvation. In that sense, He commands us to build a spiritual ark, whereas Noah built a physical one. We must be as obedient as Noah was in building his physical ark as we build our spiritual ark, which includes having God's spirit, having God's mind, having God's deeds, having God's words and thoughts. So, you see, the first lesson we can learn is God gave Noah and us (by extension) a part to play in our own salvation.

2. Noah was motivated by what he could not see, rather than being motivated by what he could see with his physical eyes.

Now we don't know how long Noah worked on the ark, but the Bible gives us some hints.

Genesis 5:32. *And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (KJV)*

Now go to the next chapter.

Genesis 6:10. *And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (KJV)*

Now notice the very next verse.

- 11) *The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.*
- 12) *And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.*
- 13) *And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. (KJV)*

Then God told Noah to build the ark. We see here that right after the birth of Shem, Ham and Japheth when Noah was five hundred years old, the indications are that very shortly thereafter, God told him to build the ark. But notice now chapter 7 in verse 6.

Genesis 7:6. *And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. (KJV)*

Therefore, I think we can safely conclude that there was probably close to a hundred years from the time that God told Noah to go build the ark until Noah went through the door of the ark and the door was shut, approximately a hundred years.

Let's just take the number one hundred for rounding off numbers. The question is, how many of those hundred years was Noah building the ark under cloudless blue skies? You have this guy out here building this boat and there's not a cloud in the sky. Kind of like today, and here he is building this. How many droughts during that hundred-year period of time? How many droughts did Noah go through building the ark? People are coming up and saying, "You're building this boat out here?" The lakes are drying up and the rivers are drying up. "What are you doing, old man? What's going on?"

As long as it took Noah to build the ark, his motivation was not what he could see with his eyes. He didn't pay attention to cloudless skies. He didn't pay attention to droughts at all. He was motivated by what he could not see, and he never stopped. For a hundred years he kept building and building. He was not motivated by the blue skies he could see. He was motivated by a vision that God gave him and commandments that God told him.

The same should be true for us today. If we based our spiritual sense of urgency, in other words, how hard we work on building our spiritual ark, if we base that on what we see in this world, all of us would probably give up before the end came.

Here Peter is talking about the very days that we're in right now. Think about this as it applies to building Noah's ark and us building our spiritual ark. Here Peter is talking about the last days.

- 2 Peter 3:3.** *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days [our day] scoffers, walking after their own lusts,*
4) *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming [Christ's return]? ... (KJV)*

Where is it? I don't see any evidence of Christ returning.

4b) ... for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. (KJV)

This is called the doctrine of uniformitarianism. What that means is, here we are today and what happens today, that's what happened last week and the week before. What is happening today is going to happen tomorrow and next month and the year after that and it's all going to be the same, and I don't see any evidence of Christ's return, so why are you working so hard? The people said the same thing to Noah. "Why are you working so hard? There isn't any water around here. What's the big deal?"

You see, the reason they were scoffing and the reason people scoff today is they look at the cloudless skies. They look at the things around them. Noah didn't do that. There are many religious people including those who teach in religious institutions that scoff at the Old Testament and they scoff at the account of Noah, but we see here Christ confirms Noah's account. You want to argue with Christ? Then go ahead and argue with Christ when talking about Noah.

Matthew 24:37. *But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

38) For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage [life was going on as normal], until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39) And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (KJV)

You see, to the physical eye, back then as well as today, things are going along just as they have always been. Normal is normal and nothing is changing. That happened until the dark clouds came, until the earth started to rumble and then everything changed, and that's going to happen with us.

You see, we are to walk by something different than physical sight. We are to walk by faith. 2 Corinthians 5:6 says it plainly. We are to walk by faith and not by sight. So, you see Noah's motivation was based on faith. His sense of urgency was not based on his physical sight. It wasn't based on looking at blue skies. The same holds true for us today. We can't base how hard we work spiritually and building our spiritual ark on what we physically see. We cannot do that. We do that to our own peril, just as the people right before the flood came did it to their own peril. But rather, we should have the faith in God's promises, the vision of what is going to come and that Christ will return and, as we're going to see, He will come when least expected. Noah based what he did on what he could not see rather than the conditions around him.

Let's go to the next point.

3. Noah did not let the society around him discourage him or cause him to give up.

Noah didn't allow what was going on at the time he was building the ark to cause him to give up. It was worse in Noah's day than it is right now, but we're getting really close. In Noah's day, the Bible says that every person was evil. It sounds like then that the whole world was so polluted and so perverted that it covered every human being except Noah and his family.

Genesis 6:5. *And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, [notice this] and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (KJV)*

Not just the deeds, but the imagination of what was in the individual's innermost being.

11) *The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.*
12) *And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his [God's] way upon the earth. (KJV)*

So, this tells us every motive and every thought was evil continually and the earth was corrupt and filled with violence. It sounds like the earth today. We have pockets where maybe there is no violence where people are attempting to do good and attempting to follow God, but we're getting closer and closer with every passing day.

Did this evil cause Noah to compromise? Did this evil cause Noah to get discouraged? Did it wear him down or wear him out so that he just put the tools down and walked off the job so to speak? Notice what happened during that hundred-year period of time. This is something I don't think we appreciate enough of what actually happened.

We talked a minute ago about how Christ confirmed Noah. He confirmed the fact that Noah lived, He confirmed the fact of the flood. Peter is doing the same thing. So, if you want to argue about Noah, you have to argue with Christ and Peter.

2 Peter 2:5. *And [God] spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person ["person" is in italics], a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; (KJV)*

Noah is called a preacher. The Greek word for "preacher" means *a herald*. That's a *crier, an announcer*. It says, *a herald that is of divine truth*. This word is only used three times in the New Testament, here and the other two times, Paul says, "I am an apostle and a preacher." So, this tells us that Noah was a preacher just like Paul was a preacher, the same word. The inference is that Noah was not hiding building the ark. He built the ark in plain sight so that preaching could occur.

Now let's go back to 1 Peter 3.

1 Peter 3:18. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened [made alive] by the Spirit: (KJV)*

I will read verse 19 from the NLT.

19) So, he [Christ] went and preached to the spirits in prison (NLT)

Who were these spirits? The Greek word for “spirits”, we know, is “pneuma” and it means *lives*. So, what we’re being told here is that Christ went to preach to live people. Notice what the context is. Who are they?

20) those who disobeyed God long ago when God waited patiently while Noah was building his ark. Only eight people were saved from drowning in that terrible flood. (NLT)

To these pre-flood humans, Christ used Noah to preach the truth to them of the lives they were living and what was going to happen to them if they did not change. Clarke’s Commentary says, “Christ preached by the ministry of Noah.” Jameson, Fausset and Brown Commentary says, “So before His incarnation, He preached in spirit through Noah to the antediluvians.” So, this tells us if Noah had a hundred years to build the ark, he wasn’t just building, he was also preaching to the people so they would be without excuse.

We’ve seen that Christ confirmed the account of Noah, Peter confirmed the account of Noah, and now Paul confirms the account of Noah. So, if you say, “no, it’s just a myth, then you have to go against Christ and Peter and Paul and have an argument.

Hebrews 11:7. *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet [by what he didn’t see], moved with fear ... (KJV)*

Jameson, Fausset and Brown says this fear was *reverential fear, out of reverence to God.*

7b) ... prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which [notice] he condemned the world ... (KJV)

How did he condemn the world? The Greek word for “condemned” means *to judge against, that is, to sentence or to damn*. Now how did he do that? By publicly proclaiming the conditions of the society around him and what was going to happen if they did not repent. He was telling them, “You better repent before it’s too late. Of course, we know that they laughed him to scorn because nobody heeded, nobody changed.

Now let’s put Noah’s building an ark in a modern-day context. We live in the high desert of central Washington, for those of you out there watching this later. We live in the high

desert of central Washington. Interstate 90 is the main interstate. It runs east to west from Seattle all the way toward the east. Let's say Noah was building his ark by an exit on Interstate 90, visible from the interstate, out in a field. All of a sudden, this boat starts to take shape. Guess what's going to happen. People are going to pull off the interstate and see this. They pull off the interstate and drive up to this boat, get out and say, "Old man, what are you doing? You're out here building a boat in the middle of nowhere. Where's the water? The nearest water that could support a boat like this is two hundred miles as the crow flies." Noah says calmly, "The water will come. Let me tell you how and why." Then he starts to preach to them. If it was today, you would have the TV and reporters and newspaper men and magazine reporters and it would be all over the internet in a short period of time.

It's my personal opinion that most of the world knew about Noah. He didn't have the communications. They didn't exist in his time. That is why God allowed a hundred years for Noah to build the ark and the word to spread around the entire earth, because people were trading. Ships were going back and forth and all of that in those days. Yes, it would take a hundred years, but you see, God is not going to kill people without notification. God is not going to similarly wipe people off the face of the earth if they have not been warned. This is why God allowed a hundred years for this story to reach around the earth. Undoubtedly people were scoffing and poking fun at Noah. This crazy guy is building some boat, this preacher out in the middle of nowhere, and it went on for a hundred years.

I don't think we appreciate what Noah went through. Can you imagine the ridicule for a hundred years? We think we are persecuted sometimes and life is tough and we have opposition and people come against us. Think of what Noah went through for a hundred years with not one person believing him. As we say today, he didn't have a support group other than God.

What about us? How does that apply to us? We know one of Satan's tactics is to allow this evil society to wear us down day by day, hour by hour, almost like erosion. Water can bring a mountain down over enough time. Drip by drip, it can wear people down. That's prophesied in Daniel 7. It's prophesied for back then, prophesied for the early New Testament church and prophesied for us today. It's talking about one of the kings of the resurrected Roman Empire.

Daniel 7:25. And he ... (KJV)

This resurrected king of the Roman Empire in prophecy.

25b) ... shall speak great words against the most High, [notice this] and shall wear out the saints of the most High ... (KJV)

Strong's says that the Aramaic word for "wear out" is used only *in a mental sense*. It's not talking about wearing us out physically, like hard labor or in prison. It means mentally. The Aramaic means *wear out emotionally and mentally*. The Complete Jewish Bible says *exhaust the holy ones*. So, we see here that it is prophesied that

Satan, who is behind it all, wants to wear out the saints mentally and emotionally, and that principle holds true for us today in these end times. That's why Christ said in Matthew 24, *He who endures to the end shall be saved*. Endure this effort to wear us out. We can gain encouragement from Noah that he went a hundred years without anyone supporting him and everybody ridiculing him. If he can do it, so can we. It's a huge lesson for us.

4. Noah focused on what God told him to do.

God came to Noah and said, "I am going to destroy the world, and here is how I am going to do it." He didn't tell him when. He said, "I'm going to destroy the world. Here's how I'm going to destroy the world. It's through a flood." God didn't tell him when, but He said, "I'm going to save you with an ark and I want you to start building it." But again, He didn't tell him when. "Start building. Keep your eye on the ball. Keep your eye on the vision. Obey Me and do what I tell you to do." One of the things that God told him to do was build this ark, very specifically. He wasn't worried about when. There is no record in the Bible that Noah would come to God and say, "Well, when is this going to happen? How long is it going to last? How long am I going to be building this boat?" There's no record of that. All we're told is Noah did what God told him to do. Instead of worrying about when, what Noah did is he focused on the job he had been given, building and preaching. Those were the two jobs, the two mandates from God. Build this boat and be a preacher of righteousness. Tell them the truth. Tell them what's going to happen if they don't repent.

Now we will go back to Genesis 6. We read this earlier, but sometimes I don't think we appreciate this one little verse.

Genesis 6:22. *Thus did Noah ... (KJV)*

Meaning he built and he preached.

22b) ... according to all that God commanded him, so did he. (KJV)

So, it appears that Noah did not spend his days fixated on when, asking God, "When is this going to happen? When are you going to bring the flood?" He wasn't trying to figure out when it was going to occur. Rather, he was focused on what God told him to do, to build and to preach.

Then one day, out of the blue, notice what happened. Noah is building and things were going along and notice what happened.

Genesis 7:1. *And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. (KJV)*

All the time Noah was building, he didn't change his character. He grew in character and obedience. He didn't deviate, he didn't quit, he didn't whine, he didn't cry.

Here God is telling Noah,

4) For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made.” (NKJV)

Noah went into the ark, the door was shut, and they spent a week there with no rain. God said, “I’m going to do it in seven days. I want you to get into the ark now.”

5) And Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him. (NKJV)

So, it appears that Noah was only given seven days’ notice before the flood came. Do you know why? Because that’s all he needed was seven days’ notice. He did what he was commanded to do and God took care of the rest.

Now the same holds true for us today. We have been told through God’s word, that Christ is going to come and destroy this order on the earth. We’re even told how He is going to do it. But we aren’t told when. Just like Noah, we’re not told when it’s going to occur. Remember what Christ said. He said, “*Of that day and that hour knows no man, not even the angels, but my Father only.*” That means Christ didn’t know. Only the Father knew.

Matthew 24:36. “*But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. (NKJV)*

It never ceases to amaze me how every once and a while somebody will pop up and say that they have it figured out when Christ is going to return. I heard it in the 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s and you hear it still today. Somebody has it figured out. But Christ says that there’s only one being that knows when this time is, and Christ says, “It isn’t me and it isn’t the angels, and it for sure isn’t us.” So, when you see somebody who says, “I know when this occurs”, it just can’t be. We don’t know when, so what should our focus be? Here Christ tells us what our focus should be in a parable.

Luke 12:40. “*Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” (NKJV)*

We can count on that. When we don’t expect it, that is when Christ is returning. When we do expect it, it’s not going to happen then.

42) And the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?

43) Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.

44) Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. (NKJV)

Now notice verse 45.

45) But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming ... (NKJV)

Where is the sign of His coming, as Peter said?

45b) ...and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk ... (NKJV)

In other words, going back into the world, turning back on the life that God called us to live.

46) the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware ... (NKJV)

Notice the severest of penalties.

46b) ... and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. (NKJV)

So, you see, like Noah, we are commanded to focus on doing what we've been instructed to do. God's word is very plain on what we should be doing. Noah was given very plain instructions on what he was to do and he obeyed them diligently, and we should also. Do what we've been told to do and don't worry about when. Don't worry about the timing, but patiently wait for salvation while being about our Father's business. That is our job.

5. Noah learned that it was God who does the saving.

This is a point that we must all learn. Noah learned that it is God who does the saving. Think about this. Noah built a boat that could not save him. He spent a hundred years building a craft that could not save him. I don't care how perfect the boat was, how big the boat was, what the design of the boat was. Given what happened on the earth, there is no humanly-built boat that could withstand all of that, to have a global flood of those proportions and the crust of the earth breaking up and the tsunamis and all of that, no humanly built boat could survive.

You see, the lesson is that it took God's divine intervention and salvation. That was what was required. God had to intervene to save Noah and the ark and everything that was in the ark. Remember, the boat wasn't even propelled. You couldn't even go into the waves. As far as we know, there was no rudder on the boat. It was just like a cork. God had to intervene to save Noah and his family. That is a huge lesson. The same is true for us, that we cannot save ourselves. Our works can't save us.

Here is a very familiar scripture, but apply it to Noah, because no matter how well Noah built the boat and how he followed all the instructions, if God wasn't there and if God didn't intervene, that boat would be crushed to splinters.

Ephesians 2:8. *For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: (KJV)*

The words "it is" are in italics, meaning that the grace and the faith are gifts. Both are gifts from God. That faith and that grace doesn't come from us.

9) Not of works, lest any man should boast. (KJV)

So, you see, as with Noah, his salvation was a gift. He couldn't save himself. That boat could not save him. His salvation was a gift. It is not a function of any boat we can personally build. Our spiritual ark, no matter how well we obey, no matter how well we try to mold our character in the image of Jesus Christ, we, by our works cannot save ourselves. It is a gift from God. God calls our works "filthy rags" in Isaiah 64. We are imperfect human beings. We make mistakes. We sin. As with Noah, we cannot save ourselves. It takes God and God's mercy and God's love. That will save us, not anything we can do. God saves us through Jesus Christ. God created the world through Jesus Christ. In a similar way, God saves us through Jesus Christ.

The Bible is very plain. If we just read the Bible and listen to what these verses say to us, it is very plain. Paul says,

1 Timothy 1:1. *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, (NKJV)*

This tells us that it is God who is our savior, and Jesus Christ who is our hope. Now notice 1 Thessalonians 5:9.

1 Thessalonians 5:9. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, (KJV)*

So, you see, the Father saves us through Christ. The fact is, as God saved Noah, God will save us, if we do our part. Noah built the boat and the boat couldn't save him, but he built the boat; and God told him to preach and he preached. Noah did everything that God told him to do, but no matter what Noah did or how well he did it, that did not save him. The boat could not save him.

The same is true for us. God tells us what we should be doing, what we should be thinking, how we should spend our time, how we should relate to other people. He gives specific instructions. Even if we did all that perfectly, it wouldn't save us. It is God's mercy, God's love, Christ's sacrifice, Christ's resurrection that saves us. So, as God saved Noah, God will save us if we do our part.

Let's conclude. Not only is the story of Noah and the ark set apart in the book of Genesis, but it was also set apart by Christ and it was also reaffirmed by Peter and Paul. So, this must be a very important event. If God and Christ and the apostles highlighted the days of Noah and Genesis spent as much time on this one event, on Noah and the flood, just about as much time as it did on the previous 1,650 years of man's existence, then clearly this event is recorded for our learning. It is an event that we should remember and study.

Let's also remember that the flood was an example of God's love for humanity.

This is a physical reminder of God's love and God's mercy for all mankind. God says,

Genesis 9:11. *And I will establish my covenant with you [Noah], neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there anymore be a flood to destroy the earth.*

12) And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: (KJV)

This is the sign.

13) I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

14) And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

15) And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. (KJV)

So, let's learn the lessons from the account of Noah and the ark and the flood.