

GREAT LESSONS FROM THE FLOOD

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Introduction:

- A. Throughout history there have been several major events that have changed the course of all mankind... The Tower of Babel, The Death & Resurrection of Jesus, The Fall of the Roman Empire, The Black Death, The Discovery Of America, WWI & WWII, 9-11-01 – Each teach us great lessons!
- B. Another event that completely changed the course of history was the worldwide flood of Noah's day. This too leaves great lessons to be learned by those who survived & those who would come after

IMPORTANT LESSONS FROM THE FLOOD OF NOAH'S DAY

A. Sin Is Devastating And God Takes Sin Seriously:

1. God destroyed the whole world with a flood as a punishment for man's wickedness (**Gen 6:5-6**)
 - a. Sinful living had become the norm – It was a universal problem infecting all of mankind!
 - b. Sinfulness was widespread and firmly rooted in everyone except Noah and his family!
People were rushing headlong into sinful thoughts & behavior without any restraint!
 - c. Man was so corrupted they are described as being continually evil in every intention of the thoughts of their hearts... Were completely consumed by sin and would not repent!
 - d. Things got so bad that God sorry He had even made man & His heart was filled with grief.
Think of a parent looking at their child & saying, "I'm sorry I even had you!" It'd take a whole lot of evil and pain to get to that point! And yet God's love is so much more perfect than a parent's love. I doubt we can appreciate fully just how bad things got!
2. God responds to man's great wickedness by sending the most destructive catastrophe this world has ever seen and ever will see until it is destroyed at the end of time! (**Gen 6:7; 7:20-24**)
 - a. God uses strong language as He speaks of this punishment – He says He will "Blot out man" – Means to wipe out, blot out, exterminate, obliterate. It was serious to God!
 - b. For forty days and forty nights it rains upon the whole earth and waters come up from the ground as well. The entire world is flooded 45 feet above the mountain tops and the water stays 150 days. Every person who is outside the ark drowns in the flood!
 - c. Does sin matter? Just ask those who refused to repent and had to swim until they died!
 - d. To some this may sound like an extreme response, but God handles the widespread sinfulness this way because sin is evil & His perfect justice demands it be punished!
3. **Lesson:** Sin is destructive, it's powerful to corrupt us, and must be taken seriously (**Prov 5:21-23**)
4. **Lesson:** While God is loving & merciful, He will punish those who refuse to repent! (**2 Peter 2:4-9**)
 - a. Many people have formulated their own view of God which makes them comfortable...
They believe in a God who is a God of love and is so much a God of love that He would never condemn anyone and would never send anyone to an eternity Hell!
 - b. Why emphasize the goodness & ignore the severity? It's more comfortable to them! It allows them to live how they want and to believe people will be saved who aren't!

B. God Is Extremely Patient In His Dealings With Us:

1. We do not know how long the earth was filled with wickedness, but we can be certain that it had been full of wickedness for a very long time (**Genesis 4:26, 5:32; 6:1-4**)
 - a. Just as it is with any society, their great wickedness did not take place overnight – It was likely a process of digression where each generation became more & more ungodly.

- b. The 120 years of Genesis 6:3 does not refer to the lifespan of man, because men after the days of Noah still lived long past that age. It seems then to refer to the amount of time God gave man to live before He'd punish the world with this flood – Patience!
 - c. Why did God not cause the flood to take place when the wickedness first started to develop? As the wickedness increased why did God wait some more time? Like with the final coming of Jesus, only one reason makes sense – Time for repentance!
 - d. Noah was a “preacher of righteousness” – Perhaps God was giving mankind a chance to listen to Noah’s message & repent. Letting time pass emphasizes God’s longsuffering
2. The very fact that God chose to use a flood to wipe out everyone but Noah and his family also demonstrates the longsuffering of God (**Genesis 9:1**)
- a. God could have come in and just wiped out man completely for their sinfulness... He could have done away with mankind altogether and made a new creation or none at all.
 - b. Instead God preserves these eight souls & starts over – God still wanted fellowship with man. He still wanted to have children spending eternity with Him in Heaven!
 - c. Saving Noah & his family meant letting man continue on this earth... It meant going ahead with the difficult plan of redemption through the death of Jesus... It meant letting man repopulate the earth knowing the majority would turn away and live in sin!
3. **Lesson:** While God does punish sin, He is very patient as He deals with us in our weaknesses. As we sin & struggle with our faith He gives us room for change! (**2 Pet 3:5, 9**)

C. We See An Example Of How Faith, Obedience, And Grace All Come Together

1. As we already observed, Noah found grace in the eyes of God because he was righteous (**Gen 6:8**)
- a. We know grace means, “Unmerited Favor” or “God giving me what I don’t deserve” but it may sound like this is saying Noah deserved God’s grace because of his righteousness
 - b. Noah was not a perfectly righteous man... Jesus is the only one who achieved a perfectly sinless life. Noah’s salvation from the flood & his ultimate salvation was still by grace
 - c. God chose to save Noah & his family due to his righteous life – No, he wasn’t sinless, but God matched his strong desire to live godly with the grace he needed for salvation!
2. As Noah built the ark, he was careful to do all that God commanded him (**Genesis 6:22; 7:5**)
- a. God gave Noah some very specific commands about building the ark – He specified what kind of wood, what size, the number of doors, the number of windows, & more!
 - b. Why would God tell Noah to build it that way? Simple... that’s how God wanted it done!
 - c. What if Noah decided to use a different wood because it was softer? Make more windows so men might be interested in coming on board? Or make it bigger for more room?
3. The very fact that Noah went ahead and built the ark is a testimony to his great faith (**Heb 11:7**)
- a. It hadn’t flooded before, there weren’t storm clouds on the horizon when the command was given, & human logic says such a flood is impossible... But Noah walked by faith!
 - b. Faith motivated complete & trusting obedience... This was the pattern of in all of his life
 - c. If Noah decided not to build the ark, build something different, or in a different way than God said, would he still be a man of faith? Would he have been saved by his faith?
4. The example of Noah helps make clear one of the most misunderstood and misapplied subjects in religious circles – The connection between faith, obedience, & grace! (**Eph 2:8; Heb 11:6**)
- a. Notice Paul says “By Grace Through Faith” → Grace certainly speaks of God’s great favor toward us, but whose responsibility is faith? We’re responsible for the faith part!

- b. No one says that a person who says that faith is necessary for salvation is trying to earn their salvation, so why the hang up with baptism? Both are things God tells us that we must do! Grace, faith, and obedience all come together for our salvation!
- c. We learn from the example of Noah, and all the others of Hebrews 11, that the kind of faith that saves not only “believes” in the heart but obeys from the heart!

D. We Can Live Righteously In A Very Unrighteous World:

1. As Moses records the history of mankind in the book of Genesis, he pictures well just how wicked people became then follows with the two words, “But Noah” (**Genesis 6:8; 7:1; 2 Peter 2:5**)
 - a. Noah was literally the salt of the earth! When God looked down at mankind, the crown and glory of His creation, He was disgusted, except when He observed Noah!
 - b. Noah was a herald of righteousness – This could mean he literally spoke to people trying to convince them to live righteously or he preached through the example of his life
 - c. Everyone around Noah & his family were doing wrong, everybody’s standards were different, everyone else had different goals & pursuits... But Noah found grace!
2. The Lord gives a great commendation concerning Noah’s righteousness by listing him with three two as exemplary men of godliness, faithfulness, and character (**Ezekiel 14:20**)
 - a. What do these three men have in common? They all lived righteously in extremely adverse environments. They did right regardless of how wicked their society was!
 - b. We’ve discussed Noah’s wicked society... Then there’s Lot who was righteous in spite of Sodom & Gomorrah... Then Daniel who was righteous in spite of Babylonian captivity
 - c. Noah, Lot, and Daniel fought against the ungodly peer pressure, resisted temptation, kept their hearts pure when it was constantly bombarded with sinful images & lifestyles
3. The example of Noah shatters the excuse many use today – It doesn’t matter how ungodly the society around us grows, we can please God and live righteously (**I Peter 2:11-12**)

E. God Is Faithful – He Always Keeps His Promises:

1. We see the faithfulness of God displayed because He sent the great flood upon the world just like He had promised (**Genesis 5:32; 7:6**)
 - a. Noah was about 500 yrs when God said the flood was coming & commanded him to build the ark. He was 600 when the flood waters came – About 100 years passed!
 - b. We struggle to trust God’s promises when we have to wait a few years, a month, or even a week... Imagine having to wait 100 years for a particular promise to be fulfilled!
 - c. Plus, there had never been a flood like this, it may not have even truly rained before - Even when it doesn’t seem likely or even possible, God always keeps His promises
2. After the flood, God put a rainbow in the sky as a sign of the covenant, a promise made, between God and man (**Gen 9:11-16**)
 - a. This covenant states that God will never destroy the world again with a flood – Certainly there have been many “local” floods, but never again a global flood like Noah’s.
 - b. This rainbow stood as a reminder of this promise... And still today when it rains, especially a good spring or summer storm, we can look to the skies and see beautiful rainbows!
 - c. Just another piece of evidence assuring us that God is in control & His words stand firm!
3. Still today the flood stands as a perpetual witness to the faithfulness of God and the steadfast nature of His promises. We have His promises as an anchor for the soul! (**Heb 6:13-20**)