

The Great Flood (Part 1)

Prelude To Deluge

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“Water, water every where, nor any drop to drink,” or so goes a couple of lines from *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. To the Mariner’s fevered mind as he was there on the ocean, looking around, there was not any wisp of wind in the air, the sight of water all around him brought him only despair.

One might imagine that similar thoughts ran through Noah’s mind as he sat or stood on the ark, looking out from the window that God had him build into the ark as he beheld untold miles of uninterrupted ocean in every direction. Yet, I do not think that Noah had a feeling of despair. I believe the feeling was different for Noah. As a man of faith (as we know he was), a man who believed God and acted accordingly, a man who had heard God’s voice (God had given Noah instructions and told him that He would bring him through this), maybe he felt (not despair I am sure, and perhaps he was not even worried) wonder at the power and the majesty of God’s mighty hand.

Just a few months before there had been civilization and all that went with it—trees, flowers, hills, mountains, lakes, rivers, millions or perhaps billions of people, their cities, and all the things that go on in human commerce. And now, just a few months later, all Noah saw was water—water under him, and maybe while looking out during the tremendous cloudbursts, water above him too. It was all around him. All he had was the ark, and God’s promise.

But he had with this feeling of wonder a confident expectation of deliverance, that God would pull him and his family through this great catastrophe. That is the kind of man Noah was.

We really cannot fathom the great Flood. We know about huge bodies of water. Many of us have lived by the Pacific Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, the Indian Ocean, the North Sea, the Great Lakes, or other large lakes. Those are huge bodies of water. You cannot see the other side. But we do not have any ability to understand the entire earth being under water, with no land anywhere—not a spot, not a grain of sand which we could call earth, not an island, not the top of a mountain—nothing, but endless water. Water, water everywhere!

It is inconceivable to the modern mind, to the way that we look at things through our scientific approach, that the earth would ever have a big catastrophe like that. This is a

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uniformitarian earth—things have always gone as they always have, and will continue to do so. The idea of a Noachian deluge receives almost unanimous ridicule and skepticism. The best people can do these days (if they are not evangelical Christians or true church of God Christians) is to believe that it was a localized flood, and that somewhere over in the Mediterranean region and toward Mesopotamia there was a severe flood. And then the legends went out from there saying that it was so severe, and it was exaggerated, and ever so much more, and finally we have the idea of Noah's flood that we find in the Bible.

Even today we have it caricatured and lampooned by most people who think that it is a kind of biblical fairy tale fit only for Sunday school lessons and the covers of coloring books. That is about all the attention it gets nowadays.

Noah's Flood happened just like the Bible says it happened. And it says in Genesis 7:20 that the tops of all the mountains were covered by at least 15 cubits of water. Using the 18 inch cubit, that is about 22 or 23 feet. The tops of the tallest mountains were submerged by at least 22 feet. Most people who study into this story think that the draft of the ark was also about 22 feet because Noah and the ark were able to cover the whole face of the waters without bumping into or grounding into anything at all. So, it was at least 22 feet over the tallest mountains.

The mountains of the antediluvian world might have been shorter than today's Mt. Everest, but the tallest was surely several thousand feet high. You could not call them mountains otherwise. There must have been mountains at least a mile or two high. Mt. Everest is toward six miles high.

The whole earth was covered by at least a couple of miles of water. It is something that we really cannot fathom. The enormity of such an act of God just overwhelms our mind. We cannot really conceive of it.

The fact is, as much as the Flood was an actual historical event, it was also a supernatural occurrence. This is the reason why so few people believe that it occurred. It happened because God Himself intervened in the affairs of mankind, and acted in love with justice and judgment to bring one world to an end, and to begin a new one.

We are not just dealing with physical circumstances, and we are not dealing necessarily with science as we know it today, because God did something Himself to intervene in the way that He set up the universe so that this huge catastrophe occurred. If He had not done anything, and had not interposed Himself into man's affairs, it would have continued on and on. But He stepped in, and with a big bang (no pun intended) He

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changed things! So it was, in many respects, natural and historic. You have to factor in that God by His great power stepped into our world, and changed things forever by His awesome power.

It was a catastrophe of truly divine proportions both in destruction and in renewal. He did not just destroy all the earth and all that was in it or on it; on the other side, there was a new creation, and a whole new ballgame, and a whole new world.

This divine catastrophe was so large that without faith it is impossible to accept it as true, just like the original creation. Most people simply reject it, because they do not believe God, and they do not think that He has the power to do what He says that He did.

I am going to take the next few sermons to plunge into the Bible's account of the Great Flood in Genesis 6 through 9. I will not just cover the Flood, but it will be the events leading up to the Flood, during the Flood, and after the Flood. These sermons might contain a little bit of everything as we try to make sense of the information that has been recorded for us in the Bible.

Also, there is going to be quite a bit of speculation, so I do not want you saying that I was dogmatic about something. If I do sound dogmatic about something that I am speculating on, it is just my way of saying that I believe this is the way that it is, myself. But there looks to be a lot of things that I can give you that are maybe not just interesting, but even in certain ways astounding, about how all of this could have happened.

We only have what is written, so those are the things that I *can* be dogmatic about. There is a lot of space between the lines where we can maybe speculate a little detail and try to expand this out so that it becomes a nice vivid picture for you, and we can, therefore, more easily draw the lessons from it. We will try to see how things may have worked, and what may have happened, from what clues have been left for us here.

Most of all I hope to see, through the whole series, evidence that the Flood and Noah's faithful works are not only plausible, but absolutely certain to have happened. I hope that what I am able to present gives you a good feeling for it, and enhance your faith in God's Word and what He presents to us.

I want to pick up where I left off in my previous sermon, "The Days of Noah" which I gave about a month before the Feast of Tabernacles. We were in Genesis 6 then, so if you go back there, we will re-read some of the verses, and summarize a little bit of what

I went over. This chapter is just after the genealogy of the preachers of righteousness, the line from Seth to Noah. Then chapter 6 opens,

Genesis 6:1-4 Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

If you will recall, the last half of that sermon focused on that long-debated topic of who were the sons of God and the daughters of men, and of course, the resulting evil that was visited on the pre-Flood world. My conclusion in that sermon was that the sons of God were indeed angels, but their taking of wives did not mean sexual union. But it implied a demon-possession, or strong demon influence of the men. And then these men sought for themselves wives of all they chose and engendered a whole generation of children reared by these demon-influenced parents.

This idea of real people demon-influenced solves the problem that comes up. How can two different kinds produce offspring? They cannot. You cannot put a dog and a cat in a room and expect to get 'cogs,' or 'dats,' or whatever after a few months' time. It just does not work that way. They are two different kinds, two different animal families, let alone genera or species. The human species is a kind of its own, and the angels are another kind. In fact, they are spirit, while we are made of the physical matter of the earth.

These two cannot meet either. They do not go together. There had to be a special miracle from God to make His Son a human being when He impregnated Mary. And this, we understand from the New Testament, was a one-time thing. He was an absolute unique individual. This was something beyond the abilities of the angel kind. They do not have that sort of ability—only God does.

What we have here is human offspring and children being influenced by demons. It was so pronounced that they were, in all other respects, sons of the Devil, sons of Belial, and sons of demons. They were not half angel/half man, but totally human. They had such a demonic influence that they began acting like children of demons. That is how

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the Bible typically uses the phrase, “the son of,” or “the children of.” They do not have to be direct, literal descendants, but rather they act like their parents. Like Jesus said to the Jews, “You call yourselves the sons of Abraham, and so you are. But you don't act like Abraham! You killed the prophets. You're trying to kill me. You're like your father the Devil!”

Here we have a gospel account of a similar thing happening compared to what happened to mankind before the Flood. People became so open to the influence of Satan that they became, in all respects, people of Satan—the whole society. The generations, as it says in verse 4, that were produced under the childrearing practices of Satan and his demons, became what is was known as “Nephilim.” This term is expressed as “mighty ones,” or “fallen ones,” or both.

The word “giants” came through the Latin *gigantes*, because it was thought they were of great stature. That could have been part of it. There were obviously men of great stature, both before and after the Flood. Verse 4 says that, but that is not the thing that interested God here. He did not care about the height of men, but their character—what was between their ears, and what was in their heart. In this case, these were mighty men who were of great influence and reputation. And they were also the fallen ones.

This is an interesting idea to put it into the terms as the world looks at the fall of man. That was bad enough, but the implication here is that even though mankind “fell” in the Garden of Eden—they did not live up to the expectations of God in obedience and submission—mankind now had sunk down lower. It was character degeneration at this point. They fell from the normal human mores. They went down further.

From what we understand, the people were also very aggressive and ambitious, according to the descriptions given in the Bible. They were influenced to take wives with such traits as to bear children who would dominate and crush their opposition. That is what Satan and the demons try to do. They try to divide and conquer. They try to grind people down under their heel to submit to them. Satan and his demons want to rule this world. They would oppress to destroy. That is the sort of people that Satan got mankind to produce at this time, more so than it is now. They sought power and fame in order to be known and have a certain reputation.

Of course, they became men of renown or “men of name.” They became very well known. They became notable among the people before the Flood. They were, as we might say, notorious in today's negative sense. They were known for their evil and the bad things that they did.

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They were highly respected, I am sure, out of fear. People feared them because they had a callous disregard (like the demons) for life and law. It did not matter who you were, or what you stood for; they were going to run over you, and who cared what happened to you. They were going to do what they wanted, to get what they wanted, and evidently, they did.

With little opposition to their wickedness, this sort of thing grew and spread, and it was soon throughout all humanity. There was not a single person before the Flood who was not affected by it.

My guess is that this began to take place in the days of Enoch. We have it here in Genesis 6 that it seems to just happen only before the Flood. But my guess is that the demons' plan for all this began in the days of Enoch. That was Noah's great-grandfather. If you look in Genesis 5:21, you will see that Enoch lived 65 years and begot Methuselah. Methuselah was 187 when he begot Lamech, Lamech was 182 when he begot Noah. So we have Noah, his father Lamech, his grandfather Methuselah, and great-grandfather Enoch. Here is listed four of the last five generations born before the Flood (Shem, Ham, and Japheth being of the fifth).

If we do the math, the days of Enoch were about 650 years after creation, which means that it was about 1,000 years before the Flood. So the last 1,000 years before the Flood was this period of precipitous moral decline and degeneracy. I bet you did not think that it was that long—a thousand years! But things like this take a while.

I think it reached a low point at about 950 years after creation when Enoch had to be translated. That was *a* low point, not *the* low point. That point was probably at about 120 years before the Flood when God made his pronouncement to Noah.

The translation of Enoch occurred because Enoch was about to see death. God translated him so that he would not see death. He saved him and delivered him from a crisis. It appears that the crisis was that somebody was trying to kill him, probably for something that he preached. Whatever happened, however it worked out, it effectively ended his preaching. We do not have any indication of anything that happened with Enoch after this translation, because God took him, and he leaves history.

It is my educated guess that God took him to some secluded area, and he either died like Moses on the mount, or that he finished out his life in a very remote place dying naturally away from everybody else. But he was a man, and it is given to men once to die; he died at some point. But he was allowed to preach only about 300 years. He walked with God 300 years after he begot Methuselah, his days being 365 years. Since

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he had Methuselah at age 65, it appears that he died within the year of being translated.

Perhaps. Perhaps not. Maybe my chronology is all wrong, and maybe the translation occurred before then. Who knows? The Bible simply does not say in exact detail. But, this was a low point in this history because I think (my guess) that this is when the bad guys overtook the good guys. The balance shifted in favor of the evil ones because suddenly the greatest preacher of righteousness—Enoch—was out of the way.

Perhaps Methuselah and Lamech did some preaching, but the Bible indicates that it was not until Noah that any significant preaching of God's way was done again. We do not know how righteous Methuselah or Lamech were, but Lamech did name his son Noah, saying, "This one will comfort us concerning our work, and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD had cursed." Evidently, there was some knowledge and practice of God's way in that family. Noah evidently was reared in a godly way. Maybe not, but it seems that way though. You would not come up with a person this good in a society that bad unless there had been some good training take place in his life. But as far as preaching goes, the next one talked about is Noah.

If you go back to Genesis 4:19, you will see that this Lamech is the evil Lamech of the line of Cain. There were two men named Lamech before the Flood that we know of. And this one, being born of Cain's line, took for himself two wives. And then verse 23 says,

Genesis 4:23 For I have killed a man for wounding me, even a young man for hurting me.

If you would compare the genealogy of Cain's family in chapter 4, with the genealogy of Seth's family in chapter 5, you will find that Lamech of the line of Cain, is of the same generation Enoch is. They are both in the sixth generation from Adam. It is interesting that at this point, the sixth generation that the balance tipped in favor of the evil men. Remember that the number six is the number of man. It was in this generation that things really began to go downhill.

Lamech and Enoch were contemporaries, and it is perhaps the evil deeds of Lamech that Enoch preached against, because Lamech, it says here, was a murderer and a polygamist. And there is some speculation that the young man that Lamech killed was Enoch, "because this young man hurt me." Now, he would not have known that he actually killed Enoch, because God took him. There is some question in that. I am not making this a dogmatic statement either way. But it is interesting to know that Lamech and Enoch were of the same generation, and a man of this bad character was around at

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the same time that Enoch had to be taken away because of persecution. I just wanted to throw that at you to think about.

What was it that Enoch preached? There is a little snippet preserved of the preaching of Enoch in the book of Jude, a prophecy of the end time, but it could just as easily been a prophecy of the end of the world before the Flood.

Jude 14-15 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

This "seventh from Adam" is different from what I just said. As we count generations today, we say that Enoch is the sixth generation from Adam. I am pretty sure that Jude was counting Abel, but he was of the same generation as Seth, both being sons of Adam. So naturally speaking, Enoch was the sixth from Adam. [Enoch could also be the seventh from creation, counting Adam as first generation. Enoch is the seventh man in the list.]

Regarding the passage, the word "ungodly" is used four times in verse 15. A man like Lamech would certainly want such teaching to be silenced, if Enoch was preaching a message of judgment on ungodliness, and Lamech was the poster child. He did not care a whit what God said—he would marry two wives; he would kill anybody who offended him; he became a man who would do just about anything.

Enoch, here, speaks of three areas of ungodliness, and shows the comprehensiveness of his message. He talks about being totally ungodly by which he (1) convicts all who are ungodly (their manner and whole being), (2) doing ungodly deeds, and (3) speaking ungodly words. He was not really keyed in on one specific thing, but rather speaking a whole message of ungodliness against these people. Not only did he preach to those who were ungodly against other people, but also those who say ungodly things against God. This was a very comprehensive message of righteousness.

It is quite an indictment against those people. You can see how somebody who was so steeped in evil as Lamech seems to have been would want to shut the man up. It appears that he might have.

If we go back to Genesis 6:3, we find that God says,

Genesis 6:3 And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

It seems that mankind's wickedness reached a point of no-return when Noah was age 480, or about 120 years before the Flood. This is when many people believe that God reduced the lifespan of men to 120 years, but the way that it is written does not lend itself quite to that point. Besides, it took about another 1,000 years or so before men dropped down to the typical 70 to 80 years. Moses lived to be 120 years too. Aaron was about 123. Joseph lived to about 110. Isaac lived about 180, and Abraham lived to 175, while Jacob lived to be 160. You can see, on down the line, men were living still a good long time. I bet most of you would like to double your lifespan.

It seems more likely, by the way that this is constructed, that He means that mankind's days would be limited to only 120 more years (in this era before the Flood). Remember, He had just said that He was not going to fight with these guys. "I'm not going to contend forever like this. They keep going downhill into evil, and more evil. I'll give them 120 years." They were, as God said, flesh. He meant that they had totally degenerated to the point of satisfying any fleshly desire that they wanted to do, without any compunction as to right or wrong, just whatever pleased them. As we will see a bit later, this included literally everything that mankind could imagine.

God would give man another 120 years from this point in the narrative, when He made this determination that things had reached a point of no return. He would give them 120 years, and He would, as He always does, being a just God, warn them by Noah. And because He knew that they would not change, He would execute His judgment upon them. But He had a time in mind, which was 120 years in which He would give any who would hear a fair warning. And as we know, no one listened.

In this next passage, I want to explain that this parallels Genesis 6:3 and also adds an important detail that is needed to understand.

1 Peter 3:18-20 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

Peter says here that God's decision to give humanity 120 years before sending the Flood was an act of longsuffering on His part.

II Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

God gave them 120 years of His own longsuffering—a very lengthy period of time—for the people to repent. He sent at least Noah out there to warn them, preaching a form of the gospel to them, to see if any would listen.

He does nothing except He is very fair and just. His fairness goes all through these 120 years for them to turn themselves around, even though it was truly hopeless. He wanted to make a witness to them, nonetheless.

During this time of God's longsuffering, the ark is being built and prepared. Evidently, it took the entire 120 years to accomplish the task completely. I do not know why it took so long, but certainly it was enough time to hone—learn and perfect—his skills. Perhaps his preaching was so widespread that there were years of time when he did not do anything regarding the ark. I do not know. We do not know how big Noah's work of God really was, how far it spanned, and how long it lasted. But if he was the one and only preacher of righteousness at that time—maybe he did a bit with his father and granddather, both being still alive at that time—perhaps they spent their time traveling around to various people preaching a message of repentance.

Their travels, like Paul's, could have taken several months or years to accomplish before they came back to the base where the ark was being built. Maybe they came and went—work a while, preach a while, etc. Maybe the skills were not available so that it took that long through trial and error. We do not know. I would think that if God gave them the plans, that they surely had that much skill to accomplish it. So I do not necessarily go with that theory. There probably was a learning curve they had to get over, but they certainly had enough time to do it—120 years.

During this time, Noah preached righteousness. At this very end of the section that we started in I Peter 3:18, it says,

I Peter 4:6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

Many people out there think that this means that the gospel was preached to dead people—that their spirits were in prison, they were in some sort of purgatory, and that Christ preached to these spirits to give them the opportunity of salvation. That is just ridiculous. There are two ways to understand this word “dead” in this passage. The first is to understand the adverb “spiritually” along with it. The gospel was preached to those who were spiritually dead, in the same way that Jesus told the one fellow, “Let the dead bury their own dead.” He meant that they were not really dead, but spiritually dead—not listening to Him, and not spiritually alive with the Spirit of God. So, they were dead to Him in that way.

The second way to look at this is to understand it as, “...now dead...” as if he is speaking about the people before the Flood. “The gospel was preached also to those who are now dead,” meaning that they died in their sins. God did this, as the verse says, so that they could be judged later like everyone else.

Then it adds, “and live according to God in the spirit,” meaning that they will have the opportunity to be resurrected later and live again, having the opportunity for salvation. But He wanted them to have the gospel preached to them as a witness. God has been doing this all along the history of mankind, even from before the days of Noah, from at least the days of Enoch, and truly probably from the days of Abel. It has been the same message going out.

This is what Noah did. Noah preached the gospel. I do not know if he preached about a Savior, although he knew the story that later became Genesis 3 about mother Eve, “the seed of the woman will come and bruise the head of the serpent”—it was there, and known, the idea of a coming Savior.

But either way, like I said, Noah, Enoch—their message was very comprehensive to the point where Peter is able to call it preaching the gospel. Just to tell you this, when it says that by the spirit he went and preached to the spirits in prison, it does not mean that he went and preached to disembodied spirits of people who have died. I have an article that explains this in more detail. If we believe that the spirits in prison are the demons, whom God cast to the earth, and are imprisoned here—II Peter 2:4-5, and Jude 6—then the verse adds credence to the idea that the demons were culpable in the increase of human wickedness just before the Flood. I do not want to go into that a lot, but turn to II Peter 2:4-5 and see that Peter links the spirits in prison with Noah and the Flood.

II Peter 2:4-5 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them

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down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly.

Back in I Peter 3, he again links the spirits in prison with Noah and the Flood, and ungodliness, and judgment. These are all very much linked together in Peter's mind. It just adds a bit of proof that we are on to something here, about the increased demonic influence upon the people just before the Flood.

Peter shows us that both the demons and the pre-Flood humans deserved their punishment, and he also hints that a similar time of judgment looms just ahead. That is why this is important to us today, because this just did not happen 4,000 years ago. There is also a time coming with a similar type of judgment is going to take place. And, we want to be on the ark, as it were!

The passage in Genesis 6:5-8 helps to expand a bit on verse 3 above.

Genesis 6:5-8 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

This expands on verse 3, about His Spirit not striving, man is indeed flesh, and that He would have a certain period of judgment—120 years—before He would bring on their end.

The way that it sounds here is, "Whoa! God finally saw the wickedness was great in the earth," like He had been off someplace, and was surprised when He got back, that things were just running amok in His creation, especially on the earth. That is the way it seems in English. But, this, in truth, does not mean that. What it expresses is God's *determination*—at this point—that man's sins had reached a crisis point. It does not mean that He was surprised by it, but rather it is saying that now, at this point, man's sins have become too big, too bad, and God is going to have to take action. He is marking off a point in time, rather than making exclamations of surprise. This point, as it

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is explained in verse 5, is when every impulse, every tendency of men and women was toward evil continually. They did not even think of doing good things anymore. They would get up every day, without any good idea of helping someone, but rather it was me, me, me—their fleshly desires only.

At this point, their consciences were so weak, or maybe even non-existent, that they had no internal constraints on sinful behavior. It did not even register. When they went to go do something, evil thoughts were never considered to be evil, but rather it was just the way that all things were. Every impulse, and every intent, and thought, and imagination—everything that they wanted to do, was evil always, continually.

So sin, instead of being something that was unusual, or something to be avoided, had become the norm. And things like "guilt" and "shame" were words, thoughts, and emotions of the past. Everyone did what they thought best in their own eyes for himself.

In this state, they come perilously close to what the New Testament calls a seared conscience. A seared conscience is nothing more than one who is so conditioned to sin, that he will not repent or change. It is burned in.

When you sear a piece of meat it sizzles; you have this browned layer of meat, and it has become firm. It might seal in the juices real nice on your roast or steak, however it is burned in, and it cannot be taken off. It is seared and burned in, it cannot be changed. That is the point that people were coming to at this time in history. They were perilously close to becoming unredeemable.

The old King James Version translates this from the Hebrew as, "It repented the Lord," while it is translated in the New King James Version as, "The Lord was sorry." Here is something that sounds a bit cartoonish, that the Lord was sorry, or that the Lord would repent.

"Repented" makes us think that God changed His mind, because that is what we talk about when we speak of repentance. When somebody repents, he changes his mind, and turns away from what he was doing, and goes the other way. In this case, we can understand what God did as taking another direction. But the way that it is worded in the old King James Version, it is as if God suddenly says, "Oops! I think I will come up with a new plan B."

No, He did not. He probably had the idea that this would probably happen, but the Hebrew, "It repented the Lord," actually implies not change, but grief, pain, sorrow, and hurt. That is why the New King James Version put it as "sorry." It would be much better

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if it had been “sorrowful.” Sorry makes us English speakers think, “Oh, wow! I shouldn't have done that!” But that is not what God felt at all. He was actually grieving, feeling emotional pain for all the sin that was being done. Sin not only makes God sad, but it also pains Him emotionally and spiritually.

God cannot abide sin. We always think that God cannot abide sin because of His holiness, but there is another factor to it. That is a kind of legalistic type of thing to look at it in terms of holiness. The other way is an emotional way of seeing it. God has emotions. And sin makes God extremely uncomfortable. It makes God miserable. It grieves Him.

If we were able to sit on God's throne for just a moment, and look down upon this earth, and see all that is really going on, knowing everything at once of all that was going on, we would be devastated! We would not be able to endure. See? The enormity of sin in the world would just probably kill us. We would die from a broken heart, as it were.

God, of course, is much stronger than we are, and He can abide, to a point, sin's destructiveness, cruelty, emotional devastation, mindless dehumanization, terrible violence, and putrid stench. But, being God, and being the Creator of all, and seeing the destructiveness of sin upon His creation, it grieves Him terribly.

God decided to destroy mankind, and start over again. That God was sorry means that He was filled with sorrow; not that He wished that He had not created Adam and Eve, or that these billions of people had not lived. That is not what it means. He was embarrassed for them. That is kind of how it would affect us. He was disheartened by what happened expecting a great deal more than He got. It is as if He was shaking His head that His creation turned out as it had. He was extremely disappointed at the outcome of these first fifteen centuries of human history.

Think of it—man, given the best health, longevity, and environmental conditions of paradise on earth, squandered his opportunities only to engage in large scale self-indulgence and evil.

Would that not be discouraging to you? If you had set up a system like this, and given your best effort, and then to see it turn against you, would you not be discouraged?

And then it said in verse 8, “Noah found grace in the sight of the LORD.” Only one man, as far as we know, caught God's eye. One man had potential. He was not morally perfect (we will see that in a moment). He was a man. He was sinful. But maybe not to the extent of the rest of mankind. But God offered him grace. This is the first mention of

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grace in the Bible. Obviously, Enoch and Abel found grace according to the context, but it was not stated as such, as it is here to Noah.

God, to this one man, expressed His favor, His goodwill, His unmerited pardon (as Herbert W. Armstrong taught it) toward Noah by offering him redemption and deliverance if he would be His servant. And Noah accepted.

Genesis 6:9-10 This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Noah was a special man. Undoubtedly, he had been prepared and protected by God up unto the time of his calling. He gave him grace. And so, in that respect, think of it in this manner—that Noah was a man who God called out of this world. Noah was a lot like us. He was a man who had to live in a sinful world, was called out of it, and yet had to still live in it at the time of the end—his time of the end. Like us, he was a sinner made righteous by the blood of Jesus Christ, and he had to grow, just like we do, over a lifetime to come to know God, and to follow Him as closely as he possibly could.

The Bible says that Noah succeeded in this. Noah walked with God, as much as 500 years before the Flood! Unless, he was only called at the 120 year mark before the Flood. It does not say. But, if he was from this particular family, then it is certainly possible that he was called many years before the 120 year mark. And then, Noah lived 350 years after the Flood walking with God, dying at age 950. He walked with God a long time. We think that our walk with God has been long. We will not have anything to say when we meet Noah.

It got to the point where his obedience and trust in God became so great that it is praised in Hebrews 11:7.

Hebrew 11:7 By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household. And thereby condemned the world, and became an heir of righteousness.

He was quite a man.

Ezekiel 14:14 Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness," says the Lord

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GOOD.

Ezekiel 14:20 "Even though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live," says the Lord GOOD, "they would deliver neither son nor daughter; they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness."

Noah was among the three most righteous men who ever lived up until Ezekiel's time, along with Job and Daniel. He was a man of sterling integrity.

Now what does, "Perfect in his generations," mean? It does not mean that he was racially pure. "Perfect" is better translated as "complete," "mature," "well rounded," "well adjusted," or the one I like, "best suited." He was the one best suited in his generation. That is an interesting way of putting it.

The entire phrase, "perfect in his generations," indicates that among all his contemporaries, all those who were living on the face of the earth at that time, he was the most spiritually mature and most suitable candidate for God's work. He was the one! He was tops in his class, as it were. He was, literally, the best of men.

He had grown the most spiritually of all the men of his generation, and this is seen in the fact that he walked with God. He alone walked with God while all the rest of humanity fell into wickedness and immorality. He was the one and the only diamond in the whole coal mine, to put it another way. He was a gem. He was the best man suited to take humanity through the Flood.

Of course, the idea continues on in verse 10—that process that he was the best man to take humanity through the Flood—and that process would start with the training of his three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth. We know that he succeeded at least with Shem, and there is not a bad word said about Japheth either. But Ham has a few marks against his character, and he certainly did not train his children very well. So Noah batted .667, I guess.

Genesis 6:11-13 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

This passage adds a few more details. The first is that the earth was corrupt. Man's evil—obviously the little squirrel outside your window is not capable of sin. He does not have that potential. Neither does the rock or the tree or any other natural thing. But man's evil was so widespread, and his wicked influence was so pervasive, that they stained even the very soil of the earth—the ground. As mentioned before, the whole creation stank as if it was putrid rotteness in the nostrils of God. That is how He saw the whole earth. The whole earth was corrupted. There was nothing redeemable in it.

If you would make note of Romans 8:19-22, Paul makes a similar statement about what is happening here as we get closer to the end. He says that the whole creation groans waiting for the glorification of the sons of God. The whole earth has to bear up under the load of sin of mankind once again. It is waiting to become free from all that unto the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

Mankind's sin is never just his own. It always spreads like a cancer to infect the next person or next group of people. As it piles up, it soon begins to corrupt the air, the water, the soil, the plants, the animals—you name it—everything man touches with his sin becomes infected as it were with corruption.

In Revelation 11:18, God says that He will destroy those who destroy the earth. That is part of His creation too. It is the destruction of the earth, through the wanton sin, man acting like god, thinking they can do whatever they want with the earth that destroys the earth. God, seeing that His place has been taken over by mankind, who thinks that he can do what he wills, steps in and brings judgment upon them.

Another detail that we find here in Genesis 6 is that God describes the earth as “filled with violence.” Mankind's sin was not confined to quietly satisfying his venal appetites, being done quietly in a corner, but rather it had grown to violent acts like robbery, assault, murder, rape, and I am most certain, war and all the atrocities that war brings. This was the worst time in mankind's history ever, except for the time just ahead.

The whole era, beginning with Adam and Eve, began with disobedience, and immediately murder by Cain. It says here it ended in terrible, total corruption and violence. All flesh had corrupted their way. In modern terms, their lifestyles were anti-God, and hostile toward one another. There was no alternative for God but to destroy them all and start over. They were in God's estimation—and His really is the only one that counts—too far gone to turn around. He had to destroy them.

For our last passage, turn to II Peter 3.

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II Peter 3:1-9 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

As was the premise in my last sermon regarding the days of Noah, so I remind ourselves as we close this sermon: a similar judgment is coming on this world. Not a judgment of water, but a judgment of fire. And if God was so righteous and powerful to bring the first to pass, so will He be faithful to fulfill His promise here at the end time.

So I ask you,

II Peter 3:11-13 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for a new heaven, and a new earth in which righteousness dwells!