

Flood Warning, part 3

Genesis 7

(preached Pine Grove 11/4/18; Sunday PM)

Introduction

One of the fastest growing religions in the world is universalism..

Universalism teaches that God is found in every religion and ultimately all people end up with God in the end..

There are so-called Christian universalists..

In fact, the largest “Christian” universalist church is called the Universalist Church of America and it was founded in 1866...

According to their website, they are Christians who believe that the God of love would not create a person in order to destroy him or her.

Therefore, they conclude that all people are destined for salvation in this life or beyond.

Most universalists reject the doctrine of hell or either claim that hell will be for a time of temporary punishment.

It will then be emptied and destroyed and all those in hell will go to heaven..

Now look, I understand the appeal of that.

No one likes to think of the concept of hell, especially in our culture today where nothing is absolutely right and nothing is absolutely wrong...

Therefore, Christian universalism is growing..

From 2000 to 2010, membership in the Universalist Church in America grew by 16%, while the membership in Southern Baptist churches grew less than 1%.

In this decade, the membership rise in universalist denominations is expected to grow even more..

So, how do we answer the idea that a God of love would never destroy someone he created?

Simple..

Two words.

The Flood.

The proof that God judges sin is seen in the flood of Genesis 7.

The proof that God destroys men and women made in his image is the flood of Genesis 7.

Not only does the Bible teach the doctrine of hell over and over, the Bible previews the idea of God's judgment in the worldwide catastrophe of the flood.

Yes, God is loving but what universalists misunderstand is that the love he has for his people compels him to judge those who don't belong to him...

Think of it this way.

If someone came up to you and threaten to harm your child, you would act to defend your child..

And if you killed that person, it wouldn't mean that you weren't a loving person, it would mean that your love of your child cause you to act.

Look, God is holy.

God hates sin.

And God will judge all those who continue in their sin, but that doesn't mean he isn't a God of love.

In fact, God is so loving that he doesn't judge sin immediately.

Instead, he offer grace and mercy in hopes that people will repent and seek His salvation...

Even in terms of the flood, God gave people 120 years to repent and change their ways..

But once their heart is set in sin, God has to act, and God will act..

Tonight, we begin the third part of what I have called, the Flood Warning in Genesis 7..

Times of preparation are coming to an end, and the flood is about to begin..

So, let's look at Genesis 7 tonight..

We will begin in verses 1-5 with..

I. The Rescue of the Righteous (1-5)

Let's read verses 1-5...

1 Then the Lord said to Noah, "Enter the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this [a]time. 2 You shall take [b]with you of every clean animal [c]by sevens, a male and his female; and of the animals that are not clean two, a male and his female; 3 also of the birds of the [d]sky, [e]by sevens, male and female, to keep [f]offspring alive on the face of all the earth. 4 For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made." 5 Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him.

By the time, we get to verse 1 of chapter 7, 120 years have elapsed since the end of chapter 6...

Because in chapter 6, God declared that the sinfulness of man was causing him to wipe man off the face of the earth..

Genesis 6:3 lets us know that man has 120 years left on the earth..

However, Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord..

So God continues his plan to wipe out mankind, with the exception of Noah, his wife and their 3 sons and daughters-in-law.

And as chapter 6 ends, God gives instruction to Noah to build a huge rectangular box...

The box of gopher wood doesn't need propulsion or a sail..

It simply need to float stably in the water...

So Noah gets to work on this ark, and we left off there two weeks ago..

However by the time chapter 7 opens, it is time for the flood to arrive..

Now what had happened in those 120 years..

Simply put, Noah preached, built, slept and repeated for 120 years..

The NT describes Noah as a preacher of righteousness, but it is also clear that Noah was a pretty good carpenter too because at the beginning of chapter 7, this enormous ark is ready..

And God simply commands Noah and his family to enter it..

And the reason is simple.

Noah is a righteous man.

Again, this isn't a righteousness that Noah has earned..

Nobody in the history of the world earns righteousness by their own works..

All righteousness is granted to people by God, and Noah is no different...

So God is rescuing the righteous here but God is also reaching the animal world as well..

Verses 2 and 3 include a description of the animals that boarded the ark..

A couple notes...

#1 - God called all these animals to the ark.

Genesis 6:20 lets us know that the animals came to Noah..

But this is nothing new.

When Adam named the animals, all of them came to Adam as well...

It is an incredible miracle to see the animal world sent to Noah by God, but for the believer, it isn't hard to believe.

God certainly controls the animal world..

#2 - Take note also that there are clean and unclean animals mentioned here.

Now, we are very early in the history of the world..

God has not set up the sacrificial system that we find in the book of Leviticus yet...

But it is also clear that animal sacrifices are already underway..

God sacrificed an animal to clothe Adam and Eve.

Abel sacrificed an animal to the Lord in Genesis 4...

And Noah is going to offer a sacrifice after the flood as well...

Clean animals are representative of those animals that will accept as a proper sacrifice while the unclean are not..

What we see here in these verses is that God is already setting the stage of clean and unclean animals as a shadowing of what is to come in his law..

And I think it is clear that Noah knew which animals were clean and which weren't..

So they all climb onto the ark..

Noah and his family and all theses animals..

And then in verse 4, God details the plan of the flood.

Noah has worked and preached 120 years, they get on the ark and then in 7 more days, the flood will come..

I think we see some parallels in that plan...

Preachers will have preached for 1000s of years, the God will recuse his church to heaven, and then in 7 more years of the tribulation, God's wrath will come again at the 2nd coming...

This is a picture in some ways of the rapture..

Noah is a shadow of how God will rescue the righteous before his pours out his flood of wrath at the end of time..

And what we read in verse 5 is another reminder of why Noah is rescued..

Noah obeys the Lord..

Noah build a boat. Check.

Noah get on a boat. Check.

Now, let me address a popular notion that it had never rained before the beginning of the flood..

A lot of people take that view and I understand why..

Genesis 2 talks about how the shrubs and vegetation were watered in the garden of Eden..

It seems that a mist rose from the earth to water them..

No the assumption by many is that this was true even up until the time of Noah..

I can see that and that may be the case, but I think it is also possible that it has rained on the earth but not like what is about to come in the flood...

Either way, the plan of God is to send a rain for 40 days and nights on the earth, but to reduce the righteous from that flood.

This leads us to verse 6, which we can call..

II. The Time of Truthfulness (6-12)

Most of you have grown up around the church, and most of you thankfully accept the literal interpretation of Scripture...

However, you must also understand this.

A lot of people who call themselves believers don't view the flood of Genesis 7 as a literal flood...

And even if they do see it as a literal flood, many people see it as a local but not global flood..

For those people, the flood is symbolic of judgment but doesn't describe literal judgment..

For them the incredible nature of a worldwide flood is too much to believe even though that is how it is described in the Bible...

God knew that people would be resistant to believe the account of a worldwide, so God takes special care in how he inspires Moses to write about in Genesis 7..

One thing you will see in this chapter is that there is repetition and the second thing you are going to see in the mention of some specific times..

Let me read these verses to us...

Genesis 7:6..

6 Now Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water [g]came upon the earth. 7 Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood. 8 Of clean animals and animals that are not clean and birds and everything that creeps on the ground, 9 there went into the ark to Noah [h]by twos, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. 10 It came about after the seven days, that the water of the flood [i]came upon the earth. 11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the [j]floodgates of the sky were opened. 12 The rain [k]fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.

In verse 6, Moses gives us the age of Noah to remind us that Noah was a real person and the flood was a real event that happened a specific time in Noah's life..

In verses 7-10, we see a repetition of information that we just read in verses 1-5, and the point is clear...

This is a real event..

Noah was 600..

The animals got on the ark in pairs..

Noah and his family got on the ark.

They waited 7 days and the flood began..

Then verse 11 gets real specific..

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month,

Look, this is the first specific date in the Bible..

Now we dont know the calendar system of Noah, but we do know this...

The flood started on a specific day.

It was a literal flood on a literal day..

Symbolic floods don't begin on literal days...

But worldwide catastrophic floods start on a literal day, and God makes that clear here in verse 11..

Verse 11 also give us more insight into how God flooded the earth...

The water didn't just come down, the water also came up..

The fountains of the great deep burst open..

In other words, rivers and springs of underground penetrate the surface of the land to add to the water from the sky..

Some see a water halo around the earth that contributed to the rainfall...

Personally, I don't find much merit in that for a number of reasons..

Here is all I can say, God can flood the earth in an instant if he desires...

He is not bound by natural law.

He is a supernatural God..

All I know is that the water came down and up and it literally flooded the entire earth in a short amount of time..

Verses 6-12 simply prove that this was a real universal flood on a real day that involved real people and real animals...

Let's move to verse 13-16, and we will call this..

III. The Care of the Creator (13-16)

Verse 13...

13 On the very same day Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark, 14 they and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after [l]their kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, [m]all sorts of birds. 15 So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life. 16 Those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him; and the Lord closed it behind him.

Once again, we see much repetition of these events to impress upon our mind the literal nature of them..

But also to remind us of Noah's obedience...

And remember this...

There are people around Noah as he and his family walk in the ark with all the animals following...

You don't build a huge structure like this without gaining some attention...

And clearly, the ridicule grows...

After one year, I am sure Noah was the laughing stock of town...

Preaching about a flood that is coming...

Building a boat unlike anything else in the world...

After 10 years, the laughs are continuing to pour in..

The scorn grows...

But now, 120 years have passed and he has remained faithful, but what are the people around him doing?

They are faithful mocking?

Look, as we preach today, do you know what the world does?

It mocks the idea of a second coming...

Look, the academic world..

The supposedly wisest of the wise in the world mock those who trust the Bible..

They scorn those who are looking for the return of Christ..

Let me tell you something..

This is to be expected...

Listen to 1 Peter 3:3-7...

3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." 5 For [a]when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. 7 But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

Noah was only a preview of how the world would treat the men who came after him preaching of coming judgment...

I sure the mocking of Noah was at an all time high when he stepped foot on that boat with all those animals..

I am sure that even his heart doubted what was about to take place..

Certainly his own wife and sons had their doubts as well..

But this is what faith does.

It obeys even when the world mocks and the doubts rise..

Faith trusts in the Lord even when it can't see the outcome..

And note verse 16..

The Lord closed the door of the ark behind Noah...

What a great picture of the care of the Creator...

God had never left Noah's side for these 120 years and he is with him to the point of closing the door of the ark behind him...

What a picture of the incredible nature of God..

The final thing to see is the actual flood taking place...

Let's read verses 17-24..

IV. The Waters of Wrath (17-24)

17 Then the flood [n]came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth. 18 The water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth, and the ark [o]floated on the [p]surface of the water. 19 The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains [q]everywhere under the heavens were covered. 20 The water prevailed fifteen [r]cubits higher, and the mountains were covered. 21 All flesh that [s]moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; 22 of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died. 23 Thus He blotted out [t]every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the [u]sky, and they were blotted out from the earth; and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. 24 The water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days.

As much as we see the care of God to shut the door behind Noah, we see an equal amount of wrath in verses 17-24..

God sends the flood upon the earth, and the text is clear..

The flood covers the entire surface of the earth.

It even rises 15 cubits or about 22 feet above the highest mountain on the earth at the time..

This is an incredible amount of water..

And the point of these verses is also clear.

The flood was effective in its purpose..

All flesh on the earth perished...

Verse 23 says that God blotted out every living thing on the face of the face of the earth..

In other words, nothing or no one escapes the judgment of God when it is poured out..

The only survivors are Noah and 7 others..

And to ensure there death of all, the water stayed at that level for 150 days according to verse 24...

Conclusion

Let's make a couple notes in our mind...

#1 - God hates sin.

We often forget how much God hates sin..

People often say that God hates the sin but loves the sinner, yet there comes point when God love of the sinner ends and his judgment begins..

God loved the people of the world in Noah's day.

He wasn't willing for any of them to perish..

He even gave the world 120 years of preaching, but eventually the sinner moves from grace to judgment...

#2 - God is concerned with the spiritual world over the physical world.

In a day when environmentalism is the highest form of religion in the world..

In a day where even the church seems to worship creation more the Creator..

In a day where the world has more value than a human life..

Genesis 7 is a good reminder that God is Lord over His creation...

Look I am not advocating good stewardship and appreciation of God's creation..

But I also realize that this world is disposable...

God disposed of it in the flood and he will dispose of it again in the horrors of the book of Revelation..

God has absolute freedom to do what he wants with His creation..

And we as people cannot overcome the purposes of God in the world..

I am not trying to save the environment..

I am trying to save souls...

Because the reality is this...

This world is gonna go, but every soul will remain forever either in heaven or hell....

You better not be hugging trees...

You better be hugging Christ...

A final note is this..

#3 - God's grace is seen in judgment.

As a kid, we were out on Santee Coper fishing one day...

And the lower lake of Santee Cooper is just a huge bowl of water..

When the wind blows, it can get worse than the ocean..

Well we are out there in a little cove but you can see the entire lake...

And as I looked out across the lake, there was this tiny boat bouncing up and down on the waves making its way to us..

And it looked like the head of a pin way on there on that big body of water...

As it moved toward us, it would literally disappear times on the other side of these big swells...

But eventually it made it to the cove we were in...

As I imagine that huge ark, it gets real small on a worldwide ocean..

Yet that picture of that ark on those seas is a picture of God's grace and wrath side by side..

Here is world of death and judgment under that ark, and here is boat of God's grace continuing the people who have survived that wrath...

What an illustration of the church..

Here we are a tiny building in a world of sin demanding judgment, yet we survive and even thrive in a dark world because of God's grace...

And though wrath is coming all around our little boat, our little church, our little lives, we will survive the wrath because we are in Christ...

Thank you Lord for the ark of Christ...

Amen church?

Amen.

The physical world is secondary to the spiritual world

God has absolute freedom over his creation

God hates sin

God's judgment is sure

God's grace is sufficient and present in judgment..