

Genesis 6-7

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[0 : 0 0] if you've got the the passage open in front of you just now that would be helpful as we go through these chapters now every morning that we wake in tarbert apart from this one we wake to the same noises we hear lorries coming and going the spray spraying up as they pass our doors we hear the diggers scraping the the rocks as they shape the shoreline and when we look out over the harbor we see the same sight morning by morning slight differences but we see the same sight we see this intense work that's continuing and it's been like that for months and as far as i understand it's going to be like that for for many months still to come and that was the way it was in the life of noah he has this huge project that god has given him to to undertake he's building an ark and it's god's design this ark it's it's to be built precisely to god's specification we see that in verse 14 and 15 and 16 of genesis 6 god says to noah so make yourself an ark of cypress we'd make rooms in it coat it with pitch inside and out this is how you're to build it it's to be 450 feet long 75 feet wide 45 feet high make a roof for it finish the ark to within 18 inches of the top put a door in the side of the ark and make lower middle and upper decks and so we have we have this job description we have these precise details and we're just getting a summary of that in these verses and so noah makes it his his job day by day to to be conscientiously getting on with this project now if we wander back to tarbara in our minds for a moment back home uh we look out over the harbor and we see the purpose of this renovation don't we uh we see the sea we see the boat uh coming back and forth uh several times uh in the week uh often twice in the in the day so we see the purpose for this job that's that's ongoing but try and put yourself in the position of those who were in noah's uh day and age for them this project this massive uh ark that uh noah is building for them as they watched on this seemed like utter madness because they were nowhere near the sea we don't even have any record of there having had been any significant rainfall on the earth and so the people they saw no need whatsoever for this ark but noah was told by god that there was a very real need for the ark and the reason for that was a judgment was coming and that's our first point this morning uh we we see here in these verses the coming judgment point number one the coming judgment verse 17 still in chapter uh six god says to noah i am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens every creature that has the breath of life in it everything on earth will perish so god announces this judgment to noah and we ask the question why was this judgment coming and we've had the answer several times

already in genesis judgment was coming because of sin we can track back through genesis we can see the escalation of sin as these chapters go on we see how it spread from adam and eve in the garden right through the whole of creation to that point where we noted last week as god looked into the hearts of man every inclination of his of his thoughts were evil sin was everywhere and god had promised genesis 2 17 that sin would cause death to come into the world and they had seen that already but now that promise of god was about to be fulfilled on a huge scale through the flood there was judgment coming and i think the first thing that's necessary for us to say as we look in on this is that uh this actually happened there are some people who want to take stories accounts like this in scripture and say well they're kind of like parables that they didn't really happen it's just a kind of moral tale to get us to to listen but that's wrong and there are many historical um artifacts and pieces of evidence that that show us that this is this actually happened there's debates about uh how extensive this flood was there's debates about uh when this actually happened what uh time precisely it was and to be honest um i have no interest whatsoever in these debates some people do um i have very little interest in in spending years delving into these things i think the important thing the main plain thing that we have to take hold of here is that what god promised in terms of judgment it came to pass in history so we see these people real people real people remember living their lives without god which is the definition of sin living your life without any reference any thought

of god they're eating they're drinking they're working they're falling in love they're getting married they're having families life is just going on and they're hearing this word from noah judgment is coming but it all seems so far-fetched it all seems so so improbable and yet the reality is it happened and when they began to realize that this judgment this coming judgment actually was coming the door of the ark was shut and it was too late to escape and there's a lesson here for us many ways this is a very sobering chapter there's a lesson here for us because we look back into a world that was sinful and we look around into worlds a world that is sinful we look back at people who are sinful we look in the mirror we find people who are sinful we live in a world that very much looks like the world that noah lived in and the promise of god that sin would bring death in was not a promise that was swept aside in the old testament as something that's done and it's no longer relevant it's a promise that's carried

through to the new testament remember the apostle paul in romans 6 23 he says the wages of sin is death and although there's never going to be another flood like this one we've been warned that when jesus returns there will be judgment jesus came into the world as savior we remember that throughout the month of december in particular but we have the warning that when he comes back he comes back as judge listen to what jesus says in matthew 24 matthew 24 verse 37 jesus says as it was in the days of noah so it will be at the coming of the son of man for in the days before the flood people were eating and drinking marrying and giving and marriage up to the day that noah entered the ark and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away that is how it will be says jesus at the coming of the son of man two men will be in the field one will be taken and the other left two women will be grinding with a hand mill one will be taken and the other left therefore says jesus keep watch because you do not know on what day your lord will come but understand this if the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into so you also says jesus must be ready because the son of man will come at an hour when you do not expect him this is a serious message and some may not like it others may stumble over this online and make a joke of it laugh and dismiss this as far-fetched and nonsensical but i expect as noah built this ark and as noah preached the message of salvation i expect that he encountered both these responses some people saying rubbish some people saying well you tone it down noah you're bringing misery but noah spoke god's word in love and although he would have encountered opposition judgment came and judgment is coming so we need to be prepared for that so that's the first point the coming judgment the second point we come to here is the covenant of god the covenant of god verse 18 of chapter 6 still very often when we read the word but it's like a hinge where we swing from from dark to light it's like a hinge where we swing from from a serious and grave situation to a situation of hope and we see that here there's this warning of judgment and then at verse 18 god says but i will establish my covenant with you and you will enter the ark you and your sons and your wife and your son's wives with you you're to bring into the ark two of every living creatures male and female to keep them alive with you and so noah's given these instructions down to verse 22 and we read that as god speaks of this covenant noah did everything just as god commanded him so we have this covenant of god and this is the first mention in the bible of covenant so what is it well essentially this was an agreement between god and noah whereby god promised to save noah and his family and this is something that we see throughout scripture god is interested in us in our own hearts in our own lives but he's not just interested in us he's interested in our families and even beyond that we read in these verses 19 to 21 god's interest and his care for his whole creation the animals and the birds too were part of this promise so noah hears this promise this covenant of god and noah believes noah listens to what god would have him do and noah did everything just as god commanded him and again here i think we learn about how god deals with us he comes to us as he came to noah to talk about salvation i note that in this passage it's god's initiative god comes to noah and in your life and mine it's god that comes to us we don't decide one day suddenly i'm going to wake up and i'm going to seek god it's a new day new resolution i'm going to seek god no it's god that comes to us just as jesus passed by through places jesus he's passing by at points in our lives and he comes to us there's opportunity in that window to receive salvation it's god's initiative not ours don't let him pass and just as god promised to save noah he promises to save us if we'll believe in him as noah did hebrews chapter 11 and verse 7 says by faith noah when warned about things not yet seen in holy fear built an ark to save his family by faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith so why was noah saved how was noah saved well he believed saved in god's promise he

believed he would be saved through this ark and that ark as i said last week is always pointing us to jesus we're not saved by being in the ark but we are saved by being in christ we are saved through the body and the blood of jesus we are saved through believing in his death and his resurrection we are saved not through that old covenant but we're saved through the new covenant remember when jesus was breaking bread with the disciples luke chapter 22 verse 19 he took bread he gave thanks and broke it and gave it to the disciples saying this is my body given for you do this in remembrance of me in the same way after supper he took the cup saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you the covenant

of god the coming judgment a serious serious message then and now but the covenant of god is where there was hope and where there is still hope it's the second point third point we come to here is that we see the consistency of god's word the coming judgment the covenant of god thirdly the consistency of god's word now before my days as a minister i worked for over 10 years in the world of construction and one thing that you learn very quickly in the world of construction is that in all projects whether large or small there's always changes there might be a design there might be detail within that design but as time passes as methods develop there's changes but in god's plan of salvation for noah through this ark this massive construction project nothing changed you notice that nothing changed you know we can have multiple revisions of drawings in any construction project but there's nothing of that here god's design calculations and construction of the ark they were never revised god's method statement for who was to enter the ark did not change and so we hear god's speaking pre-construction to noah in genesis 6 and then we can fast forward to genesis 7 and god is speaking to noah as the project is coming to an end and what god says is absolutely consistent god's word is consistent verses 2 and 3 it's an echo of what we've got in the previous chapter he says to noah take with you seven of every kind of clean animal a male and its mate and two of every kind of unclean animal a male and its mate and also seven of every kind of bird male and female to keep the various kinds alive throughout the earth now the person who's sharp here and listening may say

[18:38] I think I've spotted an inconsistency here because there's two different numbers now one section that says two two of every kind and the other section says seven of every kind of animal and you might be asking the question well what's that is that a mistake between the two passages is that an inaccuracy an inconsistency and the answer is pretty straightforward I think it's not one of the commentators says clean animals were suitable for eating and for offering sacrifices unclean animals were not therefore once the flood was over a large number a larger number of clean animals would be needed in order to offer suitable sacrifices to God and still have pairs left to reproduce so we have two that must be kept alive to allow the species to continue but we have seven of some kinds because there needs to be food there needs to be sacrifices it's quite straightforward

I think but some may be looking in at this and thinking well it's just kind of hard to get your head around when you start to picture it in your mind's eye there are crofters in our congregation there may be crofters watching this and you've tried to gather sheep off the hill and that's no easy job and the sheep know you you're trying to gather them with the dogs and they know you and they've got some degree of trust of you but they're difficult to gather off the hill that's just sheep you might be thinking in your mind what kind of mad gathering of animals was this you know how do you gather up all these animals as hippopotamuses and snakes and lions and tigers and sheep and goats and birds how on earth do you manage to gather them all up not even Alistair could do that so how do you do it and the answer is you don't

God did it Noah wasn't running around furiously trying to gather up all these chickens you know in wild game they came to Noah verses 8 to 10 pairs of clean animals and unclean animals of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground male and female they came to Noah and entered the ark as God commanded Noah so just as the animals came to Adam to be named by God's design by God's power these animals come to Noah to be gathered into this ark now if you find that far fetched and if you don't believe in miracles you'll have a huge problem with that but let me say if you don't believe in miracles you'll have a huge problem with most things in the Bible you'll have a huge problem with creation a huge problem with the incarnation the fact that

Jesus was born of a virgin a huge problem with most of the ministry of Jesus a huge problem with the resurrection if you don't believe in the supernatural you don't believe in Christianity so we see God here and his work is a supernatural work at this point he's a God who often uses natural

methods such as normal construction techniques in the building of this ark but sometimes God breaks out of the natural and he uses supernatural methods and that's what was happening in this gathering the supernatural God of all creation was calling the creation to Noah his representative to gather them into this ark and even when you think about this for all these species to live together in the one ark and not rip each other apart that too was supernatural

I think it's a preview of how things will be think about the words of Isaiah Isaiah 11 6-9 he's pointing forward to the new heavens and the new earth and he says the wolf will live with the lamb the leopard will lie down with the goat the calf and the lion and the yearling together and a little child will lead them the cow will feed with the bear the young will lie down together the lion will eat straw like an ox the infant will play near the hole of the cobra and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest they will neither harm nor destroy on my holy mountain a supernatural scene at the end and we have a supernatural scene here close to the beginning but the main point and I'm losing sight of it perhaps in this discussion the main point to note here is that what God said in terms of a salvation plan never changed for Noah and what

[23 : 52] God has said to us about his salvation plan for us does not change the ark points to Jesus no one else and he was and he is and he ever will be the only way for sinners like me and like you to be saved Jesus said I am the way the truth the life no one no one no one comes to the father except through me no one was saved other than those in the ark the truth of scripture is no one will be saved except those who are in Christ salvation at chapter 4 verse 12 is found in no one else for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved it's the consistent plan of God for salvation

Christ no other name no other way people don't like that message people don't believe that message they didn't back then either but it didn't change the truth of it the consistency of God's word fourth point the consistency of God's worker we're just taking a momentary glance here at Noah because what I want us to see here is Noah is a man who both talked the talk and he walked the walk he believed in God he professed his faith in God he believed in that salvation that was to come through the ark and he preached that out day by day with a hammer in his hand and he lived it out day by day on the construction site for 120 years he worked building this ark and that involved a lot of sacrifice for

Noah and remember he wasn't young when I was reading through this my mind went back to the days when we were working on this building and yes we had guys in their 20s and 30s and 40s working on the job but the guys who did most of the work in this job were guys in their 70s and 80s grafting away day after day long shifts and you could see they were tired Noah was 600 years old when the floodwaters came on the earth I don't quite know how that works but I think we need to note that Calvin says Moses mentions Noah's age for a purpose old age can make people more indolent and morose so Noah's faith was more remarkable because it did not fail him as he advanced in years and think about it

Noah as an old man I bet you he endured a lot of ridicule for what he was doing I bet you it cost him a whole lot of money to be involved in this project his whole life any personal plans any retirement plans that he had were down the tubes swept aside because God told him this is what you're doing Noah and he heard he believed he obeyed there was a striking consistency about the life of God's worker the consistency of God's worker and I think it's an example to us if we're Christians we say that we're Christ's ones now do the people who watch us do they see that consistency do they see that there is a connect and not a disconnect between what we preach and what we practice do they see that as those who profess to be

Christ's ones we walk the way that Jesus walked we talk the way that Jesus taught is there a consistency about us as God's workers consistency of God's worker fifth point we're almost there the call of God to be saved verse 1 of chapter 7 the Lord said to Noah go into the ark you and your whole family because I have found you righteous in this generation he's righteous because he believed not because of what he did seven days verse 4 from now says God I will send rain on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I've made and Noah did verse 5 all that the Lord commanded him again think back for a moment can you imagine all these people who watch Noah day by day he's working furiously all this construction work has been ongoing for over a century it's part of their lives these are things that they're used to seeing every day they're used to the noise they're used to the activity and can you imagine

[29 : 49] Noah's cousins maybe and they're looking in that place where Noah was always busy can you imagine his friends who always knew where to find him down at the construction yard can you imagine those who supplied the wood the builders merchants fellow tradesmen those who maybe were with him those who passed by every day and they're saying to each other on this particular day where's Noah looking around the site where's Noah and they're told well he's in the ark now he's in the ark himself from his crazy family with their own personal zoo absolute madness that's where he is he's in that ark it's not raining no sea no floods can you imagine how ridiculous that looked to those who didn't believe this massive boat just in the middle of this dry ground and they're shaking their heads as they pass looking into a clear blue sky walking over this arid ground and can you imagine how

Noah was at this point can you imagine how distressed he must have been for 120 years he's believed and then seven days before judgment comes God says the clock has now gone from 120 years there's only seven days left Noah get in the ark and himself and his family and all these animals are proceeding into the ark and people looking there shaking their heads in disbelief at Noah and where was Noah in that ark we don't know where he was in that ark but I imagine Noah was not in a back room but I imagine Noah was standing at the door of this ark and pleading with people seven days and judgment is coming six days judgment is coming come five days four days three days two days no one listened it's just

Noah his immediate family no one listened to the call of God to be saved and then judgment came we are species God had waited over a century for sinners to repent and now it was too late and there's a lesson there for us it's a lesson for the young but it's also a lesson for the middle aged and the old we might be saying even as we watch or as we listen just now well you know I do want to be saved but not today there's things I want to do I want to wander my own way for a while yet but I definitely will be saved I see the need of it I understand where there is salvation I don't want to be a Christian yet but when I'm older I definitely will

I want to say as we look at this passage here don't be so sure about that our hearts tend to get harder not softer as time goes on the likelihood of us responding to the call of God gets less and less the more the years go on and the more we hear the call of God and refuse so Psalm 95 I quote it so often says today if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts 2 Corinthians 6 2 now is the day of salvation the door of the ark the door of God's grace is still open Jesus is standing at that door he is the one who is saying to us come to me enter into the salvation that I offer and so we see in verse 7 that Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives entered into the ark to escape the waters of the flood then verse 13 to 16 my time is gone we see again this picture of them entering into the ark and it says in verse 16 then the

Lord shut them in that's a huge line there Noah didn't shut the door of the ark no one on the outside shut the door of the ark but God himself supernaturally shut them in and that's the way it is for us if we believe through Jesus God shuts us in with himself so that when the waters of judgment come we will not drown he shuts us in with himself he shuts the door so that Satan and sin and death and hell will not be able to get near us and we'll be saved the call of God to be saved and finally we see here the consequences of unbelief this is actually a point that

[35 : 53] I'd probably rather not finish on but I must finish on it because this is how the chapter finishes we see the consequences of unbelief verse 11 and 12 in the 600 year of Noah's life on the 17th day of the second month on that day the springs of the great deep burst forth the floodgates of heaven were opened and rain fell on the earth 40 days and 40 nights subterranean waters burst out from below the waters of God's wrath poured down from above and for 40 days verse 17 the flood kept coming on the earth and as the waters increased they lifted the ark high above the earth we see salvation in action but we also see judgment in action as the waters verse 18 rise and everything every creature every person was wiped out the waters flooded the earth verse 24 for 150 days so as this chapter ends it ends with us looking at the consequences of not believing in

God's word and what do we see well what we see is an estimated 250,000 people dying and eight people being saved and again it looks a lot like our day doesn't it the vast majority of people overwhelmingly not believing in God's word not repenting not looking for salvation it'll never happen they said back then what do we hear today same thing it'll never happen you people are crazy with your stories about Jesus but God is showing us through Noah God teaches us through the clear words of Jesus that judgment will happen and it's not a flood of 150 days that we have to fear it's a lake of fire that we never escape it's outer darkness it's a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth

it's a place of torment it's a place of regret it's a place of isolation that never ends that's the consequences of unbelief so this is a difficult place for me to finish but sometimes this is what we have to do

God in his wisdom takes us to these passages and he causes us to have a long hard look at the consequences of unbelief in order that we will respond to the call of God to be saved the door is still open the way into grace is still clear and the call of Jesus is still being heard come to me he says escape the judgment and be saved we'll pray Lord God we we do thank you for your word it's a serious word today and yet within the seriousness of it all we thank you that we see and hear a clear word of salvation we thank you that the way is still open that there is still time and we ask Lord that each one of us would not hesitate we would not turn away but that we would turn to Christ and be saved and we ask this in Jesus name amen to Hor passed two to drink to celebrate for is it even happen with pue