

THE MERCY OF GOD

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Genesis 6:1-8

1. It has always interested me how people can speak well of Jesus Christ, claim to hold Him in high regard, and yet ignore much of what He said.
2. People have different opinions about the biblical account of Noah and the flood, but Jesus treated it as an actual historical event.
3. While speaking about His return and end-time events Jesus stated the following.

Matt 24:36-39

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. 37 "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. 38 "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

4. Notice that Jesus clearly stated that His sure return will be just like the days of Noah.
5. People would be just like they were in the days of Noah.
6. In this message I want to focus on what happened in the days of Noah.

I. A pronouncement of judgement.

- A. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth.
 1. The Lord saw that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
 2. The earth was corrupt in the sight of God.
 3. The earth was filled with violence.
 4. The earth was corrupt for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.
- B. The Lord was sorry that He had created man and grieved by what He saw.
- C. His decision was to blot out all life on the earth with a few exceptions.
 1. Noah, along with His wife, sons, and their wives found grace in the eyes of the Lord.
NOTE: Noah, along with the members of his family, were righteous, blameless (possessed integrity) and walked with God.
 2. Besides Noah and his family animal life would be preserved as well.

II. A period of grace.

- A. God's judgment would not be instantaneous; rather God gave mankind a 120 years.
- B. Praise God for His patience. 1 Peter 3:18-20
"For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, **when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.**"
- C. We see God's patience manifested many times in the Bible.
 1. Gen 15:13-16

13 God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed **four hundred years**.
14 "But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. 15 "As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age. 16 "Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete."

2. Jonah 3:1-4

Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you." 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three days' walk. 4 Then Jonah began to go through the city one day's walk; and he cried out and said, "Yet **forty days** and Nineveh will be overthrown."

3. 2 Peter 3:3-9

"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 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. 8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. **9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.**"

D. On the cross Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them; for **they do not know what they are doing,**" (Luke 23:34) and the hand of God's judgment was stayed for thirty-seven years until the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, when the Roman army, under the command of Titus, destroyed the city and killed between 600,000 and 1,000,000 Jews.

1. During that time many of those who had cried, "Crucify Him," were given the opportunity to embrace Him as Lord and Savior.

2. Notice Peter's appeal in Acts 3:17-22.

"And now, brethren, **I know that you acted in ignorance**, just as your rulers did also. 18 But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. 19 Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; 20 and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, 21 whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time."

3. The Apostle Paul fully understood this great truth when he wrote the following in 1 Tim 1:12-15.

"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. **Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief;** 14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and

love which are found in Christ Jesus. 15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.”

4. **A personal note: I believe that I would be in Hell today were it not for Jesus pleading for me at the right hand of God during the years of my sinful rebellion and disobedience, “Father, forgive him, for he does not know what he is doing.”**

5. This is true about every one of us here today.

III. A preacher of righteous.

A. Noah was not only an ark builder, but he was also a gospel preacher as revealed by Peter in his blistering verbal attack directed towards false teachers. 2 Peter 2:4-10

“For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; 5 and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved **Noah, a preacher of righteousness**, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6 and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter; 7 and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men 8 (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds), 9 then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, 10 and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority.”

B. Noah preached for 120 years without a convert, but had even one person believed him that person would not have perished.

IV. A place of safety.

A. After 120 years of building and preaching Noah, his family, and all of the preserved wild life entered the Ark.

B. I can see Noah standing in the door as the last animal entered, pleading with the people who were there watching.

C. What must the people have thought as God’s unseen hand raised the ramp that also served as a door, and closed all who were aboard securely and safely in?

D. “Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days...The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher (22.5 ft.) , and the mountains were covered. All flesh that moved on the earth perished.” 3:17, 20-21

NOTE: No matter how high a person was able to climb it was not high enough, and no matter how self-righteous you might be it will not be righteous enough “for the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.” Romans 1:18

APPLICATION

1. Look again at Genesis 6:5 which reads, “Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

2. This reality was expanded in Genesis 6:11-12.

Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

3. As we have already seen, after the world was repopulated a similar, localized event took place during the life of Abraham when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Gen 19:23-29

The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar. 24 Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven, 25 and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. 26 But his wife, from behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt. 27 Now Abraham arose early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before the Lord; 28 and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the valley, and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a furnace. 29 Thus it came about, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived.

4. God told Abraham ahead of time what was about to come upon the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, just like He has told us ahead of time about what is soon to come upon the earth. 2 Peter 3:10-18

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. 11 **Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,** 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! 13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. 14 **Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,** 15 and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, 16 as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. 17 **You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.