



Sunday, July 19, 2025

Genesis 6:9-22

The story of Noah's Ark is actually found in the rest of chapter 6, all of 7, 8 and the first part of chapter 9. So, over the next coming weeks, we are going to be looking at different aspects of the same story as they come to pass in these chapters. Now, I recognize that many of us know the story of the flood and the ark as these are stories that we have learned since childhood and it's a story that even mainstream media has covered - cue movies like Bruce Almighty....etc

But before we get going - I have a quick question to ask: We know that animals were on the ark, but how many animals of each kind did Moses take on the ark? (The answer of course is none because it was Noah's ark and not Moses'.)

So the entire story of the great flood and the ark centers around one man and his family - Noah. In chapter 6 we learn that:

Genesis 6:9b

'...Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.'

Sound familiar? It should. The last time we heard a description like this was back in chapter 5 with a man named Enoch.

Genesis 5:24

'And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.'

Both Enoch and Noah were given the attribution of ones that walked with God. Men that were close to God - as Hebrews says, faithful, righteous. As a result, Enoch escaped death and so did Noah - at least for a time.

The story of Noah's ark is a fascinating journey as it focuses on the tension between judgement and

grace.

If we go back to last week we are reminded that the world at that point was spiralling towards destruction. That sin wasn't just growing - it was accelerating - it was quickly gaining speed and momentum. The world wasn't just sinful anymore - it had become corrupted, defiled and was now spiraling toward judgment. But even in the middle of God's just judgment upon the face of the earth, we still see His Grace clearly on display.

Now as we step into the construction of Noah's ark and the coming of the great flood, I invite you to turn with me in your bibles to Genesis 6:9-22. If you are able, I invite you to stand for the reading of the Word of the Lord:

Genesis 6:9-22

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

11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

The Ark Prepared

13 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. 14 Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. 15 And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. 16 You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks. 17 And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. 18 But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19 And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. 20 Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive. 21 And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather it to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them."

22 Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

A few years ago, Jordan and I had the opportunity to take the family to the Ark Encounter in Kentucky where they built an exact replica of the ark according to the instructions in the Bible. Here's what they came up with:



As you can see, it's absolutely massive.

Now in our reading today, we read of the incredible detail that went into the construction of the ark, but we're not going to spend much time on that today. I'm more interested in the fact 'that' Noah built the ark in the first place. The faith and trust that it would have taken is exemplary to say the least. Now, we often approach the story of Noah's Ark with the perception that God told Noah first that He was going to destroy the world with a flood and that He then needed Noah to build a giant sailing ship to escape with his life. But this isn't the case. As we just read, God doesn't tell Noah to build a boat or a ship - He tells Noah to build an ark. This is actually significant because the word for ark in the Hebrew is the word 'tebah' which simply means chest, box or even coffer - not a ship or sailing vessel in the conventional sense.

Now, this is where things get interesting.

The word tebah is only used one other time in the Bible: to describe the small basket that baby Moses was placed in to keep him safe from Pharaoh's death decree over all male babies. In Noah's story, the tebah is a massive wooden barge but in Moses' story, it's a tiny straw basket. The point

being that it's not the size or shape of the ark that matters as much as the nature of the ark.

Notice that both arks are designed to float on water, preserving life through what should have brought death. Neither Noah nor Moses had any control over where they would end up. They were completely at the mercy of the water that surrounded them. The tebah was not a vehicle for escape - it was a container of safety - a vessel of complete trust.

This is significant because it speaks to elements of surrender and control. The ark was built as a floating safety device that no man could control - only God. He opened it and He closed it. He blew the wind and controlled the waters that carried it.

Now what's really interesting about this story is the connection it has to water. The water in both Noah's and Moses' stories represents death and destruction, but it also symbolizes chaos - something overwhelming and impossible to control.

But here's the thing: in both stories, God is the one who controls what cannot be controlled.

It's the ultimate paradox: The very thing that was meant to bring destruction, God now uses to bring deliverance.

Think about that and let it try and land in your mind a little bit.

In Noah's story, the chaotic floodwaters become the very means by which God carries Noah to safety. God controls the rising and receding of the waters so that the ark comes to rest exactly where it should - on the mountains of Ararat.

In Moses' story, the Nile - the river of death for Hebrew boys - is the very river God uses to carry Moses to safety. And not just safety - right into the arms of Pharaoh's daughter, the only person in Egypt who would not kill him, but raise him.

It might not look like it at first glance, but if we go back to last week, we are reminded that chapter 5 is important because it sets the stage for the ark and the flood, by establishing the fact that God is in control. In a genealogy where every line ends in death, Genesis 5 reminds us through the story of Enoch who escapes death as God takes him home, that God is always in control - even when it doesn't look like it.

He governs the chaos - even when it seems like the chaos is in control.

This is absolutely massive. And the implications for you and me are astounding.

In Mark 4, the disciples are caught in a violent storm on the Sea of Galilee. The wind and waves threaten to swallow them. But Jesus stands up and simply says, 'Peace, be still,' and the storm obeys. The disciples are left asking, 'Who is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?'

And then in Matthew 14, Jesus walks out to His disciples on the water - again, in the middle of a storm. The sea is surging, the boat is battered, and they're terrified. But Jesus walks calmly on top of the chaotic waters. And then Peter, in a moment of faith, steps out to join Him. For a few brief moments, Peter actually walks on the water. But when he sees the wind and the waves, he begins to sink. Jesus immediately reaches out His hand and catches him.

In both cases, the message is clear: only Jesus can control the uncontrollable.

And all of this - the ark, the basket, the sea, the storm - ultimately it's all about control. We can trust God to do what only He can do. He steers the ship, guides the basket....and even controls the waters. Our response is to surrender - to let go, and let God.

And all of this - the ark, the basket, the sea, the storm - it all comes down to this one truth:

We're not in control. We never were. Nor were we ever meant to be. We were created to trust...to walk with God. Like Adam in the Garden, like Enoch before the Lord whisked him home and just like Noah as he trusted God enough to be obedient to build the barge.

You see, at the end of the day, what's really going on is that the ark, the basket, the storm are all simply there as a foreshadowing of the cross - where the ultimate trust and surrender lies!

Think about it - the cross is the place where chaos, death and judgment collide, hell-bent on complete and utter destruction. But just as God used the water with Noah and Moses, He also used the cross. And that which was meant to destroy becomes the very thing that God uses to deliver. In Noah's day, the water was meant to destroy the world, but God provided an ark for safety from that judgment. And that ark points the way to the final ark - the cross of salvation - where sin and death are defeated for eternity.

So what does this mean for you and me here today?

I think for many of us, it's easy to get stuck in the pattern of trying to control the things that we are meant to surrender. Ultimately, it's a call to surrender and walk with the Lord as He leads us and guides us and takes full control in our lives. And I get it, this can be so hard for some of us. It's hard to trust God with everything. I think for many of us, it's easy to trust God with our salvation, but it's hard to trust Him with things like sickness and disease...financial burdens...work stress...family conflict....personal struggles....etc.

But you see surrender is based on faith and trust. And if these examples show us anything today, they show us clearly that we can trust Him.

No matter how deep the waters feel.

No matter how loud the storm gets.

No matter how far off course you think you are.

He's still in control.

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