

The Boat

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Preacher: James Tang

[0:00] Thank you, Alex. Good morning, everyone. Good to see you all. Oh, actually, space. Breathing room. Isn't that good? So it turns out the only way we had to do it was just to see who chooses to travel on a public holiday weekend to celebrate Buddha.

And now we know who are the ones who are going to be saved and those who are not. It is a good day. Thank you for being here with us. Today is a good day. It's a day that the Lord has made and we rejoice.

We rejoiced. Why? Because today is the day that Arsenal Football Club will be crowned champions. Yes. Yes. It's been a long wait. And here we are. So we are. And it's going to be an even better day. We pray hard because it's also the day that Tottenham Hotspur may end up in the championship. That will be the day. That is. Sorry, I have to get that out of the way before I go into the word of God. But it's important. We've been going through Genesis. I don't know if you've been like me, but as I've been going through Genesis, it almost feels like I've been going through it for the first time.

[1:07] Because I've been looking at, wow, the creation account. And then just from the beginning all the way to where we are now in Genesis chapter six, which is probably the first famous story in Genesis that most of us, whether we grew up in church or not, will know about, which is the story of Noah.

I realized there's so many things that I missed. There's so many things that I missed. And if you have your Bibles, please open it up with me just from the very beginning. Genesis is the first book in the Bible.

And we're just going to go from the beginning. And I'm going to do a quick recap. Previously in Genesis, this is what happens. Genesis chapter one, God speaks creation into life.

He keeps making things on the six days. And then he says, what does he say after he makes every day? It was good. So he looks and he saw creation. He said it was good.

But then in chapter two, he said something wasn't good. What wasn't good in chapter two? He saw, I think I heard it, he saw that man was alone and man could not be left alone because man is hopeless on his own.

[2:08] And so he says, I will make a helper, a complimentary strength to help him. And so chapter two zooms in to day six. And then chapter three is where it really all goes wrong.

The man stays silent. The woman listens to the serpent and eats the fruit. And you think, what could be so bad about that? Well, here it is.

The original sin, the original cause of sin is just the mistrust of God. And Gabe told us it was also the misvaluing of God. It's saying, God, you're not really worth as much as you should be to me.

And so I'm going to go in this direction first. So the fruit is eaten. And then Genesis chapter four, just when you thought it was just about fruit, it wasn't about fruit. The fruit then leads to murder.

It leads to the first murder where a brother murders his other one. And then you're like, whoa, that's bad. And it's bad for Cain and he gets banished away.

[3:05] But yet somehow God is still gracious. And he says, hey, actually, I will still protect you. But sadly, sin gives birth to more sin. And the slippery slope of sin begins.

And what was a fruit then led to a murder. Then at the end of chapter four led to Lamech, who I talked about last week. The first gangster rapper who was rapping to his two wives and saying, I killed a man because he just looked at me wrong.

And he was proud of it. And civilization was starting to build. And culture was starting to happen.

But it wasn't the culture that God wanted. This line of Cain that came down to Lamech was one that was violent, one that was aggressive, one that was oppressive.

And then you think, well, what hope do we have? And then at the end of chapter four, you see there's a replacement for Abel and it comes in the name of Seth. And then there's a line of Seth that happens.

And that group, that group is different. And it's from that moment at the end of chapter four, it says, and people started to call upon the name of the Lord. So while there was a group that was so hell bent on violence, there was another group that was starting to call upon the name of the Lord.

[4:10] And then we started going down the genealogy from Adam all the way to Noah. And one of the things that we notice there is we look at a boring list like Genesis chapter five. You're looking at the rhythms. You're looking at what's actually happening in the details.

And what you see, the first is, and he died. And he died. And he died. And it was a constant reminder of the consequence of sin. A constant reminder of the justice of God. And he died.

And he died. And he died. And it reminds us that there is an end date to our lives. Whatever we do, there is an end date. Why? Because we chose to go the other way. Until that line, that rhythm was disturbed.

It was interrupted. It reaches a guy called Enoch in the middle of Genesis chapter five. And then suddenly, Enoch doesn't die. The first person to not die.

Can you imagine everyone at that moment go, wait, everyone else died? Why did Enoch not die? Okay. His life got cut short though, because he wasn't even middle-aged at that time. He was only 365. And most people at that point were living to 900.

[5:09] But for some reason, Enoch did not die. He walked with God. And then he was not. So God took him. One of two people, Elijah and Enoch, who was taken. Enoch then gives birth and fathers a line of people who actually do walk with God.

There's Methuselah. Methuselah, the longest, the oldest man in the Bible, recorded in the Bible, 969. His name meant, when he dies, it shall be sent.

Can you imagine growing up in school as Methuselah? And everyone going, hey, what's your name? Oh, my name is, when I die, it will come. Can you imagine the jokes that would be thrown at Methuselah?

Hey, what's going to happen when you die, Methuselah? What's going to come? And so everyone knows that's his name. Everyone knows that something's going to happen when Methuselah dies. But before he dies, he fathers someone else called Lamech, not the gangster rapper Lamech in chapter four.

This is a Lamech who is a godly man. And actually, we get to see in this list, this boring list of genealogies, we get to hear what he has to say. And he says, I'm going to have another son. And this son is going to bring rest and relief.

[6:17] This son is going to be called Noah. And out of the cursed ground, there will be relief. And you're like, whoa, where did he hear that line from, right?

Where did Lamech, all these generations away from Adam, where did he hear that term that the ground is cursed? Well, we discovered, I discovered last week, he heard that from Adam himself. Because Adam had lived all the way through those different generations.

So Methuselah and Lamech would have actually spent time with the original man, would have spent time with Adam and said, Adam, why did you eat the fruit? And Adam would have had to explain. Adam could have described what the garden would have been like. So Methuselah and Lamech, Noah's dad and grandfather, would have lived with Noah in those years when Noah was given a very specific instruction.

And what was the instruction? To build an ark. And let me just stop there for a second. What do you know about Noah? When I say Noah, let's form a bass line.

[7:24] What are you thinking about here? The first thing I thought about was the song that I used to sing all the time. The animals went in two by two. Did you remember that song? The animals went in two by two. The elephant and the kangaroo.

And they all went into the ark for to get out of the rain. This nursery rhyme that we read to our children about the animals going into the ark. But we seem to have missed the point that this story is about the wrath of God wiping out mankind.

Hey, two-year-old, come and sing this song with me about how God killed everyone. And so we look at this story and we go, well, what was it about?

Why was Genesis chapter 5 so intent on telling us the connection from Adam to Noah? Adam lived with all the people in that list apart from Noah. He missed Noah. And so we're going to find out today.

And I hope as we look through this book, this chapter on Genesis chapter 6 and 7 today, you'll find out something a bit more than just the animals went in two by two. That there is a little bit more to the story.

[8:34] There's a little bit more than what meets the eye here. And so I'm going to invite Kara up to come and read the word of the Lord to us. Can I invite you to stand for the word of God? Today I'm going to read from Genesis 6, chapter, well, Genesis 6, verse 1 to 8.

This is the word of the Lord. When men began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were attractive, and they took as their wives any they chose.

Then the Lord said, My spirit shall not abide in men forever, for he is flesh. His days shall be 120 years. The Nephilim were on the earth on those days, and also afterward.

When the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were old, the men of renown. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, I will blot out men whom I have created from the face of the land, men and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.

[9:59] But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. This is the word of the Lord. Praise be to God. Please take a seat. Thank you, Cara. So there was hope.

There was another line, the Seth line, that was call upon the name of the Lord. But somewhere as the lines kept going, five chapters in, ten generations down, no one, even in the line of Seth, actually makes it other than one family.

What happened there? Honestly, this is one of the more confusing parts of the Bible that are just hard to understand. Because if you look at this, there's things going on here that we're going to try and unpack.

But I want us to try and keep the main point the main point here. Because we can actually go down rabbit holes where we chase and actually look at things that are maybe not necessarily unimportant, but just things that we are, it's impossible for understand.

Okay? I was talking to a friend here who was reading C.S. Lewis recently. And he was actually saying, C.S. Lewis is really hard to read. And I'm like, absolutely. Mere Christianity is a book that maybe I've started five times.

[11:00] And it's taken me time and time again to get to. Because the English is just different. If you think about the Chronicles of Narnia, which you wrote, you look at the English and you're like, that is just, it's actually from a different time. It's actually a little bit harder to understand.

So can you imagine then, if we find C.S. Lewis a little bit hard sometimes, can you imagine going into the original book of the Bible and looking at Genesis? Undoubtedly, there are going to be things here that we do not fully, fully get.

And I want to try and address some things. I want to try and keep us on track to what this passage is also really talking about. But there are a few things that we can look at here. So the lions start to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them.

The sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. How did we end up with one lion that was calling on the name of the Lord? And eventually at the end, there was only one family that survived. The one word, compromise.

Compromise. Remember from Genesis chapter three, he already said to the serpent, he said, hey, there's going to be two lions of people. There's going to be two types. There's only two types of people in the world.

[12:00] One that trusts God and one that does not trust God. That's what he's saying in Genesis chapter three. And now you see here, those two lions are happening. It's in play. But the problem here, where it really goes wrong, where it ends up to the point where God wipes out everyone, is because those two lions started to mix.

Let's find out what happens here. The sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. Now, there was a recent movie called Noah, starring Russell Crowe, maybe that I say recent, but it

was a good few years ago now, where it really kind of fantasized and dramatized this story here. And some people are like, oh, the sons of God, were they the angels? So did angels come and actually start mixing with the human race? If we look at the context of what's happened here, the answer, I don't think it is the case.

What we see here are two lions of people, the sons, the children, the lion, the offspring of Cain, and the offspring of Seth, and they are starting to mix. What does it mean here? The sons of God, which would be the lion of Seth, the good lion, okay, they saw that the daughters of man were attractive and they took as their wives any they chose.

We go back now, Genesis chapter one, God created and saw creation and said that it was good. But then Eve in chapter three says, I saw the fruit and the fruit looked good, attractive.

[13:17] It's actually the same word there. And so suddenly in chapter three, man takes control and makes discerning choices themselves. I think this is good. And you see here in chapter six, the same thing.

The sons of Seth look across and see the attractiveness of the daughters of the lion of Cain. And they say, I would like to choose that person as my wife. It starts to unravel when two lions start to mix.

It starts to get corrupted when there is compromise. This is actually a good place to talk a little bit about, as those who are followers of Christ, one of the decisions that we're making, especially when it comes to those we are dating and those we are wanting to marry, are these people, ones that are in line with us.

Later in the New Testament, talks about to not be yoked, to not be tied to unbelievers. Why? Because it's a bad idea. Because one person wants to go in this direction and the other wants to go in this direction. End of story. Why would you want to tie yourself to someone who is going in the opposite direction?

We see here a good case study of when one lion that's supposed to be trusting in God looks over and says, I'm interested in that lion. I think they're attractive. I'm going to go over there.

[14:26] And you can see that starts to happen. And then the Lord said, my spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh. His days shall be 120 years. Again, going back to the beginning, he creates us out of dust and then he breathes life.

We are both dust and the life of God. And God says here, okay, they are just flesh. They are alive because of my spirit. But now I'm going to limit it. And now it's going to be 120 years. There's a couple of interpretations with this that I'm not going to go through today.

One is actually that timer, that countdown is basically saying, I'm going to give mankind 120 years to repent. This is the time for them to repent and to turn back.

Why? Because if they don't, the flood's coming. That's one interpretation. Another one is that actually, remember last week, people lived up to 900 something years. But as you see, eventually mankind, maybe because of the decisions that we made, we actually end up around, everyone lives under 120 years.

Whichever way you go, it's basically God saying, now there is a countdown. There is a countdown to repent. There is a countdown to go back and choose me again.

[15:31] And then carry on. Verse four, the Nephilim, who were the Nephilim? The word simply means the fallen ones. But if you carry on going, these were the sons of God and they bore children and these were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

So there are some places where it would depict giants, sons of angels who are coming. But really, I would just say that these are just big men. These were just big men who were warriors.

And this isn't that hard to understand. There are big human beings around, even in our world right now. We probably live in the place, in the world, where maybe those here are of more smaller stature.

But if you go to the west, if you go to the north, there are big human beings. Something that we have to kind of surrender here is we simply don't truly understand what mankind was developing like.

Imagine someone's living for 900 years and he's eating, or she's eating fruit that comes from paradise. This food was nutritious.

[16:31] They're also working and farming for 900 years. Can you imagine how? So these human beings, it stands to reason, do not look the same as us. Does that make sense? I go back to England sometimes and I look, I go from average height here in Hong Kong to tiny, tiny in England.

And if I went to America, it would be even worse. And I look and I'm like, okay, well, these human beings, there were probably some that were just bigger. And the Nephilim here were describing people that were mighty warriors.

There are people in this world right now that are seven feet tall. These could be the ancestors of even someone like Goliath, around nine feet tall. So what we have here then is basically two lines, mixing, compromising.

And what you end up is corruption. And this is where God looks. Remember chapter one, God sees creation, sees man and sees woman and says it was good, it was very good. But sadly, it only takes five chapters.

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Theologians call this concept total depravity.

[17 : 38] You look and you see the heart of man and you see the sin that exists. You're like, okay, I can see that people are not truly pure.

This is the first thing that I really think we need to understand. That we sat here are not really good people. Psalm 14 says, there's no one who's good. Jeremiah 17 says, the heart is deceitful.

Have you ever described someone, hey, no, but that person has a good heart. Yeah? That's actually unbiblical. Jesus himself said, there is no one good. And they're like, okay, well, what about, and I've joked about this before and I truly do mean it.

What about the little babies? What about those little helpless babies like Lily? Like, Joe and Alex will tell you, Lily's a sinner. She'll scream whenever she doesn't get what she wants.

Connor, you teach two to three-year-olds, you see the depravity on show amongst tiny little kids. Psalm 51 says, we were born in sin.

[18 : 40] But you're like, oh, yes, I know, but there are some people that are good. Here's the thing. There are some people who are really honest and really humble. Well, actually, I am inspired by something that Tim Keller said that actually there is no such thing as true humility amongst human beings.

I look at someone, Caleb, I don't mean this about you, you're just here. I look at Caleb and I think he's just a really prideful kind of guy. Just really cocky. And I'm like, you know what? I don't want to be like Caleb.

I want to be better than Caleb. I want to be more humble than Caleb. What am I doing? What am I exhibiting? Pride. Because I'm saying I'm better than him.

Can you see? Even our thoughts. Think about the other good things that you do. Maybe the charity work that you do. Maybe the good intentions, the things that you do to try and care for other people. If you keep peeling back while you're doing those things, I think there's a people-pleasing element to it.

I think there's a seeking people's approval in it. Even the good things. Can I convince you of this? That you are a sinner through and through. That there is no ability in us to have pure and good thoughts.

[19 : 51] Even when on the outside, it looks like it. Caleb, I'm just going to keep picking on you here. Here's a glass of water. Would you like to drink this water? It's quite hot in here.

You would love to drink this water because it looks, it's clean. I got it from the water fountain that's just around there. Okay, you can drink it. One second. Sorry, that's gross.

That's gross. Would you still like to drink this water? Okay, I may have picked the wrong person because I think Caleb really would just drink from this cup.

Yeah. Even I won't drink from this cup anymore. Brothers and sisters, this is us. You may look and you see that you are, I'm a good person.

I'm not that bad. Well, here's the point. You might even be 99%, but you're not 100%. And if we're not 100%, that means we can't truly rely on the thoughts that we have going on.

[20 : 53] There's something about us that is filled with sin. We are not good people who sin every now and again. We are sinners who are living out the way that we're living out. That's why we need a savior.

I'm not going to drink from this. I'm just going to leave this right here. Please no one drink from it. Can you see, that's what total depravity is. And once you understand that, we will start to understand the rest of the passage here.

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And then the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him to his heart.

And later it says he was sorry for it. Just an interesting point here, an important point here. God's not like, oh my goodness, I'm so sorry, I wish I could have, I'm changing my mind about mankind. It's not that. What it is, is that it's anguish. It's anger. It's like a parent looking at a child who's living in a destructive way, not just to themselves, but to other people.

[21 : 54] It's the heartbreak that comes with looking at a child, looking at your own child and seeing them inflict pain on themselves and other people. It's that kind of regret. It's that kind of sorrow. It's that kind of anguish.

And remember, God saw that his own children, Cain and Abel, were murdering each other. So if you're a parent, imagine one of your own kids murdering someone else, murdering one of the siblings.

It's that kind of anguish. It's that kind of pain. It's that kind of regret. And he looks and he says, this is not good. Verse seven, and I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.

Of course, the fish survive because fish can swim in the ocean, which I need to ask God about.

There's some really scary fish. I'll ask him about rats and pigeons as well, how they manage.

You're right. I'm like, God, you wiped them out the first time. Just let them be. But somehow the rats and the pigeons, they came back. But the Chinese redeemed the pigeons and we added a little bit of salt onto it and it ends up being something delicious.

[22 : 56] Sorry, that's completely side note. And he wipes everyone out. And you're like, okay, well, this is it. This is the end. And then the most powerful word in scripture comes, but.

Just like the but in Ephesians 2, when we were dead in our sins, but God. Now we see, verse eight, but Noah found favor in the eyes of God.

So in the midst of both lines now, mixing to the point where actually there's no one left. Can you imagine within 10 generations, there is no one left who is worth saving. That's what compromise does.

And if you're sat here going, I need to make a decision about a relationship. I need to make a decision about a job. I would encourage you, look at this passage and go, wait, where am I compromising in my life? Where am I actually making decisions that I am trying to justify myself based on my own flesh about what I like to see, but actually, it's ending up in compromise that ends up in corruption that ends up being really evil.

If we're truly to understand the love of God and the grace of God, we must understand the wrath of God and the holiness of God. We have to understand both together. And we'll find out a little bit more here. But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

[24 : 16] Just a little bit more, let's keep going down. Verse nine, these are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. Whoa, we heard that before. We heard that in Enoch, that he was someone who walked with God together.

What does that mean? In the midst of this generation, there was someone who was actually saying, hey, I'm just going to be different. I'm going to walk in a different way. Doesn't mean he's perfect.

Next week, we're going to look at the end of Noah's life and it doesn't really end that well.

So he's not perfect. When it says blameless here, all it means is that this was someone who was pursuing righteousness, who was trying to walk with God. That's all it was saying here. And now this family would be chosen.

They would find favor in the eyes of God. And a little bit more, scripture expands here. Now, verse 11, now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth and behold, it was corrupt.

For all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. You have to understand something about this because you're like, you might be sitting here going, I don't understand why God had to wipe that out, wipe the whole thing out. That's just cruel. It's just mean. It was unnecessary.

[25 : 17] He could have just helped the people who were kind of good and that would have been enough. But if you look into the word corrupt, the word corrupt there really meant that actually creation was getting destroyed.

And so what he's doing, he's destroying the destroyed. As he was looking at mankind, spiraling out of control, following down this slippery slope of sin, what was happening was everything was becoming corrupt.

At the beginning, it looked like a pure glass of water that had spit in it, but eventually now it just becomes this murky water that you see in oceans besides Hong Kong. Just unclear waters and then it gets worse and worse.

And so he's like, the water is already destroyed. Society is already destroyed. And because it's destroyed, I must clean it all out and start again. That's what he's saying here.

It's saying this is beyond repair. And something else that I think those of us who live in Hong Kong, we find this hard to understand. If you've spent time abroad, then you'll probably understand this a little bit more.

[26 : 15] It was said creation or culture was corrupt and that it was filled with violence. Hong Kong so happens to be, in my opinion, one of the safest places in the world. I'm happy to send my children on the MTR to go to wherever they need to go to and I'll be okay in terms of just how I feel whether they'll be safe.

I remember telling Christina, isn't that good that our kids can find their own way home now? We don't even need to go pick them up anymore. We feel safe on the MTR because the signs are always there. If you've lived in London and if you've been in the underground system, it's confusing. New York is even worse. But Hong Kong, you'll be able to do it. And actually, she said something that was interesting. She was like, well, it is a good thing, but it's also a bad thing because then they're not really aware of the outside world.

They're not really aware of what's going on outside, so when they go back, they'll be living in a way that's just unsafe. I remember this happened to me. Do you remember those, do you remember that thing called COVID where we spent three years trapped in one city and trapped in a very safe city? And so I remember just living life here to doing the COVID life here and it was all very safe and easy. And then three years on, we went back to England to visit our family and was just in a shopping center and pushing one of the kids, I can't remember which one, pushing one of the kids.

[27 : 32] And then I saw something in the shop. I was like, it's too hard to get to it. So I just left the pushchair with the child inside. And I was like, oh, you wait here. I'm going to go. And I'm saying, Hong Kong, that's pretty safe.

You're all judging me now because I'm not even in Hong Kong, James. It was pretty safe. But then I walked like 10 steps and I was like, wait, we're not in Hong Kong. That could all disappear very quickly.

I put the wrong child in the stroller. They can take the other one. So we lose that memory of actually what it's like to live in a society that's filled with violence and corruption. What are we actually fearing for our lives?

And when you look at that, you're thinking, God, where is your justice? Where is your justice? Why aren't you judging those people? Why aren't you looking at those people and saying, why aren't you dealing with them?

Why aren't you dealing with that evil? And yet you see here, God is dealing with that evil. He is dealing with it through what we can see here as wrath. Now, the word wrath there makes us think of just a violent, aggressive God trying to lash out, but that's not what it is.

[28 : 39] What he's doing is when he's defending something that he loves, something that he cherishes, and he sees it as getting corrupt, he sees it as getting evil, he sees that it's destroyed, then he has to operate. And we'll talk a little bit more about the wrath of God later.

But Noah, but Noah found favor in the eyes of God. A lot of us, if we grew up listening to the song about Noah, we will then automatically think, whether we realize it or not, that the way to get saved is to be a good person.

How am I going to be saved by God? How am I not going to drown in the flood? I just have to be like Noah, be a good person. That is not what Scripture is saying here. You can see here that verse eight, Noah finds favor in the eyes of God before it's described what he's like.

When we see the words, Noah found favor, what we think it means, society has trained us to think it means Noah earned the right to be saved. Noah was good enough that the teacher looked kindly on him and decided to save him.

That's not what it means. What it means is Noah found undeserved grace, unmerited favor. You look at the families around, whether it's church, missionaries that go out and are really just living all

out for the Lord and you look at them, you're like, they are good, good people.

[29 : 53] And if you ask any single one of them, they would say, no, we are not good. We are only good because of the grace of God. So what we see here is Noah is only good because of the grace of God.

If you ask Noah, if you were lucky enough to actually spend time with Noah and his family, it would be, we don't really know why we're picked. We probably deserve to be in society outside and yet somehow grace found us.

I think that's something else. If we have to understand total depravity, we have to understand something else, which is the concept of grace. that we didn't do anything to deserve what we have. That is a key component to us then repenting and actually living lives of love, giving freely because we received freely.

Noah found favor before he was described to be a righteous man, blameless in his generation. But then he speaks to Noah. In verse 13, it says, God said to Noah, I have determined to make an end of all flesh for the earth is filled with violence through them.

Behold, I will destroy them with the earth. And then he goes and gives instructions on how to make an ark. We don't actually know whether it's rained up until at this point, but it's probably reasonable to assume that there was no flood.

[31 : 06] So God says to Noah, hey, you're going to need to build something very big on dry land and it's going to take you about 100 years to build. This makes me think, grace finds Noah and then God gives him instructions to do something that is completely countercultural.

Imagine, he has to sacrifice everything that he's been doing for about 100 years to go and build this ark. Now, remember, granddad Methuselah is around.

dad Lamech is around and they spoke to Adam so they would have described to Noah, hey, Adam had told us about the original creation.

He's told us about Eden. And so when Noah received the instructions from God to build this ark, no doubt them two would have been in his ear saying, do it. Do it. We are so exhausted from the corruption.

We are so exhausted from the violence. God needs to come in judgment to save us. Save us from who? To save us from ourselves. Both our lines are now compromised.

[32 : 17] We need to do this. And so, no doubt, with granddad and with dad in his ear, he starts to build this ark, which would have been just an outrageous thing to do. It would have taken a long time.

And it makes me think, when was the last time we received instructions from God, or we felt convicted to be different to the people around us. Not necessarily to go out and build an ark, but to just follow God and obey him.

So even though grace found Noah, yet Noah still had to do something. Because at this point, he could have said, God, that sounds crazy. I'm not going to build the ark.

Has anyone watched Evan Almighty? Steve Carell? Quite a funny movie. Not an actual depiction of what happened here in Genesis 6 and 7, but funny and close enough.

To do something completely outrageous that your friends and that your family don't truly understand. That is what Noah did here. That is what made him blameless, not because he was perfect, but because he was obedient.

[33 : 22] But because he was willing to follow God. Interestingly, in 2 Peter 2, it talks about Noah how he's not only building the ark, he's actually also warning people around him.

He's actually preaching righteousness to those around him. So he was actually trying to build a church whilst he was doing this. So he gives up his career, gives up all the things, it must have come at great expense in every single way, starts to build the ark, and then he starts to tell people, his friends, his family, his neighbors, repent.

Repent because the flood is coming. But your grandfather is still alive. Yes, but repent. He's going to come to him. He's going to die soon and repentance will be necessary.

And how many people does Noah successfully evangelize to? Zero. He tries to bring people to God and they refuse to go in.

This blesses me as someone who tries, not perfectly, tries to walk with God, tries to pursue God, tries to be obedient to God, sometimes not knowing the fruit that will come out of it.

[34 : 29] It brings me great comfort to know there was someone else who was told to build a boat in the middle of land for a hundred years preaching the same message and yet he got no one.

What about that good neighbor? Okay, surely, yes, there were violent people on the other side of town that weren't listening, but surely that friendly neighbor that lived on the plot of land next to Noah.

Surely they would have been okay. At the very least, they probably weren't trying to sabotage his building project in the middle of the night. They were letting him continue to build this crazy thing on the boat.

Surely they would be okay. But again, here we have no one response. No one. Not even the kind of good people. Not even the ones who were kind of kind.

That every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And so what do we have? Why is this story even here?

[35 : 35] So then he builds the ark. Okay, verse 22 at the end of chapter 6. Noah did this. He did all that God commanded him. Didn't question. Didn't add to it.

Didn't subtract to it. Didn't make a deal and negotiate and say, okay, God, I hear you. Something's going to happen when granddad dies. Okay, I'll build it, but can it not be so big? Because it will take forever.

You're only having my family in any way. We'll figure it out. Or what about you do this for me? It wasn't. It was just he got the instructions from God and then he said, and scripture just says, and Noah did all that God had commanded him.

Again, the true obedience that comes, the grace that is needed, but also the obedience that is needed for mankind to be saved. And so he makes it.

Chapter 7 now. Then the Lord said to Noah, go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. And then he gives some instructions. on what kind of animals to bring. I always thought it was just two by two, which is how the song goes.

[36 : 32] But actually, there were also seven pairs of animals that he would have to bring on, some clean and some unclean. God was starting to prepare the way for a sacrificial system where mankind can be covered and made holy again in front of a holy God.

We won't talk about that today, but he instructs him. And again, chapter 7, verse 5, and Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him again. And then, when he was 600 years old, after 100 years of building the ark, it's time to get on.

He gets onto the ark, and scripture here, and it's really interesting, it just says this, verse 10, and after seven days, the waters of the flood came upon the earth. After seven days.

Imagine building something for 100 years with people laughing at you constantly, ridiculing you constantly, going, what on earth are you doing? This has never been done. We don't even know what you're building. And finally, there comes the day after 100 years, you get on the boat, and the rain doesn't come.

For seven days. Can you imagine being the family, just sitting on the boat, going, Dad, did we just give up all of our lives, lost all of our friends, and now we're still sat here with no rain?

[37 : 47] Again, not only was he preaching righteousness for 100 years, not only was he obeying for 100 years, it doesn't make sense sometimes. And it doesn't come at the time that you want it to come.

Can you imagine the people, the neighbors, looking in at the boat, hey Noah, what's up, how's that flood working out? How's the boat? Is it comfy?

Is there Wi-Fi? Hey, when are you going to come out? The ridicule. I don't know, I can't even guarantee that I wouldn't be one of those people that woke up.

And yet, seven days they waited. But then, finally, chapter 7, verse 11, in the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the 17th day of the month, you can have no doubt that Noah would remember that day.

Exactly that day. When after all those years of obedience, it happens. And it isn't just a drizzly rain. And the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened.

[38 : 54] This wasn't just a heavy rain, people. This was God decreasing creation. The great depths were opening up again. God was saying, we're going to start again. This was the great reversal.

And no one, no one, that Noah had preached to would get on. But now it's starting to rain. Now the floods are happening.

So you would have no doubt there would be some people who were starting to go, oh, maybe Noah was right. Quick, quick, grab your stuff. Let's go. Let's see if there's still time for us to get onto that ark.

Can you imagine the screaming, the wailing, the death that would be coming upon creation at that point. Later in the New Testament, it talks about it, that the people in the days of Noah were eating, drinking, marrying, just living life as normal.

But when that moment comes, when that day comes, it is already too late. And so they get on the boat. They stay on the boat. And maybe the key word here is this, chapter 7, verse 16.

[40:00] And they went in as God had commanded him, and the Lord shut him in. Do you remember in Genesis chapter 2, I said there was a change in word, God and Lord.

The word God was the one that was in Genesis chapter 1, which talks about the all-powerful God creating things. And then in chapter 2, he turns it because he creates man and woman, and then it becomes Lord, which means Elohim, which was not just the power of God, but the presence of God.

It was the relational aspect of God. So you see here, again, the writer shows two differences.

Chapter 7, verse 16, and God had commanded them, but then the Lord shut him in.

The writer's here showing us, hey, it's not, God is all-powerful, but the one who saves is a relational God. The one who saves isn't just power, it's presence, it's being with his people.

It tells you something else, Noah himself could not have shut that door. The Lord, can you imagine, the family gets on, it's starting to flood, the water is starting to go up, the boat's starting to move, and then his wife will say, Noah, get everyone on, close the door, close the door, and then Noah runs and closes the door, but he's 600 years old, so he's probably running quite slowly, and then eventually he closes the door, and then it's like, did you close it properly?

[41:18] Are you sure? Because if we have a leak, we could have a problem. It is not that.

Sometimes we, as Christians, we think, okay, what do I need to do to be saved? Do I need to do the best that I can?

And then you might ask that question, is it enough? Am I being good enough? Am I reading the Bible enough? Am I praying enough? From this story of old, that is not the way you get saved.

The way you get saved is if God looks at you and has favor on you. You then trust and obey him and follow his instructions, and the Lord will ultimately be the one that shuts you in. Can you imagine that door would have been so heavy, too heavy for Noah to close, and yet God, the Lord, sorry, is the one who shuts him in.

Can you imagine just the assurance that he would have felt? Oh, thank goodness it's not down to me. I have that same fear when my wife tells me, did you close all the windows? Did you clean the toilet?

And I'm like, yes? And yet Noah here knows for sure, I had nothing to do with this. The Lord is the one who's shutting us in.

[42:27] If we're going to survive, it's going to be because of him. It's because he shut the door.

One last thing I want to show us. We look at this and we see some of the misconceptions that we had about our own faith, about ourselves.

We thought that maybe we are kind of good people. This passage tells us we are not. There is total depravity. We are not capable of pure, good thoughts. Even our best intentions and our best actions are still laced with selfishness and fear and insecurity and pride.

Total depravity is what we see here. We don't find favor because we are an A plus student. We find favor because God shows us favor. And yet then our response is obedience.

Our response is obedience in light of when we're told to do something that doesn't really truly make sense. And from that, the Lord saves us and shuts us in.

But there's one final thing here. If we go back to chapter 6, verse 18, God tells him to build the ark and he gives him the dimensions. Remember, he doesn't have an instruction manual.

[43:33] Maybe that's why it takes so long. He does not have Gemini to help him. But then after that, verse 18, God says this, but I will establish my covenant with you and you shall come into the ark.

It's the first time the word covenant is used. This relational God, this God of love, that's about to pour out his wrath onto creation. Says, I will give you a promise.

If you trust me, if you obey me, I promise you, you and your family will be saved. Would you come into the ark?

Wait, God, you're already in the ark? Why are you saying come into the ark? You should say build the ark and go into the ark. But yet you tell me to come in to the ark.

Brothers and sisters, this is where we see the foreshadowing of Christ. Where Christ says, come, abide in me.

[44:38] I am the ark. I am the only way that you can be saved. Not that friendly neighbor who's giving you cookies while she's trying to build the ark. Sadly, she won't make it.

Not just because, because it can't just be because she's a kind person. Not how you are striving to be that grade A student. That's not going to help you.

The only way that we can be saved is if we get into the ark. You realize something. When we look at Christianity, when we look at how we live, we're always thinking about how do we earn our way there?

How do we not break the rules is what we're trying to say. And again, I think we need to tweak it a little bit. That when we're breaking the rules, we haven't got this angry God who's trying to punish us. When we're breaking his rules, what we're actually doing is we're breaking his heart.

And again, every parent knows this. When you tell your child, don't do that. Don't touch that hot stove. Okay? From this moment forth, this is one of the commandments in the kitchen.

[45:36] Do not touch, do not put your hand into that thing that's called the oven. Do not do it. And then you see your children do it. Because that's what we do. Right? And then what happens?

Yes, they broke the rule, but they've also broke themselves, their hand. But most of all, they've broken your heart as a parent. Right? Because they didn't trust you. And in doing so, they've hurt themselves.

When we see it that way, we realize that actually God is a God of promise. God is a God of relationship. God is a God of love. And he is the one who shuts us in. It says, everything dies.

Everything goes. He starts again. But next week, we're going to see actually some hope. We're going to see what he means when he talks about, I'm never going to do this again.

We're going to see what he means when he puts the rainbow into the sky. We're going to see what he means when creation starts again. But for now, I want us just to stop here. There is going to come a time where the Lord is going to say, I'm going to shut the door and it's going to be too late.

[46:48] In that moment, we won't have a chance anymore. It's in this moment that we can still say, Christ, I follow you. I trust you. And only you, I realize you are the only way for me to survive is if I obey you, if I worship you, if I believe in you.

I don't know where you are on the scale of kind of full-blown sinner or kind of sinner or doing well, trying your best, but still sinner. I'm here saying it doesn't really matter.

We all fall short of the glory of God. but, it doesn't, again, but, but, but, but we all justified freely by his grace as a gift through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Get into the ark. Get into the ark before it's too late. It is in Christ alone that we can be saved. And you might still have questions about the wrath of God.

You might still have questions about the love of God. And that's where I point you to the cross, where the wrath of God and the love of God meets. Because the God is also God of justice. But in that one moment on the cross, he fulfills both.

[48:02] Mankind can only be saved by clinging on to the tree. Let us pray. Amen. as we finish up here, instead of responding in song, we're going to respond in a moment of just reflection.

Lord, if there is any evil thought in us, any mistrust of you, any misvaluing of you, we come to you and we repent.

repent. we see that the flood is not just judgment, but it's salvation through judgment.

The same waters that clear the earth of sin are the same waters that lift us up towards you. And for that we are grateful.

Let us each spend the moment now just in quiet reflection. As we repent and ask Jesus for you to come.

[50:10] Lord Jesus, in some ways we sat here today as recipients of your grace, but also observers of violence and corruption and darkness in the world.

We sit here on this ark that is you, and we are grateful. We know that every thought and intention of ours is still evil continually, but we also know that you now live in us.

And that you are working in every part of our hearts, cleaning over our sin, covering us with your sacrifice.

and so today we sit and we wait. Just as Noah did for those seven days on the boat before the rain came, just as he did for the 150 days after the rain subsided and all he could see was water.

and so we sit and we wait for you. And as we wait, Lord, would you speak to us?

[51 : 52] Would you remember us, your covenant with us, your promise to us? we thank you, Lord.

Thank you that you came to save us while we were still sinners. in your name that we pray. Amen.