

10th Sunday after Trinity Festival**GENESIS 6:9-22****THE FLOOD --- DEATH AND LIFE**

This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

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. Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. 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 [450 feet x 75 feet x 45 feet]. 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.

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. 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. 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. 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. 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."

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

The history of Noah and the Flood is one of the most astounding Old Testament miracles, both in respect to the scope—worldwide; and power—mega-tons of water unleashed. It's easy to think of the Flood as showing only God's wrath and punishment. It also shows His love and his mercy.

The genealogy, or family tree, from Adam to Noah (Genesis 5) shows that Noah lived about 1500 years after Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve's son Cain, with the murder of his brother Abel, had opened the door for gross/great

outbreaks of coarse sin among mankind. “Big” sins have a deep impact on people affected and show a bold and defiant heart. “Little” sins are no less damning. “Perfection” is the only standard. By the time of Noah, *the earth was filled with violence*. In verses prior to our text, it says that every intent of the thoughts of man’s heart was only evil all the time (6:5). God would not tolerate the corruptness and wickedness of the human heart any more.

It was more than just the anger of a stern judge against repeat offenders, against gross/great offenders. It was also grief. Adam and Eve had been His special creation. God made Adam and Eve and their children superior to the animals. Of all creation they were the only ones who were morally responsible, the only ones who could show love to God for all that God had done for them, the only ones obeying Him from the heart, not just on instinct or habit. God was grieved when Adam and Eve boldly and foolishly threw it away, buying Satan’s lies. They disobeyed God’s command about the forbidden fruit. Yet, even then, God in His love promised the Seed of the woman would come to bruise and crush Satan’s power and head. Forgiveness, righteousness, and life instead of death, would come to them through Him forever. BUT, 1500 years later, all the people of the earth, except eight, were saying, “Not interested! Forget it! Our way (the devil’s way) is better.” It grieved God’s heart.

However, there were eight—Noah, “Mrs. Noah,” and sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth and each of their wives. Noah was 500 years old when his sons were born (5:32). ----- Why were the lifespans so long? Perhaps because of less inroads of sickness. Perhaps because of the need for the earth to be populated. And surely to pass on the promise of the Savior by word of mouth directly to many succeeding generations. ----- Noah was a believer. He walked with God. He was “perfect” / righteous through faith in God’s forgiveness by the Promised Seed of the Woman! Wasn’t he a sinner? Yes, he was a sinner; Noah died (9:29). “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). “In the day you eat from the tree, you shall surely die (Genesis 2:17). It was by faith alone, that Noah and his family were acceptable to God and would be spared, just as they were spared from their sins. God never forgets His children. He will never forget you. Through Jesus you are adopted into God’s family—sons and daughters of God! “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26). Come what may, through Christ you are safe before the Father forever.

The Lord told Noah to build an “ark.” An ark is a “box” for safe-keeping and for carrying. (The Israelites would later have the “ark,” the box, of the Covenant for carrying the tablets of stone with the 10 Commandments written on

them, a jar of manna, and with the “atonement cover / mercy seat” on top.) Noah’s ark was huge! In English the measurements are 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. That means length was the distance the street corner at our property, to the Baptist church up the street; the width, the distance from the front wall of the church to the first entryway doors at the back; the height, from the peak of the ceiling to the floor (which is 25 feet) plus 20 more feet—about double. The ark was a big box; a big barge, sealed with pitch/tar/sap within and without—a place for survival and life! Inside, there rooms/cubicles/ “nests” for the animals. God said the animals would “come to the ark”—two by two, male and female. The ark would have three floors, a door, and a “window” at the top going all the way around, eighteen inches high. Thus light and ventilation would be provided. There were three decks. They must have had openings to allow for light and air to reach the bottom. Food? Noah and his family were instructed to store up food for all to eat. What kind of food? Remember that at creation, man and all living creatures, ate vegetation, no meat in the diet. Likewise here. How did Noah and his family engineer such a monstrosity? We are not told. They had much time and much skill. Think of the pyramids of Egypt, constructed after the flood, and the faces of stone on Easter Island. We have no idea about their tools, but it was done. Noah was instructed to use “gopherwood” as the Hebrew word comes out in English. We are not sure what type of wood that was.

The ark was a preaching of God’s anger and judgment against all the negative hearts of the onlookers, inquirers, and mockers Peter says Noah was a “preacher of righteousness to the ungodly ancient world” (I Peter 2:5). The ark and the Flood would be God’s doom and punishment for unbelief, a foretaste of the wrath to come in the fires of hell. *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.* Godless man and all his habitation would be destroyed. It would rained forty days and forty nights; also the great fountains of the deep would be opened up. Water covered everything (7:19-24). All land creatures died. (No sea creatures were taken aboard.) Wicked man and his earthly habitation were destroyed.

On the other hand, God comforted Noah and his family with His words, *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.* A covenant is an agreement or promise. God was establishing a covenant with them. After the flood He promised them and all generations to come, that He would never again destroy all life on the earth by flood. He set His rainbow in the sky as proof of it. A rainbow appears when one is standing between the sun and a rain shower in the

opposite direction. It is caused by the refraction of the sunlight through the water droplets. Why was there no rainbow before the Flood? Did God change the way sunlight refracts through water? I doubt it. We do know that in the Garden of Eden, plants did not receive rain (2:4-6). There was a mist and there were streams. The same weather pattern must have continued for 1500 years. The Flood must have been the first rainfall on the earth! What a strange phenomenon for them! Imagine the fear the next time it started to rain! Thus God's Covenant that never again would there be worldwide flood. A comfort for us too. ----- It is too bad that the ungodly have taken God's sign of the rainbow and are use it to signify their right to do what they want, when they want, no matter what God says. I wonder how grieved God is about that.

All of this also fits into God's greater Covenant, the coming of the Seed of Eve to break the power of sin over us by providing forgiveness for us through His own blood. The two are bound together. God certainly could have allowed Noah and his family to die in the Flood, and have taken them to heaven. Christians die in tragedies to this day. But God had made a promise to Adam and Eve. God would not go back on His Word. Rather than eradicate Noah and family and start over with a new holy man and woman, God kept His promise, that her Seed would put Satan in His place. If God had started over, that specific promise would have never been fulfilled. Then the believers prior to Noah who had already died in that faith, would then have held to a faith that was null and void, a dead end. God does not go back on His Word.

He likewise showers you with promised grace and mercy every day. Do you ever ask yourself, "Why does God put up with me, miserable, disagreeable, and disobedient as I am?" He shouldn't put up with any of us, but He does. "God is Love. Here is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and gave His Son to be the propitiation [atoning sacrifice] for our sins" (I John 4:7-10).

God's love and mercy are evident in the Flood. The New Testament letter to the Hebrews reminds us that the waters of the Flood and the waters of Baptism are similar. The waters of the Flood lifted up the ark and saved the inhabitants from sure death. The waters of Baptism, wash and cleanse our hearts from sin and unrighteousness (Hebrews 11:7), sparing us from eternal death, granting us life! There are two sides of the Flood—punishment and safety. There are two sides of Jesus death at Calvary—God's wrath over sin and God's pardon for sinners—in Jesus!

Amen! So be it!

Pastor Kanzenbach---