

Salvation

Genesis 6-9

As we continue on our *one year journey through the Bible*, we move from the goodness and LIFE in the garden to the CURSE of sin that entered the world. Now we turn to Genesis four and five and see that curse in action. Cain and Abel were the first children born and very quickly jealousy between them turned into violence and murder. The seeds of conflict spoken to Eve bore terrible fruit in the lives of her children.

Sin grew like a weed, spreading with mankind as people multiplied. The roots of sin went deeper and the power of sin wrapped tighter around people, producing increasing wickedness and violence all over the earth. In the midst of this darkness God provided a ray of hope.

And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him." To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the Lord. Genesis 4:25-26

Here begins the line of PROMISE. Jealous Cain killed generous Abel, staining the earth with the blood of the first murder. But God gave Adam and Eve another son - an APPOINTED SON - who would carry on the line of blessing - the line of descent that would eventually lead to the man who would crush the head of the serpent. You may have skimmed Genesis five - the first genealogy in the Bible. But those names are important since they trace the line of blessing from Seth to Noah - *a thread of the righteousness that comes from FAITH.*

Look at how Genesis five ends:

*When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son and called his name Noah, saying, "Out of the ground that the Lord has cursed, **this one shall bring us relief** from our work and from the painful toil of our hands." Lamech lived after he fathered Noah 595 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Lamech were 777 years, **and he died.*** Genesis 5:28-31

The refrain of Genesis five is the echo of the curse - "So and so lived this long, **and he died...** Another guy lived this long, **and he died... and he died.**" Lamech seems to be a man of faith, trusting in the Creator God for something better for his son, Noah. Since they lived a crazy long time it is reasonable to assume that Lamech and his father Methuselah helped Noah build the ark as a sign of their faith in God and as an encouragement to Noah. Genesis 5 ends with the ominous note that Lamech lived 777 years, **and he died.**

In this way, **Noah is singled out.** He is very much alone. In the line from Seth to Noah - the line of blessing - everyone has died. Only Noah remains. There is some grim foreshadowing here. The

righteous line that had included people living 900+ years has suddenly stopped dead except for one guy. You can see the outline for today is very simple.

<i>Outside the ark there was...</i>	<i>Inside the ark there was...</i>
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I've got some words you can fill in but first I want to read parts of Genesis 6-7 and give you a chance to fill in some words. Listen to the account of Noah and **jot down some descriptive words of what happens OUTSIDE the ark as opposed to what happens INSIDE the ark.**

When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, ² the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. [COMPROMISE]

³ Then the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."

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**. [CORRUPTION]

⁶ And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. ⁷ So the Lord said, "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."

⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

⁹ These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. ¹⁰ And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹ Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for **all flesh** had corrupted their way on the earth. [CONSEQUENCES]

¹³ And 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. [CONDEMNATION]

¹⁴ **Make yourself an ark of gopher wood.** Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch... ¹⁷ For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the

earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.

18 But I will establish my covenant with you, **and you shall come 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... Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them." [PROVISION]

22 Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

7 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. 2 Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate... 5 And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

6 Noah was **six hundred years old** when the flood of waters came upon the earth. 7 And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him **went into the ark** to escape the waters of the flood. 8 Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, 9 two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah.

10 And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

11 In the **six hundredth year** of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. 12 And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

13 On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them **entered the ark**, 14 they and every beast, according to its kind... [PROTECTION]

15 **They went into the ark with Noah**, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. 16 And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, **went in as God had commanded him**.

And the Lord shut him in.

17 The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. 18 The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. 19 And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered...

21 **And all flesh died** that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, **and all mankind**. 22 Everything on

the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ²³ He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth.

Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. ²⁴ And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

Shout out some words. What are some things you noticed that were **OUTSIDE the ark?**

- Evil, wickedness, corruption, sin, water, judgment, death...

Ok, and what are some things you noticed **INSIDE the ark?**

- grace, favor, abundance, provision, blessing, God, God's chosen people...

Good work! We're almost done! I found four realities outside the ark and four realities inside the ark. First, outside the ark... Genesis 6:1-2

Outside the ark there was...

- **Compromise**

*"When man began 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. **And they took as their wives any they chose.**"* Genesis 6:1-2

These first five verses are tricky and debated. I'm not even going to guess at the Nephilim – see the church blog for an article that does some guessing. But I feel more confident about this first bit. **"Sons of God"** in the Bible usually means people who are like God, who reflect the character of God as their father. So I think these "sons of God" refer to those in **the godly line from Seth** to Noah. Some of these young men who were raised to call on the name of the Lord and give glory and honor to their Creator chose beautiful wives instead of choosing godly wives.

This represents compromise – the beginnings of sin. This was before God called Abraham, long before Moses gave the Law – but still parents would have raised their kids to know right from wrong – how to glorify the Creator as opposed to ignoring or defying Him. And a separation developed between those who were God-worshippers and those who were not. Despite this separation, some of the children of the godly **abandoned God for girls**. Sadly, this trend continues today.

Young people – be very careful when you start dating. Do not give your heart away until you know the faith and character of the person you are interested in. "Falling in love" is a nonsense saying. You choose to plunge into "that lovin' feelin'," it doesn't just randomly happen to you. Don't trip into the mud puddle of infatuation. It might turn into an inescapable flood. Because compromise leads to the second reality outside of the ark – and the defining reality – **CORRUPTION.**

Outside the ark there was...

- Corruption

*“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.**” Genesis 6:5*

The virus of sin embedded itself not only in the behavior of people but in the hearts of people. Even their intentions were “only evil continually.” The corruption of sin had compounded and expanded. And that is precisely what sin does. It is restless and evil. Always moving and growing.

Sin is not just bad choices we make. As Pastor Colin Smith points out, **“Sin is a growing power inside us.”** It is a power INSIDE of us. Left on its own it will grow and grow until we literally die.

- With some sins this is obvious – like *drinking or drugs* – use enough, long enough you will die.
- With other sins it’s less obvious, but no less damaging – *worship your job* and work 60-70 hour weeks and your health will deteriorate and eventually you’ll collapse.
- *Anger* can grow and grow until it becomes violence and murder.
- *Materialism* can grow until you rack up mountains of credit card debt.
- *Greed* can grow until all you think about, and all you care about is closing that next deal and adding that next bonus to you bank account and your investment portfolio.

That is what was happening in the days of Noah. Sin was growing in the hearts of people and therefore it was spreading and growing throughout civilization. Verse 11 -

Outside the ark there was...

- Corruption

*“Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence... **all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.**” Genesis 6:11-12*

All people were born in sin – corrupted internally by the virus passed on from Adam and Eve. But Verse 12 shows that people also corrupted their own way. ***We are sinners by nature and by choice.*** We are born with inclinations to sin but we all choose to sin. And the power of sin grows ever stronger. As sin grows, so do its consequences – both for the sinner and the ones around him or her.

Outside the ark there were...

- Consequences

*“And God said to Noah, ‘I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for **the earth is filled with violence through them.**’” Genesis 6:13*

As the power of sin grew, the primary expression of that sin was VIOLENCE. As Cain killed Abel out of jealousy, that same pattern repeated itself in a thousand different stories of violence.

Selfishness exploded all over the earth as ***sinners crashed into each other*** and their anger spilled into violence.

There are always consequences for sin. Pastor James MacDonald says, ***“Choose to sin, choose to suffer.”*** Sin is its own consequence. For when you sin, you will always be inclined to sin more. Sin always leads to more sin. ***Sin is like a fire – it is never satisfied.*** It never says, “enough.”

- ***Sexual sin*** is the most obvious example of this. What starts with one glance at a pretty girl turns into periodic clicks on some images online. This develops into some extended forays into the back alleys of the internet. And pretty soon, hours are gone, habits are formed and pathways are literally burned into your brain.
- ***Relational sin*** also illustrates this. Emerson Eggerichs describes “the crazy cycle” in an unhealthy marriage when a wife feels unloved and reacts disrespectfully. Her husband feels disrespected and reacts unlovingly. The cycle spins on and on, escalating either in a loud and angry way or in a cold and quiet way – lack of love fueling disrespect, and disrespect feeding back into lack of love.
- ***Any conflict*** can go this way if it is not resolved quickly. A wound festers and you nurse the pain. Pain keeps the embers of anger and resentment hot – and those can quickly be blown into anger, which can explode into violence.

“Choose to sin. Choose to suffer.” Jesus said, “anyone who sins is a slave to sin.” ***All sin is addictive by its nature.*** It is a POWER that grows if you let it.

Pastor Colin compares sin to **BINDWEED** – a nasty plant they had at their home in London. Apparently bindweed wraps itself around other plants and is very difficult to remove. If you pull on it, it will break off on the top or break off on the bottom – and then regrow itself. And if you pull it up from the ground but leave any piece of it remaining, that piece will re-plant itself and immediately begin wrapping itself around the other plants, squeezing the life out of them. If you leave bindweed untended for any length of time, it will take over the whole garden and kill everything in it. And even if you tend it periodically, the root system can hide for long stretches underground, binding itself to the root system of the other plants. So the best thing is to not get bindweed in your garden in the first place!

Unfortunately, ***all of us have the bindweed of sin embedded in our hearts.*** And if we don’t tend it by fighting sin it will grow and grow, even in the lives of Christians. All sin leads to slavery. Much sin leads to suffering. And eventually ***all sin leads to death.*** Look at verse 17.

Outside the ark there was...

- **Condemnation**

“For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.” Genesis 6:17

God was grieved that He had even made mankind. Everything He saw on earth was wickedness and violence and it made God terribly sad. So God decided to try a Re-Start – to **reboot the earth**. As we saw last week, “the wages of sin is death” and God decided to call a payday on which everyone on earth would get what was coming to them.

God’s judgment took the form of **a massive, global flood**. The waters burst upon the earth suddenly and fiercesomely. They exploded from below and poured down from above. The waters prevailed all over the earth and every living thing – every creature that had in its nostrils the breath of life – died. **God’s condemnation was sudden, swift and complete**. Once the flood started there was no escape, no shelter. Everything and everyone outside of the ark was swept away in the righteous condemnation of God’s wrath against sin.

We saw last week that **God promised to punish sin**. “In the day you eat of it you will surely die.” The flood is another example of God keeping His word. But even as God kept His promise to punish sin, He mercifully provided a place of salvation. Now let’s turn from what happened outside the ark to what happened INSIDE the ark!

Inside the ark there was

- Protection

*“Everything that is on the earth shall die. **But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark.**” Genesis 6:17-18*

Right after God promised to wipe out everything on earth, He made a special promise to Noah – to shelter him in an enormous, handmade boat.

Imagine you were Noah. He must have been frustrated and confused for so much of his life – he didn’t have kids until he was 500... 500!!! His parents and grandparents had started having kids in their first or second century of their long lives. But 500 years must have made him feel like God had forgotten him.

Still, Genesis 6:8 says “Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.” He “was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.” So instead of letting his long wait to have kids make him BITTER **he let it make him BETTER**. That’s a quote from Joni Earackson Tada. Facing hardship will force you in one direction or the other. You will either get better – closer to God, more dependent, with stronger faith – or you will get bitter, angry, resentful. You will not stay the same when you suffer.

Noah chose to walk with God. He learned from Seth and Enoch, his great-great grand parents – and called on the name of God the Creator. He did not compromise like many around him. Maybe the reason he didn’t have kids until he was 500 was that all the women he knew were ungodly.

But **Noah wouldn't settle for an ungodly woman**, no matter how pretty she was. He waited until God brought him Mrs. Noah – a woman of faith who also walked with the Lord.

Then God blessed them with **three strong sons**. Once the boys were grown up and married, at some point in his mid 500s, God spoke to Noah. We don't know how He spoke, but what he said was crystal clear, right down to the specific measurements for the ark Noah was supposed to build. It's safe to assume God provided more details than we have in the Bible or that Noah was able to hire some skilled builders. Because a ship that size would have been no easy project to assemble.

Keep in mind, there was no body of water where Noah was. And there was no precedent for a **ship the size of the ark**. It was 1.5 football fields long! (Check out arkencounter.com for some scale images.) It was 4 stories tall and had the storage capacity of 450 semi-truck trailers! This was a staggeringly huge building project.

There was no water around. So **people must have thought Noah was crazy** to be spending all of his time building a giant boat. But when God gave Noah instructions, it says in 6:22 and again in 7:5 "Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him."

It surely took years, probably multiple decades to build the ark. Year after year, decade after decade, no flood came. Everyone must have thought this "preacher of righteousness" was just a religious crackpot. But still Noah pressed on with his labors until he finished the ark. Then he gathered all the animals in and God sealed the door.

Inside the ark there was

- Protection

*"And all flesh died that moved on the earth... He blotted out every living thing... **Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark.**" Genesis 7:21,23*

Inside the ark, Noah and his family were safe. Outside the ark the flood of God's judgment destroyed every living thing. But inside there was protection from the wrath of God. This is the most obvious Old Testament story that **points to Jesus**. Some we will study are more subtle. This one is crystal clear. Outside of Jesus, you are exposed to the wrath of God. **In Christ, there is protection**. Jesus is the true ark. Give your life to Him and you will be saved. Refuse to believe in him and you will be swept away in the coming judgment of God.

Inside the ark was protection and also provision. This was the definition of love we used to unpack Psalm 23 in December. God shows His love for us by protecting us and providing for us in Christ. Notice how God did this for Noah and his family in the ark.

Inside the ark there was

- Provision

*“I will establish my covenant with you and you shall come 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... Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up.”** Genesis 6:18-21*

Notice God’s covenant provisions for Noah. **God blessed Noah with abundant provisions.**

Primarily, he got to bring his whole family along. It wasn’t just up to Noah and his wife to repopulate the earth, even though we quickly find out not all of his boys were all that well behaved. This was God’s blessing to Noah to save his family with him. In addition, God saved all of the land animals and blessed Noah’s family with all of that noise and activity to keep them busy for the year they would wait on the ark for everything to dry back out. Of course, they would need lots of food to eat for a year and to feed an ark full of animals.

But God provided all of that. He took care of everything – bringing the animals right to Noah, just as he had for Adam when it was time to give them all names.

Third, inside the ark the people held on to God’s promise. Inside the ark, they had HOPE.

Inside the ark there was

- Promise

And God blessed Noah and his sons and said, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.” Genesis 9:1

God made a covenant with Noah. This was the first formal covenant in the Bible – a unilateral promise from God to a man. Noah, you build an ark. I will save you in it. With God a covenant is much more than a contract. It is God’s solemn promise – His binding, permanent agreement to be in relationship together.

Just as God sent Adam and Eve out to **be fruitful and multiply**, so He gave the same command to Noah. We’ll see next week that Noah’s kids and grandkids flagrantly disobeyed this command to fill the earth. But for Noah, there is great promise and hope for a new start. All evil has been wiped out. All violence has been subdued.

We are back to just one family, walking with God. Surely this time peace will last more than a day or two!

Well. This is the Bible. Are you keeping up with your reading?

There was one more thing on the ark with Noah.

Inside the ark there were

- Problems

“Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard. He drank the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent.” Genesis 9:20-21

The righteous man God had chosen and with whom God had made a covenant got sloppy drunk and made a fool of himself. One of his sons made fun of the drunk old man. The other two tried to protect what was left of Noah's dignity.

Why in the world is this story in the Bible? Why doesn't the account of Noah end with the nice shiny rainbow and all the fuzzy, wuzzy animals?

The answer: **sin is still in the world**. God wiped out all of the people on earth. But inside the hearts of the remaining 8 people were the seeds of sin. That same virus from Adam still infected those 8 people – and from them it would spread right back out around the world. Tune in next week.

Hopefully the message today is clear:

- Outside of Jesus there is compromise, corruption, consequences and condemnation.
- In Christ there is protection, provision and promise.

Jesus is the TRUE ARK of salvation.

*“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are **in Christ Jesus**.” Romans 8:1*

If you put your faith in Jesus ***He will carry up up above the flood of God's coming judgment.*** You will be safe – not taking refuge in a large wooden boat but in the person of Jesus Christ. He can lift you up above the flood of God's coming wrath because He drowned in that wrath for you on the cross.

Outside of Christ you are on your own. Just as there was no one on earth who could swim long enough or throw a boat together fast enough to survive when the floodwaters broke, so there is no one on earth now who can live righteous enough or plead loud enough to escape God's coming wrath. Only Jesus can save you. ***You cannot save yourself.***

Jesus is the better Noah. Like Noah he was righteous and holy. Unlike Noah, Jesus never messed up, not one single time. Because of His perfectly righteous human life Jesus can provide the gift of perfect righteousness to all who come to Him in faith. Like Noah, Jesus went through the flood of God's judgment and came out the other side. Jesus rose from the dead, victorious over sin and death forever! He will save you if you come to Him!

But the whole point of the story of Noah's ark is that **you have to COME!** Right now the doorway to salvation stands open. But one day soon that door will close. And as with the ark, once the door is shut, it cannot be opened.

This is such a concrete visual. You are either **IN the ark** when the door is sealed shut **or you are OUTSIDE**. The final exam with Jesus is a one question test. True or False - you put your faith in Jesus? It is Pass/Fail. You either have the Son of God and have life or you do not have the Son of God and do not have life.

- A lot of people know ABOUT Jesus but they are not committed TO Jesus.
- That would be like all the people around Noah who knew about the ark. That knowledge proved useless to them.
- The only people who lived through the flood were the ones who GOT ON BOARD.

The same thing is true with Jesus. **It's not enough to know about Him**, or even to believe he COULD save you. You have to commit to Him by faith. You have to express your faith out loud! "Confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord - and you will be saved."

Why hasn't Jesus come back yet? Because God is patient. He does not want anyone to perish and suffer His wrath and condemnation. God wants everyone to come to repentance and faith in Jesus. Now is the time of God's favor! Today is the day of salvation.

Now is our opportunity to bring the good news to our neighbors and the nations so that more and more people can be gathered into the ark of God's salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. There is no other name under heaven by which people can be saved. There is no hope for anyone apart from Jesus. He is the only way.

So come to Jesus! Come today and be saved!

Outside the ark there was...

- Compromise (6:2) "took any they chose" - intermingling godly / ungodly
- Corruption (6:5) "every intention only evil continually"
 - Conflict (6:11) "earth was corrupt, filled w/ violence"
- Consequences (6:13) "earth filled w/ violence" >> filled w water
 - Sin is its own consequence >> slavery, suffering
 - "Sin is a growing power"
- Condemnation (6:13) "I will destroy them" >> filled w death (7:21)
 - Consternation (6:6-7) "the Lord regretted; grieved."

- Death (6:17) “destroy all flesh”

Inside the ark there was...

- Protection
 - Grace (6:8) “Noah found favor”
 - Righteousness (6:9a) “blameless”; 7:1 “righteous before me”
 - Protection - Covenant (6:18) “covenant with you”; (7:7) “to escape”; (7:16) “the Lord shut him in”
 - Separation (7:23) “only Noah was left... and those with him on the ark.”
- Provision (6:19-21; 7:2-4) “two of every animal”; every sort of food
 - Blessing (7:7) - sons and wives
 - Holiness - clean animals (7:8)
- Promise (6:9b) “walked with God”; (8:1) God remembered Noah
 - Hope of a Fresh Start (8:16-17)
 - Rainbow - no more global flood; covenant relationship
- Problems - The seeds of more sin (9:20-24)