

## Noah: God pushes the reset: Genesis 6: 5-22, 2 Peter 2:4-14

Adapted from: "I Noah Man," Contributed by Jeff Strite @ SermonCentral.com

Ever since Robert Fulghum came out with his famous list, "**All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten**" there have been hundreds of variations, such as what we should learn from our dogs: *When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.* Or from our cats: *Curiosity never killed anything except maybe a few hours.* And there is also a list "**All I Really Need To Know I Learned From Noah's Ark.**"



1. Noah didn't wait for his ship to come in, he built one.
2. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
3. Stay fit. When you're 500 years old, someone might ask you to do something REALLY big.
4. Speed isn't always an advantage. The cheetahs were on board the ark, but so were the snails.
5. Remember that the ark was built by amateurs and the Titanic was built by professionals.
6. Also remember that the woodpeckers inside are often a bigger threat than the storm outside.
7. No matter how bleak it looks, if God is with you, there's always a rainbow on the other side.
8. And above all else... don't miss the boat.

Yes, there is plenty of wisdom to be gained from the story of Noah's Ark, which most folks haven't learned, either because they have never thought of the story again since first hearing it in Sunday School, or because they just don't believe what the Bible said about a flood was true.

So, First: As to the reality of an ancient flood that drowned everything on earth, while scientist debate how much water would be needed to cover over the tallest mountains to a depth of 22 feet, or where all that water later went to, historians have a rule of thumb: **that when a large number of cultures around the world all include a story of an ancient flood, and most of them tell very similar stories;** that the waters covered the entire earth, that the animals and a few humans were saved in a big boat, and that the man's name was a variation of Noah ... **then the story is probably true.**

Kept alive in human memory, there was in some ancient time a devastating flood that destroyed the entire known world, except for that one man named Noah who built a boat for his family. Thus, all that remains is to figure out is why the flood came and if

we can, how to stop it from ever reoccurring. On those two topics, the Bible has a lot say from which we will benefit a lot by learning.

One mother, told of the time she was listening to her 5 year old son, Matthew, as he worked on his Speak and Spell™ computer. He was concentrating intensely, typing in words for the computer to say back to him.

Matthew punched in the word "God." To his surprise, the computer said, "Word not found." He tried again with the same reply. Staring at the computer in disgust he declared: "Jesus is not going to like this!" (illus. from "God Isn't Gonna Like This." Contributed by Jeff Strite @ Sermon Central.Com)

Our Bible says that the flood came about because God did not like and could no longer put up with what He saw happening among the humans on the earth. The conditions down here pushed God so far that he hit the "reset button."

Apparently, there is a point where we can end up pushing God too far. In the Bible we're told that God

- Kicked Adam and Eve out of the garden
- Condemned Satan to ultimate defeat in the fires of hell
- Flooded the world destroying all but 8 people
- Came down onto tower of Babel - scattering people to the 4 winds by confusing their languages
- AND THAT was just the 1st eleven chapters of Genesis.

So, there is a point where God can be pushed too far.

The God of the Bible reminds me of this big guy I knew in High School. Everybody liked Jim. He was friendly, outgoing, and caring. But he was obviously a strong, powerful giant of a boy who could be somewhat imposing. Somebody once observed, "*you don't really want to get Jim mad.*" Likewise, we have a God who is loving, merciful, gentle and kind. David describes Him this way:

The LORD is compassionate and gracious,  
slow to anger, abounding in love.  
He will not always accuse,  
nor will he harbor his anger forever

*he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust." (Psalm 103:8-14)*

But there is a point beyond which you don't want to push God... So what did these pre-flood people do that made Him so angry? What was it that brought down the wrath of God so severely that He destroyed every living creature upon the face of the earth, except for those few inside the ark that Noah built?

The Bible is very clear about the facts of the story: humans had become unbelievably evil... so much so that they deeply grieved God that he had ever made us.

The Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that **every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually.**  
Genesis 6:5

So God decided to send a flood and start over. **BUT God had earlier made a promise to Adam & Eve that one day, one of her children would defeat Satan and restore the world back to the way life was in the Garden of Eden.** Through Noah and his family, God found a way to both start over while also keeping his earlier promise to our first parents. And if you learn only one thing from the Bible it is that **God keeps his promises.**

God instructed Noah to build a huge box of a boat, one and a half football fields long and one and a half football fields wide, and then God brought the animals to be saved to Noah. The floods came, the ark rose, and the whole earth was covered with water. Noah and his family stayed on board the ark for over a year, letting the floodwaters recede. And when they came off the boat God promised He'd never flood the earth again. That's the basic story, but let's look into it a bit deeper.

How bad were these ancient people? Look at this verse again. The Bible seldom uses such sweeping language: the **WICKEDNESS** of humankind was **GREAT**, and **EVERY inclination of their thoughts was ONLY EVIL CONTINUALLY.** A few verses later adds the comment that the earth had been **CORRUPTED** and **FILLED WITH VIOLENCE** (6:11).

In other words, there was **no goodness, not kindness** in these people,

- No compassion.
- They couldn't even THINK clean thoughts.
- Unless they could hurt someone, or gain advantage over someone,
- or tell a foul joke or make an obscene gesture... nobody was happy
- there was nothing but violence everywhere you looked.
- Life was cheap and honor was despised.

You can still see evidence of this kind of thinking sprouting up this side of the flood throughout our history. Just in the past century we've had Nazi Germany, Communist Russia, the killing fields of Cambodia, the mass starvation in North Korea, and the Hutu genocide in Rwanda. These were entire societies that considered others to be worthless and disposable.

Even our own country - a land dedicated to freedom and dignity - we've had slavery, the Ku Klux Klan and Black Panthers and now mass shooters, along with politicians and judges and even religious leaders who have betrayed us and abused our trust.

Thankfully such ugliness is not happening everywhere in our country, but it was happening **EVERYWHERE** in the world of Noah's day. Anybody who had any trace of niceness just didn't have a chance. Nice folks were either corrupted or killed. It got so bad that after a while, people stopped thinking in terms of something being right and wrong and just tried to "get by" and "fit in." Because if they didn't "fit in" things could get scary in a big hurry.

But there was one guy who refused to fit in.

In a world that was unbelievably evil... this man was unquestionably good.

His name was Noah.

Genesis says "**Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.**" And the next verse says

Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God. Genesis 6:9
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What made Noah so righteous?

What made him different than everyone else?

We are told that: **Noah walked with God"**

What does it mean that "Noah walked with God" ??

It meant that he spent the majority of his time with God.

He didn't just give God his weekends. Everywhere he walked, he took God along with him.

Every day of the week, Noah not only believed that God existed. He believed that God cared for him and he made a conscious decision to follow God.

Every day of the week, Noah spent time praying to God. He wasn't just sporadically praying... he was talking to God all through the day.

And Noah taught his family to live like that too.

He followed God so faithfully, that once chosen to build the ark we are repeatedly told that Noah "...**did ALL that God commanded him**" (Genesis 6:22; 7:5,9,16).

Whatever God told Noah to do... that's exactly what he did.

Now THIS is important: **Noah did everything God told him to do... even when it seemed crazy to do it.** Our bible says that

**By faith, warned by God about events as yet unseen,**

Noah respected the warning and built an ark to save  
his household      Hebrews 11:7

If you're going to walk with God you've got to be willing to follow Him all the way. And if you do that people around you are going to say you're crazy.

- You'll end up making choices they would not make.
- You will not join in with the group bullying someone else
- You'll choose not steal, or cheat, or take advantage of another person.
- You'll decide to not attend this party or go to that movie because of who or what you know will be there.

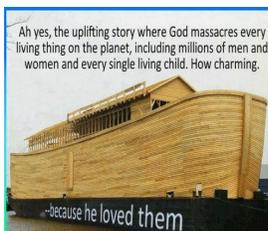


Do you think people around Noah laughed at him and made fun of him? He's building a huge boat out in the middle of nowhere! People laughed. And then he tells them that God is angry with them and he reminds them of their immorality and selfishness.

The ark was a constant reminder of God's impending condemnation of what those people were doing. You know, when people find themselves being condemned they tend to do more than just laugh... they tend to push back, to get nasty. That's what Jesus indicated we'd face if we took our faith seriously ... especially in a world that doesn't:

*"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Matthew 5:10-12*

Why would people persecute the followers of Jesus? Well, because if we live our lives right and honorably among those living otherwise it is a constant reminder of what they know they should also be doing but aren't.



As I was looking for pictures about Noah and the Ark to display on today's overhead, I ran across this picture several times. Written on the picture are these words:

"Ah yes, the uplifting story where God massacres every living creature on the planet, including millions of men, women and every single living child. How charming. Because he loved them."

Does that offend you? It offended me.

I was offended because it assumes that those who died in the flood didn't deserve to suffer judgment. They were just innocent by-standers.

But these folks weren't innocent!!!

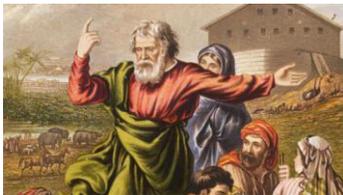
And they weren't by-standers. They were evil.

They were so corrupt it grieved God's heart that He had even made them.

God saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that **every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually.**

Genesis 6:5

So, these folks weren't innocent. And they weren't just hanging around not knowing what was happening. **They had even been warned! For one thousand years they had been warned that God was getting ready to push the reset button.**



Another place in our Bible tells us that "**Noah (was) a preacher of righteousness.**" (2 Peter 2:5). Noah's Great Grandfather was a man named **Enoch**. He is the only other person that the Bible described as "walking with God." Enoch was the first prophet in the Bible, and for 1,000 years before the floods came he was preaching to these ancient people of

their need to repent of their sins and return to God. He even named his son (Noah's Grandfather) "Methuselah" which means "*when he dies, the floods will come.*"

We don't know that Methuselah was a preacher like his father, but he wore that name for 969 years. And when his grandson came along he was named NOAH, meaning "rest" because his father said, *this one will bring us relief* (Gen.5:28). Noah was not just a ship builder... he was a preacher, a prophet, a declarer of judgment. He verbally told folks what was going to happen.

It's worth noting that, even while Noah was building the ark, **God still had NOT completely given up on these people.** The ark would have been a major tourist attraction. Folks would have come for 100s of miles to see this man building a huge boat out in the middle of no place. And whenever people came by... Noah would have the same message. "Repent! Change! Seek God! There's a flood coming. And if you don't repent you'll drown!" (Pause)

You mean to tell me that God might have spared those people in Noah's day?

**Yes!** Had they responded to Enoch's and Noah's warnings God would have spared them and we would not have a flood memory.

How do I know this?

Do you know the story of **Jonah and the whale**?



God told Jonah to go to an unbelievably wicked city called **Nineveh** and declare that God would destroy them if they didn't repent. But Jonah hated the Ninevites and wanted God to destroy those people. So Jonah caught a boat going as far away from that city as he could get. God decided Jonah needed time to rethink his attitude, so He caused a great storm to nearly sink the ship and when Jonah was thrown into the sea,



a huge whale swallowed him. Having spent three 3 days and nights inside the belly of that whale, and then spit up on the closest beach to Nineveh, Jonah decided it was time to obey God.



So he went into the city of Nineveh and began to preach. It took him three days to walk all the way through the city. And his message was very simple. He told the Ninevites that they had 40 days to repent or God would destroy them.

So, did God destroy Nineveh? **No. He did not.**

The people were so frightened by God's message that they fasted and repented in sackcloth and ashes. They even put sackcloth and ashes on their animals. And God spared their city.

But in the days of Noah nobody did that. Nobody fasted. Nobody repented. They were too far gone, they were too corrupt, they were too jaded by their sins. Even with Enoch's and Noah's preaching for so many years, and the ark standing as a witness to God's intentions, nobody changed. Nobody repented.

They ignored the warnings because they refused to believe God. And that response is as old as the earth itself. Writing to us this side of the flood, the Apostle Peter warns us...

In the last days scoffers will come ... saying  
'Where is this "coming" he promised?  
Ever since our fathers died, everything  
goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.

But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the Day of Judgment and destruction of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3:3-7

The people in Noah's day didn't want to change and so they died.  
And the fate of many at the end of our days will be the same as in the days of Noah.  
There will be judgment... and there will be destruction.  
And people will have no excuse on that day.  
They will not be innocent bystanders.

God had Noah warn the people of his day so that those people would have a chance to change. God didn't want them to perish. We're told He was grieved and pained in His heart by what he saw them doing.

This Bible is God's warning to us. It tells us: "***God is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come - like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.***" II Peter 3:9-10



But before we close, there is one more important thing you need to learn from Noah's ark. Which is that it served as a "type," a symbolic illustration, of how God intended to save all people who would one day place their faith in Jesus, the future savior son He had promised to A&E.

In I Peter 3:20-22 we're told that:

*God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.*

In this passage Noah's ministry was linked with that of Jesus.  
What was the connection?

The Ark was a shelter for the saved of Noah's day. It was built of wood and had only one door. And that one door was the ONLY way in and the only way out.



But the Bible says Jesus has built a shelter for us as well. It's called the church. Not a building like the one we're meeting in, **but the body of believers who meet here.** That church is built upon the wood of the cross of Calvary. And that church has only ONE door. And that door is Jesus.

The lesson from the story of the flood is that God has once before and will again someday judge the earth, eliminating those who are condemned while saving and protecting those who have put their faith in Him. The message from Jesus Christ is that like the ark of old, he is now the only way through which anyone who comes to him in faith will be saved. In Noah's day only 8 were saved. But Jesus says *whosoever will, may come.* There's room in Jesus' family for everyone who wants to be saved.

Remember, God keeps His promises. There is another day coming, not when God's patience but when our time on earth will run out. And when that time comes will you be with Christ Jesus inside the shelter of God's protection?? ... or will you be on the outside facing His judgment??

The choice is yours.  
Don't miss this boat.