

Subject: *God's Grace in the Days of Noah*

Scripture: *Genesis 6:5-22*

God's grace always shines brightest when the days are darkest. The days of Noah were dark days, but they were days when God magnified His grace through Noah. The question is often asked, "If God is so powerful and so good, why does He allow sin and suffering?" The full answer is known only to God, but part of the answer is this—without sin we could not know God's grace, forgiveness, or patience.

1. Man's Awful Wickedness

- A. Intermarriage and the corruption of family life (vs. 1-2)
- B. Wicked conduct, evil thoughts, and widespread violence (vs. 5, 11-13)
- C. God's heart is grieved (v. 6)
- D. God's patience will run out (vs. 3)
- E. God's judgment will come (vs. 7, 13)

The sinful world of Noah was a picture of the world when Christ returns.

Matthew 24:37-39 ³⁷ *But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.* ³⁸ *For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark,* ³⁹ *And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

The days of Noah can be described as days of immorality, indifference, and ignorance. They sinned without restraint. They lived as if God and His will didn't even matter. They were unaware and unprepared for God's judgment ("they knew not until the flood came and took them all away"). As it was so shall it be.

2. God's Amazing Grace

In the midst of all this sin and corruption, God showed grace to one man and his family. That man was Noah, and the Bible says "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Grace is the undeserved favor of God. Grace is unexplained favor. The word "grace" has the idea of someone bending down to show favor to an inferior. Grace is condescending favor. Why did Noah find grace in the eyes of the Lord? God chose to give him grace. Why did we find grace in the eyes of the Lord in salvation? God chose to give us grace.

Romans 9:15-16 ¹⁵ *For he said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.* ¹⁶ *So then it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.*

The story of Noah is a perfect illustration of what Paul wrote in Romans:

Romans 5:20 *where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.*

A. God's gracious fellowship with Noah (vs. 9)

This says more about God than it does about Noah. God made Noah the kind of man he was, "a just (righteous) man and perfect (not sinless, but blameless, without evident flaw). And by grace Noah walked with God.

B. God's gracious shelter for Noah (vs. 13-17)

God told Noah that He was going to send a flood to destroy the world, and He gave Noah instructions for building the ark: 1) Make it out of gopher (cypress) wood known to last a long time; 2) Make rooms inside the ark; 2) Cover it inside and outside with pitch (lit., covering; translated as "atonement"); 3) Make it large and stable (450 ft. long, 75 ft. wide, 45 ft. high), exactly six times longer than it was wide (the same proportions used today for big ships; 4) Make a window; 5) Make one door; 6) Make three stories or levels. It was a huge ship, the largest ship ever built until 1884. It had almost 98,000 square feet of floor space, equivalent to 20 basketball courts, and it had the capacity to hold 520 railroad cars. It wasn't made for style or speed, but for stability and security.

C. God's gracious covenant with Noah (vs. 18)

This is the first mention of a "covenant" in the Bible. This is God's covenant with Noah and his family to spare them in the flood. A covenant is a binding agreement that God makes with certain people. God is not obligated to make a covenant, but once He makes a covenant He obligates Himself to keep it. He has made a covenant with His people today, called the New Covenant, and we remember it every time we have the Lord's Supper. Christ said, "This cup is the new testament (covenant) in my blood."

D. God's gracious plan to spare the animals (vs. 19-20)

God told Noah to take two animals of every kind (male and female) on board the ark. God's power will bring these animals to Noah when the time is right (last of verse 20). It has been estimated that Noah took a total of 45,000 animals aboard the ark.

E. God's gracious plan to provide food for Noah, his family, and the animals (vs. 21)

This is the greatest amount of grocery shopping ever known.

F. God's grace is evident in Noah's obedience (vs. 22)

In ancient times there were many stories that circulated about the worldwide flood, but most of them focused on human heroes. The biblical story in Genesis is different. Here the story focuses on God and on Noah's obedience to God's command (Gen. 6:22; 7:5, 9, 16). In a time when everybody was wicked and rebelling against God, what caused Noah to be different? What caused Noah to have a heart of obedience? It was God's work in Noah's heart. Noah feared God, believed God, and obeyed God, and it was all because of grace.

Hebrews 11:1-7

By faith Abel worshiped God, Enoch walked with God, and Noah worked on the ark.