

Reading Genesis with the Apostles

Noah and the Flood: Apocalyptic Judgment/Salvation and New Creation

Key Passages: Genesis 6-9; Matthew 24.36-42; Hebrews 11.7; 1 Peter 3.18-22; 2 Peter 2.4-9; 3.1-7

THE UNDOING OF CREATION

Gen 6.1-7 Human Depravity and God's Judgment

Gen 6.8 God's Grace to Noah

Gen 6.9 Effect of God's Grace to Noah: Righteousness (Ezek 14.14, 20)

Structure centering on 8.1 "God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark."

Gen 7.11-12 "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. And rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights."

Compare to Gen 1.6-10 = separation between waters above and below (sky, atmosphere); separation of waters below (land)

A NEW CREATION

Gen 8.20 Worship

Gen 8.21-9.17 Noahic Covenant

Gen 9.1-3 Covenantal Blessing

Gen 9.4-5 Covenantal Law

Gen 9.6 Covenant Curse

Gen 9.12-17 Covenant Sign

Gen 5:28–31 "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."

Isa 54.9-17 New Covenant Creation Like Noahic Covenant Creation

Gen 9.20-29 The "Fall" of Noah

NEW TESTAMENT USE OF FLOOD ACCOUNT

Matt 24.36-42 (Luke 17.22-37) “But concerning **that day** and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. For **as were the days of Noah**, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For **as in those days before the flood** they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were **unaware** until the flood came and **swept them all away**, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.”

The complacency of the people of Noah’s day foreshadows the complacency of people prior to the coming of Christ.

Heb 11.7 “By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark **for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.**

Noah’s faith, which was exercised in the building of the ark, was a testimony of the righteous judgment of God against his generation. It was also evidence of his justification by faith. On both counts it is a witness to God’s judgment: His judgment against the world of condemnation and His judgment for Noah of justification.

1Peter 3:18–22 “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because **they formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, 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 having been subjected to him.**”

Resurrection of Jesus Christ and New Creation – Baptism (flood) and New Creation – Safely through the water

2 Peter 2:4–9 “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; **if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly**; if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); **then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment,**”

Like Hebrews 11, Peter understands Noah’s obedience to God as a preaching of God’s righteousness. Notice that the world is “the world of the ungodly.” The distinction God makes between Noah and his wicked generation points forward to the distinction God makes between the godly in Christ and the unrighteous. Some believe the rescue and punishment are present experiences anticipating the final judgment/salvation. Others believe the rescue and

punishment refer exclusively to the final judgment/salvation. The grammar cannot decide, and both interpretations can be supported from the immediate context as well as the analogy of faith.

2 Peter 3:1–7 “This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, **all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.**” For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the **world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.** But by the same word the **heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.**”

ὁ τότε κόσμος = The world **then**

οἱ νῦν οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ = The heavens and the earth **now**

Peter treats the antediluvian creation as a former cosmos. Both the judgment and renewal of that cosmos point to the judgment and renewal of the present cosmos or heavens and earth. Peter says that those who believe that Earth’s history has progressed without cosmic upheaval are foolishly ignoring the record of the flood.

SUMMARY

The flood is proclaimed as a cosmic cataclysm of water which was God’s judgment on a world of depraved humanity, which also serves as a warning of another cosmic cataclysm of fire which will be God’s judgment on a world of depraved humanity. Just as the building of the Ark was a condemnation of the world as it bore witness to the world of God’s righteous judgment, so the proclamation of Christ, as a witness to the world of the righteousness of God, is salvation for those who believe and condemnation for those who disbelieve. The salvation of Noah and his family is understood as a pattern for eschatological salvation in Jesus Christ. As the judgment of the flood cleansed the creation so that Noah and his family, brought safely through, disembarked into a “new creation,” so in our union with the resurrected Christ we are brought safely through the waters of baptism into a New Creation.

APPLICATION

We live in an intoxicated age, in which the generality of humanity is in a spiritual stupor, suppressing the knowledge of God, and hence of Divine Retribution. The message of the flood is a sobering warning to this complacency.

Jesus is the true “Noah” who does comfort us and deliver us from the curse. How do we experience this deliverance now? How will we experience this at His coming?