

Noah

- 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.
- 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.
- ¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.
- ¹⁵ This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits.
- ¹⁶ Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks.
- 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. They shall be male and female.

²⁰ Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive.

²¹ 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."

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

Genesis 6:9-22

Why Noah?

Everyone knows about **Noah and the ark**. But why is this story in the Bible? How are we to approach it with ourselves, our children, and one another? In a month or so a Hollywood movie is coming out called *Noah*. From what I understand, the early screenings of this movie showed a Noah completely foreign to the one in the Bible. He is basically the founder of Green Peace and God is a capricious angry deity because men have not decided to recycle. Their scorch and burn tactics have turned the world into a kind of post-apocalyptic Mad Max wasteland, and God has no choice but to destroy it and start over.¹ We will see how the movie eventually plays out,

¹ See Brian Godawa's review. <http://godawa.com/movieblog/darren-aronofskys-noah-environmentalist-wacko/>

but it shows that people like to mold Noah into their own image and turn the story to their own purposes.

Meanwhile, over at www.holybible.com, we read about “Everything I need to know, I learned from Noah’s Ark.” This includes:

1. Don’t miss the boat.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn’t raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit. When you’re 60 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Don’t listen to critics. Just get on with the job that needs to be done.
6. Build your future on high ground.
7. For safety’s sake, travel in pairs.
8. Speed isn’t always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
9. When you’re stressed, float awhile.
10. Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
11. No matter the storm, when you are with God, there’s always a rainbow waiting.
12. Remember that woodpeckers inside are a larger threat than the storm outside.
13. No matter the storm, when you're one with God there's a rainbow waiting.

This takes the story and makes it about us. It is the classic moralistic tendency that has become so popular amongst Evangelicals. “Look at righteous, perfect Noah, and how he walked with God. No one had anything against him. He was wonderful. Look at how he obeyed when God told him to build and do the impossible. Now you go out and obey and walk with God too, and he will make the impossible work for you.” It isn’t wrong to take Noah and use him as an example, so long as our interpretations match what is actually there, and also making sure that we don’t miss the primary reason for why this story is here.

This is first and foremost, **an historic tale**, a tale about God filled with redemptive and theological meaning. It isn’t like you can just extract the moral principles out like a juicer and cast aside the history and theology like useless leftover fiber. It is about **God’s right to judge sin** and do what he wants. It is about his **desire start over**. It is about his **grace** in saving a world that deserved only death. It is about his **provision** in supplying a way and a place where in man and the world through him could be saved. In everything here, **God is preminent**. God’s story is the one we need to hear more than anything, because as we saw last time, human beings are evil and depraved. We have **broken covenant** with

God, and his wrath is being revealed from heaven against all manner of godlessness and wickedness today, even as his justice and wrath was expressed in a gigantic flood that once destroyed the world.

Then, and only then, is this the story about man. First, though, it is the story about **one man's obedience**. That man is not you, but Noah. It is an obedience that comes about because of God's coming down in grace to him, an obedience that leads to the exact outcome that God desired. Understanding all of this properly, you will finally be able to read the story and see **how you fit into it**, thereby deriving applications that actually come from the story, rather than from the fertile imaginations of sinful people.

God's Anger and Justice

I'm going to start with the **bad news** in the story though it does not come first in our passage today. This will let the bad news stand as the backdrop to the good news. Hopefully, it will impress upon you the seriousness of the bad news, while serving to reinforce how truly good the gospel is.

Genesis 6:11-13 tell us that the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and filled with violence. God saw the earth, that it was corrupt, and that **all flesh** had corrupted their way on it. So God came to Noah and said to him, "**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.” Notice that God came to Noah and told him something. So this is “**news**.” He told him something that he could not have otherwise known. So it is a **revelation** from outside of himself. He told him about the future. So it is a **prophecy**. The content of it all is extremely **distressing**. This is very, very bad news. In fact, it is difficult to think of how there could be worse news to receive. I’m not sure any of can fathom what Noah must have thought when he received word that everything he knew, everyone he knew, everything in the world would soon be destroyed. I think about losing electricity or gasoline and I start to panic. What about all things?

These verses virtually repeat **vs. 7**. But vs. 7 itself comes after six verses that lead up to this most terrifying and horrific news. God was **grieved** that he had made man (**6**). Everything thought of man was **only evil all the time** (**5**). And then there are those very strange verses **1-4** which told us about the great sexual perversion that led up to these conclusions. When we were in those first four verses, I gave you my reasons for interpreting that passage the way all the early Jews and Christians—which I am convinced include Peter and

Jude—took them (some Reformed Christians who agree are James Boice, Francis Schaeffer, Arthur Pink, and Robert Reymond). They believed it referred to heavenly beings, human women, and great giants called the Nephilim. That interpretation has bearing on our text a little later.

Why Noah?

At this point, I want to turn to Noah, and then go back to God's news to him. **Vs. 9** begins “**The generations of Noah.**” This is the third of ten “Toledoth” formulas, which create the basic outline of Genesis. *Toledoth* is the Hebrew word which translates “generations.”² We have now seen the **Generations of the heavens and the earth (2:4ff)**, the **generations of Adam (5:1ff)**, and now the **generations of Noah (6:9ff)**. This means that Gen 6:9 begins a new section of Genesis.

Yet, this section is related to what came before it. This is vital for interpreting the introduction of Noah. The previous verse (**vs. 8**) told us that **Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD**. That is how the generations of Adam conclude. The whole earth is wicked, but Noah finds grace. You need to understand that **grace** does not come because Noah is basically good, much less morally perfect. Only God is good, and Noah is certainly to be counted among the entire race which

² It is always a feminine, plural, construct noun. We'll see the importance of this in a moment.

is said to think only evil all the time. Grace is given to people who are *not* morally good. That's the point of the word.

Grace is an activity of God that rains upon a person because *he* chooses to shower it. For 120 years, God showered **common grace** upon the whole earth (**Gen 6:3**), stalling divine judgment to give men the opportunity to repent. But no one did repent, because unless **special grace** comes, their wicked thoughts are simply not able to penetrate the offer of the gospel and respond in a positive manner. Sin clouds human judgment, darkens our wills, and causes us to flee rather than turn to God. This is not grace's problem, but ours. But since God had a plan, he chose of his own freedom to give **saving grace** to Noah.

It is into both the **Genesis 6:1-4** context and the context of God showing grace to Noah in **vs. 8** that we must read what **vs. 9** now says about Noah. The ESV says, "**Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.**" This is not an easy verse to interpret, as any perusal of English Bibles will demonstrate.

There are three things it tells us about Noah. 1. He was **righteous**. 2. He was **blameless**. 3. He **walked** with God. What do these things mean?

Noah Was a Righteous man

Here is how some want to interpret this. In her book *Yes We Can Be Perfect In Our Generation*, perfectionist **Betty Champion** writes, “If nobody is perfect why does scripture say Noah was a perfect man? See **Genesis 6:9**.”¹ She is citing the KJV and other translations which render “blameless” as “perfect.” In fact, the LXX gives the same Greek word that Jesus gives in his Sermon on the Mount when he says, “Be perfect [*teleios*] as your heavenly Father is perfect” (**Matt 5:48**). When I read the story of Noah, I am greatly puzzled by this kind of interpretation, for what I read about Noah is that pretty much as soon as he is given the opportunity once the flood has receded, he commits great sin in his tent. God is not “perfect” like this. He does not do good and then evil. No, perfect must mean something other than Christian perfectionists think here.

Augustine and **Chrysostom** are softer. They begin a long line of interpretation that sees Noah’s righteousness in comparison to all those around him.³ In other words, they do

³ Augustine, *City of God* 15.26; Chrysostom, *Homilies on Genesis* 22:5. More recently, “Here he is given a moral and spiritual evaluation by the author. Noah was a man of righteousness in contrast to the corrupt and violent society in which he lived. Compared to them he was blameless. ‘Noah is the only person in Genesis described as blameless or perfect. Abraham is told to be perfect and walk before [God] (17:1)(but he is never said to have to have achieved

not compare Noah's righteousness to God, but to others. Noah was righteous *in comparison to everyone else*. I can certainly understand the appeal of this, but it worries me when the focus becomes comparing ourselves with others. For when we do this, it can be far too easy to become *self-righteous*, because "I'm obviously not as bad as that guy," and thus the very opposite of the righteousness that is being depicted here.

Now, like you would think, the word does mean that Noah was obedient. And yes, he was more righteous than others. He stood alone in a world of evil, standing his ground in obedience to God's commands: preaching truth and obeying the law. This is the conclusion of the very last verse in fact, "Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him" ([Gen 6:22](#)).

But it would be a mistake to think that this is some kind of intrinsic righteousness, or even a kind of prevenient grace that goes before all men, some of whom choose better than others.⁴ That is why we just discussed all humans being evil and God showing grace to Noah.

it' (Wenham, *Torah as Story*, 35)." Paul J. Kissling, 'Genesis,' *College Press NIV Commentary Old Testament Series* (Joplin, MO: College Press Pub, 2004), 281.

⁴ Chrysostom is unclear on this as he talks about man's freewill making us responsible for our choices, as well as the grace of God needed to make the right ones. He could be interpreted in

So why? **Why was Noah righteous?** The NT confirms why Noah was righteous and it is very important to get this right. “**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*” (Heb 11:7). It couldn’t be any clearer. Noah’s righteousness came by faith.**

It worked like this. God chose to show grace to Noah. This grace was very particular in that God came and spoke to Noah,⁵ gave him a specific message, and Noah believed God by faith. This faith then **caused Noah** to act in obedience, for true faith hears God’s commands and desires to obey them. Noah’s righteousness was an **alien righteousness**, just as any believer’s righteousness is today. It comes from God as he clothes us in his Holy Spirit and engrafts us into his Son. This gives us new affections. So yes, faith without works is dead, but **works is not the reason** why God showed grace to Noah.

either an Arminian or a Calvinist sense. I do not want you the listener/reader to be vague about this though.

⁵ In my view this was not in a kind of disembodied voice, but by walking with him (see Gen 3:8 and 6:9), but the consistent idea of the angel of the LORD who physically appears, a theme that runs throughout Genesis.

Now, there are two more words that are said to define Noah, and at first glance you might think that they are purely synonymous with righteousness. That is, to say that Noah was blameless and that he walked with God simply reinforce his personal morality. I don't deny that these words do this. I think they do. However, **each word is doing double duty** in the story, pointing us to Noah's righteousness, but pointing us to something else as well.

The first word or phrase (“**blameless in his generation**”) points us back to **Genesis 6:1-4**, while the second word or phrase “**walked with God**” points us back farther, to Enoch and then to the Garden of Eden. Both of these then serve the purpose not only of confirming that Noah was righteous, but of then moving us forward to help us understand some of the more subtle things about this story that are often missed by readers and preachers alike.

Blameless in his Generations

The first of these is the most controversial. I deal with it at length in my *Giants: Sons of Gods*. Basically, the interpretation begins by remembering that the idea of Genesis 6:1-4 was the **pollution of the human species**, so that the promised Seed to Eve would not be able to come and destroy Satan. It then reads the words “**blameless**” and “**generation,**”

as well “**corrupt**” (**vs. 11**), and the reason why “**all flesh**” would have to be destroyed, as well as the return of the theme of Genesis 1 that the “**kinds**” of animals were going to be put on the ark in light of this. In other words, **Genesis 6:1-4** serves a very important purpose of introducing themes that are developed throughout the rest of the chapter. If you don’t take the supernatural interpretation, or if you just take those verses as some kind of pointless insertion to the chapter, you will miss most of this.

It is difficult to do this quickly, but we’ll do our best. First, what does this word “**blameless**” mean? Well, Moses uses it throughout the Pentateuch (Gen-Deut), 80% of the time, it refer to **spotless, physically unblemished sacrificial animals**.⁶ It is legitimate to interpret this as Noah being among the few people left on earth that were physically pure, like a spotless sacrificial lamb. I suppose, if you held to the Sethite interpretation, it would also be legitimate to read the word through that view as well, but I find that view itself lacking.

To me, this is reinforced by the word “**generation**.” This is not the same word used early in the verse. This is the word

⁶ The other 20% it refers to the idea of “completion” (Lev 23:15; 25:30). Deut 32:4 refers to God’s “perfect” works. And the remainder of the occurrences are like this one, where something is said about people needing to be “blameless” (Gen 17:1; Deut 18:13).

dor rather than *toledoth*. The ESV translates it as “generation” (singular), but the word is actually plural—“[generations](#).”⁷ The word can refer to either a time frame (i.e. “[blameless in his age](#)” or “[blameless among his contemporaries](#)”), or to a biological lineage (which implies a timeframe).⁸ The idea would be that in his lineage, Noah was *physically* pure. This is a fascinating to compare with the Dead Sea Scrolls.

In the scrolls, in a book called the [Genesis Apocryphon](#) we read about Lamech, the father of Noah who sees the birth of his son and that he looks more like an angel than a man. Being frightened, he turns to his wife (Bitenosh) and makes her swear that he is the father. She says, “[Remember my pleasure ... the time of love, the gasping of my breath in my breast ... I swear to you by the Great Holy One, by the King of the heavens ... that this seed comes from you, that this pregnancy comes from you, that the planting of this fruit comes from you, and not from any foreigner or watcher or son of heaven](#)” ([GenAp 2](#)).

⁷ The word is singular in Gen 7:1 where the more common point that Noah is righteous (rather than blameless) in this particular generation is being made.

⁸ For example Joshua 22:27, “it shall be a witness between us and you and between our generations after us, that we are to perform the service of the LORD before Him” (Jos 22:27 NAS). It isn’t just a period of time that is in mind, but the actual people of Israel who will be descended from these Israelites.

The third word comes in vs. 11, which we have already looked at. The word is “**corrupt**.” It seems to be different from violence, since the earth is said to also be violent. What is even stranger is that it says “**all flesh**” had corrupted their way. Why in the world is God so angry at animals?

This word (*shachath*) has several meanings. One is “**to destroy**.” It is used this way in vs. 13 in fact. “**I am about to destroy them**.” Another is “**to spoil**” (Jer 13:7) or “**to ravage**” (2 Sam 11:1), often sexually. The word appears together with “**way**” a few times (Deut 9:12; 31:29; Jdg 2:19; Ezek 16:27; 20:44; Mal 2:8). In each instance it refers either to either having relations with foreign women or to idolatry. Listen to Judges 2:19 for instance. “**Whenever the judge died, they turned back and were more corrupt than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them. They did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways**.” The word “**way**” is used most of the time to refer to this kind of worship of other gods.

“**Way**” is used together with “**whoring after the gods**” just two verses earlier. “**They would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in**” (Jdg 2:17 KJV). The reasons

idolatry is likened to adultery or fornication is because these beings that they worshiped are real beings. They really exist. They aren't worshiping sticks and stones, but spiritual entities. They are spiritual beings, angels, created by God but who went astray at least as early as the days of Genesis 6:1-4, doing the very thing we are talking about now with us.⁹

There is one more thing to add to this. It relates to the animals that God wants on the ark. Down in **vs. 20** it says that Noah is to bring birds after **their kind**, animals after **their kind**, creeping things of the ground after **their kind**. Two of every **kind** shall come to you to keep them alive. Earlier saw how on application of the text is that speed isn't always an advantage. **Snails** were on board with cheetahs. Curiously,

⁹ **Going Deeper:** I have wondered for years about why the Bible so consistently uses sexual imagery like whoring or adultery when it comes to the worship of these gods. I think that if we are honest, we will have to admit that we really have no idea how the interplay between physical beings and spirit beings plays out. In possession, it is clear that there is some kind of union that occurs between the two, and perhaps there is some kind of union that occurs between us and them in worship as well. Christians certainly believe this as we are lifted up into heavenly places with Christ as we are in union with him, and in worship God even gives us sacraments that mysteriously unite him to us so that our faith is strengthened. It seems very plausible to me that false worship, that is worship of real spiritual beings that are not the LORD, sees a similar kind of union take place. This adds both a seriousness to our worship as well as a frightening aspect to the worship of foreign gods. Given this, it does appear that the union that was taking place in Genesis 6:1-4 was the precursor to all of this, and that since they gave up their proper domain (as Jude says), there was a kind of physicality to it like we see in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah when the men wanted to have relations with the angels.

Spurgeon talked about snails here too, saying that by perseverance the snail reached the ark. Different application; same snail.

But my point is more basic. It was a snail that reached the ark and God wanted to preserve the snail. Why bring this up here? There are several theological reasons that we will begin to look **at next time**, as they involve the returning of the earth to the form we originally find it in **Genesis 1:2**. God is making a **new creation**. The language here harkens back to creation, when God made all things after their kinds.

The strange thing is, **Genesis 1** and **Genesis 6-7** are the only times in the whole Bible where God uses this kind of talk at all. Yet, he mentions “kinds” 17 times in those three chapters.¹⁰ Why? Well, it gets back at this idea of returning the earth to its pristine state; the flood is going to be a kind of new creation. Right in the middle is the sons of God episode and the corruption of human flesh, which all early Jews and Christians (that we know of) believed there was a mixing of kinds going on. Though it is speculative, perhaps that is partly in mind with the animals too. And there is certainly a kind of precedent for this, as the OT speaks of those strange

¹⁰ Gen 1:11, 12 [2x], 21 [2x], 24 [2x], 25 [3x]; 6:20 [3x], and 7:14 [4x].

hybrids like centaurs (horse-men), sirens (fish-women), satyrs (goat-men) and others *as demons*.¹¹

As strange as all of that is, and as interesting as it is to research, the point of bringing it up is not to be speculative, but to reinforce that the corruption on the earth, be it this or something else, was so bad that God had to even destroy the animals for it. This corruption also led to great **violence** on the earth. Terrible, unthinkable violence. Perhaps in the 20th century we only begin to see what was going on back then, we don't know. We see this violence in the line of Cain in ch. 4 of Genesis, with Cain and Lamech the murderers. Perhaps we even see it in the line of Noah, as Methuselah means “**man of the dart**” or “**man of the arrow**” or “**man of war.**” Even righteous people can be drawn into war. It is curious that Methuselah is Enoch's son, which would put him eighth in the lineage, just like Tubal-Cain, the man who forged iron, which is interpreted in many ancient Jewish books as primarily referring to weapons.

¹¹ See Isaiah 13:21; 34:12-13 and my chapter 13 in *Giants: Sons of the Gods*. It also tells us not to follow the practices of the those in the land of Canaan (which include many nephilim). One such practice is bestiality.

God's Very Special Grace

Noah Walked with God

As I bring up Enoch, we now want to look at one more thing about him. He was said to have “walked with God” (**Gen 5:22, 24**). There is only one other man in all of the Bible who is said to have “walked with God”: Noah.¹² Walking is first associated with God himself who walks in the Garden of Eden (**Gen 3:8**).¹³ The **location** is the important thing here.

The idea of God walking comes up again in **Job 22:14**. It says that God walks the vault of heaven.¹⁴ Both Eden and heaven, as we have seen, are God's **temples**. Someone else walked here. Satan walked among the stones of fire on the mountain of God in Eden (**Ezek 28:13-15**). In each case, the form of the verb is in the Hithpael stem, and the vast majority of the time this stem appears, it has God and a sanctuary or a king in view.¹⁵

¹² Others undoubtedly did walk with God, but this phrase is only used of these two men.

¹³ The idea of God walking and Noah walking is part of the reason for seeing God here as the Angel of the LORD. If this were the only reason, it would not be persuasive enough to me. But see note 4.

¹⁴ It is possible to see this as a walking around in heaven, not as a physical being, but as a spiritual being. But this could also be purely anthropomorphic language, or a combination of the two, as God is Triune.

¹⁵ I was first led to this in Cory D. Crawford, “Noah's Architecture: The Role of Sacred Space In Ancient Near Eastern Flood Myths, in *Constructions of Space IV: Further Developments in Examining Ancient Israel's Social Space*, ed. Mark K. George (New York: Bloomsbury T&T

Noah's Sanctuary Ark

This is true in Genesis 6 as well. Noah is walking with God and suddenly, Noah tells God to do something. [In my best Bill Cosby voice], “Noah, I want you to build an ark.” “Riggggggghhht. What’s an ark?” What is an ark? Of course, it is a boat.¹⁶ This boat will save many lives—eight human beings, and two of every kind of animal from an impending flood (vs. 17). The ark is how God will preserve life on earth. This is God’s gracious provision. The refuge from his wrath.

But it is more than a boat. It is a **sanctuary, a temple**. Curiously, it shares a geometric relationship with the ark of covenant which went inside the temple. Exactly 80,000 little arks would fit into Noah’s ark.¹⁷ Noah’s ark also has some fascinating parallels with Solomon’s temple.

You will notice that there are dimensions given for Noah’s ark. These are more than blueprints for a ship. They are blueprints for a temple. The dimensions are that it is **300**

Clark, 2013), 17 (1-22).

https://www.academia.edu/5112116/Noahs_Architecture_The_Role_of_Sacred_Space_in_Ancient_Near_Eastern_Flood_Myths. Crawford could go farther with his analysis as he mentions only three or four texts. In reality there are several dozen. **This would make for an interesting study.**

¹⁶ There are three main arks in the OT: Noah’s ark, Moses’ life-raft that saved him as a child, and the ark of the covenant. The first two are boats (the only structures in the Bible called *tebah*). The first and third are holy objects related to a sanctuary.

¹⁷ For more see my sermon “Build Me an Ark,” Exodus 25:9-20.

cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high (Gen 6:15). In Cosby's sketch, after God gives the dimensions Noah says, "Riggggggghhht. What's a cubit?" There are about 1 ½ feet in a cubit, so that it is 450 x 75 x 45 ft. That's a big boat!

But curiously, the dimensions given by God to Solomon for the temple are very similar. Not only are they given in the same order (length, width, height), but they are the exact same height (30 cubits). Not only this, but one scholar points out that, "Once once takes into account the thicknesses of the walls of the main hall as well as the width of the *yasia* ('storied structure,' 1 Kgs 6:5) surrounding the hall on three sides, the full exterior length and width would be close to, if not exactly, one hundred by fifty cubits, thus making the temple and ark correlates in two of three dimensions."¹⁸

There's more. Noah's ark has three stories (Gen 6:16): a lower, second, and third deck. The area surrounding the Solomon's temple is also divided into three stories: bottom, middle, and third (1 Kgs 6:6). Then we have the idea of a place to store food. Noah is told "Take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up"(Gen 6:21). Sure, with all those animals you would need a place for food. But curiously, the temple also had storehouses (1 Kgs 6:8). Finally, There is

¹⁸ Crawford, p. 6-7.

the door on the ark. This door goes on the “side” (Gen 6:16). This is said in proximity to the “roof” of the ark. Solomon is likewise told to finish the roof (1 Kgs 6:9), and in the very same paragraph he is told to put a door on the right side (1 Kgs 6:8).

Finishing up this theme of the ark as a temple is the language used in the very last verse. Not only are we to understand that Noah was obedient, which of course he was. We are to understand that his obedience was done in worship in proximity to the temple, the place where he and God walked together. There is no mistaking this connection. It says, “Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him” (Gen 6:22). This phrase is repeated over and over again with Moses, especially when it comes to finishing the tabernacle.¹⁹ Both men are acting as types of Christ, for they are building the perfect temple of God.

At this point in their respective stories, when they are building God’s sanctuary, Noah and Moses are viewed as the great obedient servants of the temple. They are what Adam was supposed to be. This contributes to the picture of a return to Eden before the fall. But it also shows us how vital it was to God that his worship be done as commanded. Neither

¹⁹ Ex 38:22; 39:1, 5, 7, 21, 26, 29, 31; 40:16, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32).

Noah nor Moses fudged on the details. They did not make up things as they went along. They did not add or subtract, but were obedient in what they were told to do.

You see, the obedience God requires of them and of us is the same in principle, though it may be applied differently. It is not just obedience for obedience's sake, as if it is an end to itself. It is not just to be a good moral person. Yes, there is obedience here, but it is not moralism, it is Christianity. Its end is to glorify God. You are to have the same kind of obedience, walking with God where you are in the temple of the NT.

This temple is your body (1 Cor 6:19). As Paul says, you are not to unite it with a prostitute. Neither are you to unite it with other gods, real or imagined, fallen angels, demons, or your stomach. You are not to engage in things that summon (contacting) them or mark you out as theirs (pagan rituals, markings, etc). These things pollute the temple, and bring about the kind of ruin experienced in Eden, the kind of ruin that ended up bringing about great sin on earth and in heaven, the kind of ruin that ended up in terrible violence, the kind of ruin that caused God to destroy mankind once. If this is not a warning for your personal behavior, I do not know what is.

But there is another NT temple. It is tied directly to Christ, who is the Temple (**John 2:21**). He is the ark that saves us from the wrath of God. He is the door to the temple. In him are found all storehouses of things needed to live. And his church, the visible church, the place where he chooses to dwell, especially when they are gathered together for worship and study and fellowship and prayer, is also his temple. You must not forsake this temple, nor pollute it with corrupt worship, or an insincere heart when you gather. Noah is held up as the example of this through the ark—the temple of God in his time.

God's Covenant with Noah

All of this is made possible by for Noah by **God's covenant**. This is how we will finish our time today. The covenant is the central feature of the story. We have seen two covenants in Genesis already: the **covenant of creation/works** and a **gracious covenant promise** both made with Adam.

Genesis 6:18 is the first time the word (*berith*) appears in the Bible. But as scholars have demonstrated, “‘to confirm’ is used of ratifying pre-existing ‘words’ (**Deut 9:5**), ‘promises’ (**2 Sam 7:25**), ‘threats’ (**Jer 30:24**), ‘oaths’ (**Gen 26:3**), ‘vows’ (**Num 30:14**), as well as ‘covenants’ (Dumbrell, *Creation and*

Covenant, 25–26; cf. TDOT 2:260).²⁰ This means that there was a **pre-existing covenant** that God is reconfirming with Noah. That seems to be the covenant promise given to Adam. Noah is now being placed in that covenantal relationship with God because of the grace extended to him in **vs. 8**. His family is also included in these covenant blessings so that the earth can be repopulated.²¹

What is the focus of the covenant? Why is it mentioned here? Wenham says, “**The phrase ‘confirm my covenant’ suggests that divine obligations are uppermost, that God will maintain his special relationship with Noah.**”²² This is a very important point, because though Noah is obedient, and though, if he had not made the ark, he would not have

TDOT Theological Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament, ed. E. Jenni and C. Westermann or G. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.)

²⁰ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 175.

²¹ There is a lot that could be said here about the familial relationship and the covenant. From a Baptist perspective, I would want to note a few things. **First**, all of these people are quite old, so there is no infant inclusion in this covenant. **Second**, it is quite possible that they all expressed faith in God along with Noah, though this is speculative. **Third**, this covenant is only typological of the new covenant, it is not the new covenant. As such, it was given to save Noah and his family from a *physical* flood. It anticipates the new covenant and the saving of people to heaven by Christ’s blood, but whether or not all of these individuals were saved in a spiritual sense is speculative. It just doesn’t say.

²² Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 175.

survived the flood, this covenant becomes effectual: grace-giving, faith-imparting, works-creating in the life of Noah. This is about God's work, God's condescension to Noah in a friendly relationship where he is bound to a sinner through his oath and his word.

And notice God's word, his promise: "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 into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female..." (Gen 6:18-19). This is language that tells you of God's power, not Noah's. It tells you about God's grace, not Noah's merit. It tells you about God's special covenant love for his people.

But all of this comes to Noah because God, looking into the future and knowing his plan and power perfectly, anticipates the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Noah's is a covenant of promise, as are all OT covenants. But ours is a covenant of fulfillment. Noah's was a type of the covenant to come, even as the flood is a type of the baptism to come (1 Pet 3:19-20). Today, that promise has come, the fulfillment has arrived, the baptism that appeals to God for a clean conscience (as Peter puts it), symbolically brings all to safety, even as it

did Noah, who will trust in Christ by faith alone. And so we are saved not merely from drowning, but from the very fires of hell itself.

With all the strange applications possible from the story of Noah, the ones I want to leave you with are these. God preserved that world so that he could send his only begotten son. Christ has come with a better covenant that is able to save to the uttermost. He is the greater Noah, and you must put your trust in nothing and no one else but him. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. Repent of your sins, and turn to God in Christ so that you may flee the coming wrath. For God's stance against evil has not changed. But today is the day of salvation.

Then, like Noah did, and Moses after him ([1 Cor 10:2](#)), be baptized and enter the NT temple with God's people. Learn and strive because of Grace to be obedient to his commandments, for he still commands many things today. And know that if you do, you will have found favor with God.

The Ark as a Temple	
Noah's Ark (Gen 6:14-16, 21)	Solomon's Temple (1 Kgs 6:2-10)
Three Tiered	
Bottom	Bottom
Second	Middle
Third	Third
Dimensions	
300 cubits long (450 ft)	60 cubits long (1/5 the ark)
50 cubits wide	20 cubits (2/5 the ark)
30 cubits high ¹	30 cubits high
Door and Roof	
Side door	Right side of the house
Finish the roof	Finish the roof
Storage	
Store food	Storehouses
Obedience	
Noah did according to all that God commanded him	Moses did all that God commanded him (Ex 39:42)
Noah's Name	
Noah means "rest"	The temple is the place of God's "rest" and the ark comes to "rest" in it (Ps 132:7-8). ²
<p>¹ Utnapishtim, the Gilgamesh Epic's flood hero builds a seven tiered cubed ark of 120 cubits (60 x 60 x 60). The purpose of the cube, like the ark and the temple in the Bible is to reflect the ziggurat, which was a seven tiered cosmic mountain.</p> <p>² We will explore this idea more in Ch. 8 when the ark comes to "rest" on the mountain.</p>	

¹ Betty Champion, *Yes We Can Be Perfect In Our Generation* (LaGrange, GA: World Overcomer's Church Int., 2002), 119.