

Series: Lessons from God's Servants

Lesson 1: "Noah, a Holy Man in an Unholy World"

*Announcements, encouragement to invite people and opening prayer.



Connect: an opportunity for people to immediately interact and connect with each other; icebreaker/attention getters. **Icebreaker:** What are some of the forces that push against your journey to be holy?

Transition: This world is fallen. All of creation is bound and broken because of man's sin. That means we live in an unholy world that is always going put enormous pressures on us. So what do we do?

Bottom Line: Who better to learn from than a righteous and faithful servant of God who was living in a world that was spiritually bankrupt!

LESSON PLAN

Read Genesis 6:5-8

1. How does God describe the wickedness of man in Noah's day?

Question: In what ways do we see that heart of evil in today's society?

2. How did the Lord feel about man's new humanistic society on earth?

3. How does God determine the situation can be resolved?

We need to ask the question of the text, "How in the world did the people on earth become so corrupt"? We don't know the exact date of the flood but much of the archaeological finds and geological shifts point toward a date of about 3,000 B.C.

Read Genesis 6:1-4

This passage has been greatly misunderstood. We need to clear this up to see exactly what happened. Civilization before the flood had quit trusting in God. Their intermarriage with those who did not follow Yahweh created a civilization that embraced sin as a lifestyle. What



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God have Paul teach us about being unequally yoked? It is a recipe for disaster. Here is an early lesson of that New Testament teaching that was always God's teaching from the time He first chose the Hebrew race to begin the Old Covenant.

The race of Cain invented implements of industry and art. Their great works would have been adopted by the descendants of Seth. During the years before the flood great strides were made in the arts and sciences. The destruction of the flood wiped out much of the evidence. However, there was an intricate gold locket found by a miner in a layer of coal in Australia in the 1890's. If coal takes millions of years to form, how did the locket get there? Hmm.

Seth was the child given to replace Able who Cain had killed. Seth followed God and his descendants called on the name of the Lord. Sadly, the race of Seth also became infected with the vices of the Cainites, Cain's race. This opened the door for those who followed God from Seth's line to intermarry with those who did not follow God from Cain's line. The intermarriage of the two races gave birth to corruption and wickedness. Some writers have tried to say the sons of God referred to angels who intermarried with the daughters of man referring to humans. However, God created everything to reproduce after its own kind. Angels are a separate class of creation and God never allowed angels to marry people. This is a metaphor for Seth's descendants, the sons of God intermarrying with Cain's descendants, the daughters of men. Their offspring produced a people of physical strength and courage as they mixed the races. The Nephilim are mentioned in Numbers 13:33. They were a tribe of Canaanites. They were large men, however the word doesn't mean giants. Nephilim means "the fallen ones" or "those who fall on others," apostates or men of violence, people who have left the true faith of Yahweh.

Question: How does intermarriage, outside the Christian faith, create fallen ones today?

4. How long did God give mankind to repent and turn back to Him?

God gave them 120 years. Noah would have been 480 years old when God drew the line and called upon him to preach righteousness to the people of earth. Noah preached (2 Peter 2:5) all the time he was building the ark for God. Would you say that God was more than patient with the people? Would you say that Noah was more than faithful to preach 120 years and see absolutely no one accept the altar call? That is the record because it was in Noah's 600th year of life that God told him to enter the ark - Gen. 7:11.



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Question: What lesson should we learn from Noah's example of faithfulness to God?

Read Genesis 6:9-7:1

5. Explain how difficult it would be if for Noah to grasp God's instructions.

This mega-ship had to be built by hand! There were no power tools. This project would be beyond imagination and the mere thought of the amount of your life spent doing this task that would make you the laughing stock of all around you had to be enormous.

Reflection: Has God ever called you to a difficult task that seemed beyond comprehension? What was it? How easy was it to respond?

Question: How would you explain to someone what it means to be like Noah and walk with God?

Question: How would you walk with God if your entire town, your country, everyone around you had a completely corrupt value system? How much more difficult do you think life was for Noah than it is for you and me?

Links to full-scale replicas of Noah's Ark:

<http://www.godsark.org/>; <http://www.nwcreation.net/noahsarklinks.html>;
<http://www.squidoo.com/johan-huibers-noahs-ark>;
<http://www.christianpost.com/news/full-scale-replica-of-noahs-ark-coming-to-ky-theme-park-47904/>

6. How important do you think Noah's faithfulness to God was to his family?

Question: In what ways could you be more like Noah?

Question: What are you personally doing to pass on the grace of God?



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Read Hebrews 11:7

7. What does it mean that Noah was warned about things not yet seen and accepted them by faith as truth?

The Vapor Canopy

What IS the Vapor Canopy? Recall the first chapter of Genesis. 6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which [were] under the firmament from the waters which [were] above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. 9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry [land] appear: and it was so. 10 And God called the dry [land] Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that [it was] good. (KJV)

Consider the implications of what you just read! Waters above the heavens! This is the vapor canopy! "Could this be?" Yes, it could. "Well", you might say, "don't we have waters above the heavens today?" Yes we do but but There's more. Here's Psalm 104. (Hey! That rhymes.)

5 [Who] laid the foundations of the earth, [that] it should not be removed for ever. 6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as [with] a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. 7 At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. 8 They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them. 9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

Notice verse 7, "At thy rebuke they fled" and verse 9, "that they turn not again to cover the earth". These waters are not there any more or at least not like they once used to be! These waters are known as the "Vapor Canopy" which encircled the Earth during the time of Noah. We do have a vapor canopy above us today. But based upon Biblical description, it is not like it once was.

(Taken from: WATER VAPOR in the CLIMATE SYSTEM Special Report. December 1995 by Susan Bucci Mockler.)



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So, we believe the earth was much like a terrarium that keeps watering itself. The statement from God to build this giant ship would have seemed ludicrous. How would that keep them safe from God's judgment on the world? It is unlikely that Noah could have conceived of waters rising from below and falling severely from above and covering the earth. But he obeyed God in spite of what could not be seen.

8. What does it mean when it says that Noah by faith condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith?

This was an example or a shadow of Romans 1:17, the promise from God that is fulfilled in Christ and the Christian faith.

Final Question: What is the one idea that stands out to you most from this lesson?