

Genesis Chapters 6-7 Summary - John Karmelich

I'm pretty positive most Christians at some point in their lives have woken up after several days of rain and thought, it's time to start ark construction! Most of us have known the Noah story since childhood. The great question of course, is why study it again? Besides learning some trivial facts about it, how is the story going to affect our walk with God? When I'm not sure how to proceed, it's time to remember that God called me to teach how the Bible affects us "here and now". In other words, the bible isn't just to teach historical facts! Of course, I believe Noah's fact! As I go over this story, again I will state how this story affects us today. OK, enough stating the obvious, let's get on with the story:

The opening four verses of Chapter 6 which leads into the story of Noah, has been a classic debate that a lot of Jewish and Christian scholars have argued over since Genesis was first taught. I know most of the opinions on these verses. To explain these verses, let me simply state here's my opinion about what they mean. If I get to heaven and find out I'm wrong, I'll shrug and let it go! (There's a classic joke that goes when the angels want a good laugh, they read bible commentaries on what the text means!) Since I got that disclosure out of my system, time to stop stalling and explain these verses and get into Noah!

The short version is the text is about the "sons of God" had sex with women through marriage. All that led to God destroying the world other than Noah and his family! The Hebrew term translated: "sons of God" always refers to things directly created by God versus descendants thereof. Therefore, I'd argue it refers to angels, or specifically demonic ones. I pondered, why did demons do that? Were they "horny" and found women attractive? Then I thought about why all those demons rebelled against God? To put it simply, demons thought they should be the center of His attention and not people. It just means their strategy was to turn all people against God to prove people aren't worthy to be saved for all eternity. In other words, their idea was to enter males to develop people who don't care about God. I know there is a lot of theories on these verses. To me, this theory fits the logic of the text! Satan realizes his fate was sealed, and he'll try anything and everything, to delay that permanent doom. Just remember God's more powerful than Satan as He will work in our lives so we can resist whatever temptation demons throw at us! The reason we're getting into all this before Noah, is it shows how corrupt the world got and it God to "step in" to do the whole Noah story!

Now that we got the "weird stuff" out of the way we can focus on the story of Noah that takes up most of the text here as well as the next lesson on Chapters 8-9. If there is one thing to grasp here is to know just as Noah, his wife his three sons and their wives were preserved through the world's destruction it's important to realize this is a model of God's grace. Just as we will be preserved when all people will be judged, and the world will be destroyed a second time as the end of the bible states as fact! I can get all technical in this lesson, and I believe the flood was world-wide and not a local one! I can talk about the size of Noah's barge (the thing could not be steered). It was big enough to hold all animal species. You may recall back in Chapter 3, God brought all the animals to Adam to name them! Therefore, it wasn't a problem for God to bring two of each into the ark. If the bible took the trouble to tell the exact age of Noah at that time, plus a lot of information about when the flood started and stopped, then all the literal aspects of this story are literal! Plus, we have a world full of physical evidence of a world-wide flood.

The one technical thing I do like to bring up is 40 days of rain, even heavy rain is not enough to cover the highest mountains in the world. Yes, I believe there was a water canopy above the earth that came down when the flood started. (That canopy prevented harmful rays from hitting which is why we read of very long lives before the flood). If I had to guess how it happened, I suspect eruptions occurred in

the ground the same way volcanoes explode. A lot of that water came from sources below the surface and between the water above and below the ground! God isn't in the earth preservation business!

Anyway, Chapter 6 tells us the world was full of violence due to the demonic influence in the world. It tells us that Noah and his family was chosen by God's grace and their family line avoided all that! God announced the flood and waited 120 years. That gave Noah and his family time to build it! Notice that we never read of Noah complaining. Every time God spoke to him, we read of Noah's obedience. That is a good lesson for us. I know we're saved by grace, but saved to do what? To live as a witness for the God we serve! That means He wants us to be obedient to how He calls us to live!

I admit I'm endlessly fascinated by little details. For example, Noah was told to bring two of every kind of unclean animal and seven of the clean. How did Noah know? That means God must have explained what a "clean" animal was. (We don't learn till Moses wrote Leviticus Chapter 11 many centuries later in history! As far as Noah, seven of the clean had nothing to do with those type of animals being better to eat. It was before humans were allowed to eat meat (that begins in Chapter 9). God's teaching Noah that He demands believers act differently from the world around them! Having an unclean animal (that had to be explained to Noah somehow) was taken on the ark! Yes, Jesus declared all food clean for us, which is why it's not an issue for Christians. Still to not live like the world around us is a principal that God wants Christians to live by even today.

Speaking of bible trivia, I'm fascinated that after Noah and company entered the ark, there was another seven-day period before the rain began. Theories include a mourning time for the end of the world or it could be simply that God was testing Noah's faith by waiting another week. In the Hebrew, there are 2 words for rain, one for normal rain and one for a downpour. Both are used in this text. Still rain for 40 days isn't enough to cover the highest mountains which why it includes the water canopy coming down and water from below the surface coming up. Another classic question is, did Noah take dinosaurs? I'd argue yes and they couldn't survive in the world without the water canopy! So how did say a kangaroo get only to Australia after the flood? I suspect the water and land bridges are different than how we do see them today. In short, every question pondered about the flood has been debated to death. One can read lots of books about that. I'm more concerned with how it affects our lives today. I should add the last part of the chapter specifies the exact time waters prevailed on the earth which was 150 days. Then I am sure a lot of water worked its way back underground, as there are many underground water places as most of us know today.

OK I promised to focus on the important question. Why should we care? Yes, I believe it was literal. I won't beat that to death anymore. Yes, the rainbow is a reminder that God will never flood the world a second time but if you read the "fine print" in 2nd Peter Chapter 3, we learn the earth will be destroyed by fire one day. One reason for the flood is to show us God will judge the world again one day. What the flood reminds us of, (and the evidence for it around the world) is just as God judged the world, and destroyed it one day in the past, so it will be destroyed one day in the future! In effect this story is one big reminder that God's judgement on the world is real! The only hope is to plead "guilty as charged"! Then we like Noah are only saved by God's grace and not our good deeds! That's that. Hope you like my reminders of the Noah story and keep God focused in your life as we remember why it is He made us, to be a witness for Him.

On the same page as this study is a more detailed study I wrote many years back. You are welcome to email me if you want or join my list to the get the latest lesson. Thanks for reading. John