

Genesis 6:1-22¹

Mankind's wickedness increases, so God sends the flood, but by his grace, mercy & favor, God preserves Noah and his family in the Ark.

1st Sunday in Advent

Supplementary Lectionary Series "B,"
Old Testament, adapted

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December 1, 2013
Door Offering –
Good Samaritan Fund
Elders
Decorate for Christmas

^{6:1} When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, ² the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. ³ Then the LORD said, "My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years."

⁴ The tyrants [Hebrew: *mylipiNòh* ' the Nephilim, fallen ones] were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

⁵ The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. ⁶ The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. ⁷ So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them." ⁸ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

⁹ This is the account [Hebrew: *t/dl]/T*, Toledoth] of Noah.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation, and he walked with The One True God. ¹⁰ Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

¹¹ Now the earth was corrupt in The True God's sight and was full of violence. ¹² God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. ¹³ So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy [exterminate] both them and the earth. ¹⁴ So make yourself an Ark of cypress [Hebrew: *gopher*] wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. ¹⁵ This is how you are to build it: The Ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. ¹⁶ Make a roof for it and finish the Ark to within 18 inches of the top. Put a door in the side of the Ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. ¹⁷ I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. ¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the Ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹ You are to bring into the Ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. ²⁰ Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the

¹ *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984. All Scripture references are taken from this translation unless noted otherwise.

ground, will come to you to be kept alive. ²¹ You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.”

²² Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

THE LORD TAKES ACTION WITH THE FLOOD

I. TO PUNISH THE WICKED

II. TO PRESERVE THE RIGHTEOUS

In the Name of Jesus, who is coming again at a time we do not know in order to judge the living and the dead, Dear Fellow-Redeemed.

Today is the First Sunday in Advent – the First Sunday of the Church Year. The term “advent” means “coming,” and so there is a double emphasis to this time of the Church Year – the Advent Season.

The first emphasis is that we prepare ourselves for a proper celebration of Christmas. Our focus is not to be on “Black Friday,” on the earthly gifts, wrappings, decorations, tinsel, glitz and glitter of the season. Rather, our focus is to be on the birth of our Savior Jesus. The second emphasis of Advent also concerns Jesus.

Jesus has promised to come again. His Second Coming will not be in humility as was his first coming. Jesus’ Second Coming will be in glory to raise all the dead, and to give to those still living and raised from the dead – to give to those who believed in him – eternal life in heaven with him. All unbelievers will also be raised. They will go away to eternal punishment in hell. By faith in Jesus, we will be ready for Jesus’ Second Coming.

Our text this morning, which is all of the the Sixth Chapter of Genesis, serves as a vivid warning and reminder of Jesus’ Second Coming. For in this Chapter, we see that THE LORD TAKES ACTION WITH THE FLOOD. THE LORD TAKES ACTION WITH THE FLOOD ... I. TO PUNISH THE WICKED; and, II. TO PRESERVE THE RIGHTEOUS.

THE LORD TAKES ACTION WITH THE FLOOD

I. TO PUNISH THE WICKED

The wicked of Noah’s time are vividly described.

⁵ The LORD saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. ⁶ The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain (6:5&6).

The wickedness of the time is further described, “Now the earth was corrupt in The True God’s sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways” (6:11&12). God’s creation, which he had

created perfect, was completely ruined. Thus, the LORD said again, “I am grieved that I have made them” (6:7c). A truth is contained in all of this description: Man’s wickedness and corruption is God’s pain and grief.

The wickedness and corruption was so bad, that even the formerly godly people had fallen. “When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose” (6:1&2). “The sons of God” is a description of believers. “The daughters of men” is a description of unbelievers. Oh, those “daughters of men” were beautiful, comely, inviting. They were the *Playboy* bunnies and *Victoria Secrets*’ models of Noah’s day. The believers saw them, succumbed to their charms, and were led away into unbelief with them. There was another aspect to these evil and wicked days.

Moses records, “The tyrants [Hebrew: *μylypynNÒh*’ the Nephilim, fallen ones] were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown” (6:4). The New International Version translation does not translate the Hebrew word Nephilim [*μylypynNÒ*], but simply anglicizes it – gives it English letters. Some translations regarded these as “Giants.” That is not a good translation either. The Hebrew root of this word is Naphal [*lyp'n:*], which means to fall; to fall upon, to attack. These are tyrants who rule by force and terror. Later they are referred to as “heroes of old, men of renown.” That kind of depends on your view point.

If the tyrant who rules you gives you benefit, then he is a hero for you; if he does not, then he is a threat and tyrant. One person’s tyrant is another person’s hero. That is the case today also. While we in the United States view Osama Bin Laden as a tyrant and terrorist, those of the Muslim faith view him as a hero. With all of this wickedness, rottenness, and depravity, God’s decides to take action.

God will punish.

⁶ The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. ⁷ So the LORD said, “I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them” (6:6&7).

God would wipe out mankind from the face of the earth; he would exterminate them. He would also wipe out the animals, which had also been corrupted by the influence and rule of mankind. God was going to destroy his creation. God said, “I am going to put an end to all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy [exterminate] both them [the people] and the earth” (6:13b). God sets a time in which he is going to bring this destruction.

God says, "My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal [flesh]; his days will be a hundred and twenty years" (6:3). God informs Noah of his intentions, and through Noah, then warns the generation of Noah's time of what he intends to do. God does this to remind the people of Noah's day of his grace.

This 120 years was what was left of their time of grace – a time to come to repentance – but they did not. That Noah proclaimed this coming destruction to the people of his time is noted by the Apostle Peter, who writes, "[God] did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5). Noah was "a preacher of righteousness"; Noah proclaimed God's Word; Noah warned the people. Noah also demonstrated his message by following God's Word in building the Ark. But it was to no avail. The people continued in wickedness, sin, rottenness, corruption. They ridiculed Noah for building this Ark in the middle of a region that had no lakes. Judgment and destruction was coming upon them.

APPROPRIATION

As you review the description of Noah's day, you must recognize how our day is just like his day. Wickedness is great. Sexual immorality is not only committed but condoned, defended and commended. There is violence throughout the world – even in and close to our community here in Durand, Michigan. Corruption seeps through just about every pore of those in government and in positions of authority. Every inclination of the thoughts of mankind's heart continues to be evil and wicked – yes, even our own inclinations and thoughts. Think a thought without sinning! How hard it is to do!

There are still the tyrant-heroes. Tyrants if you are against them and heroes if they are for you and beneficial for you.

Sons and daughters of God – believers – marrying sons and daughters of men – unbelievers – still takes place, and is it not remarkable how rare it is that a believing husband or wife influences his or her spouse toward faith in Jesus? It is the opposite which usually happens. You have seen it. Perhaps you have also experienced it in your own family, relatives or friends. How devastating! And there is still something else that is taking place today that took place during the time of Noah. As was the case during the time of Noah, God's Word is still being proclaimed.

That Word of God is being proclaimed for the purpose of repentance and faith. That Word of God will continue to be proclaimed to the end. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my Words will never pass away" (Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33.) Jesus proclaimed, "This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14). Is not this the case now, dear friends? Are we not hearing the Gospel of Jesus now? Is not the world flooded with this Gospel through missionaries, radio, television, internet – taken by electronic means to places formerly not accessible? The end is certainly near. When will it come?

Jesus proclaimed,

³⁶ “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹ and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man (Matthew 24:36-39).

Therefore, we are to be ready.

Be ready, because we do not know when Jesus will come again. Be ready, because when he does come, we do not want to be caught in sinfulness and unbelief. Be ready, by hearing the Gospel, repenting of sin and believing in Jesus alone for forgiveness of sin and eternal life. Let God’s Word continue to be proclaimed in truth and purity and be ready.

When the LORD Jesus comes the second time, it will be similar to the time of Noah. There will be punishment for the wicked – for unbelievers; but preservation for believers.

THE LORD TAKES ACTION WITH THE FLOOD II. TO PRESERVE THE RIGHTEOUS

Our text states, “Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation, and he walked with The One True God” (6:9). How could Noah be righteous if every inclination of the thoughts of man’s heart was only evil and wicked continually? That description fits Noah too. That is a description of all mankind that St. Paul states too:

**¹⁰ ... “There is no one righteous, not even one;
¹¹ there is no one who understands,
no one who seeks God.
¹² All have turned away,
they have together become worthless;
there is no one who does good,
not even one.”**

^{22b} There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:10-12; 22b&23).

So how was “Noah ... a righteous man, blameless in his generation, and he walked with The One True God” (6:9)? The answer is in the verse preceding the description of Noah as a righteous man.

The shortest verse in this text states, “Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (6:8). The NIV translates this verse, “Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.” Understand what that “favor in the eyes of the LORD is.” It is grace! It is God’s undeserved love. Noah was blessed with God the LORD’s undeserved love toward him. It was by this grace that

the LORD created faith in Noah's heart – a faith which Noah exhibited in his speech and life.

In his speaking, Noah demonstrated his faith by being “a preacher of righteousness,” as we heard Peter describe him earlier (2 Peter 2:5b). Noah demonstrated his faith by building the Ark exactly as the LORD God told him to build it, as we are told at the end of our text: “Noah did everything just as God commanded him” (6:22). By grace then, God would preserve Noah and his family and the animals according to their kinds, while God also punished the wicked of Noah's day. Noah would build the Ark in accordance with God's description; Noah would gather food for himself, his family and the animals that would be brought to him; Noah would house the animals, himself and his family as the LORD God directed. All of this was by grace through faith.

Thus, Noah too was declared righteous by grace through faith. The writer to the Hebrews states, “By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith” (Hebrews 11:7). Moreover, God stated that he would establish his covenant with Noah.

God said, “But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the Ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you” (6:18). Another revelation of God's grace toward Noah was the establishment of this covenant.

The immediate covenant, attested and guaranteed by the rainbow that appeared after the flood, was that God would never again totally destroy the earth by water (cf. 9:11-17). There was another covenant, long-term, that God established with Noah.

That long-term covenant that God established with and through Noah was the guarantee of a coming Savior. This covenant went back to God's promise in the Garden of Eden, when God said to the serpent, Satan, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (3:15). That Savior, the Seed of the Woman, would also come through the line or lineage of Noah!

APPROPRIATION

The LORD God has fulfilled his covenant with Adam and Eve and Noah. Jesus has come. Jesus came and redeemed the world from sin, death and the grave, from hell and from the devil and his power. Jesus destroyed him who had the power of death, namely, the devil. Jesus accomplished all of this at his first coming, which led him to the cross. Having accomplished that redemption, arisen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, Jesus will come again.

Jesus will come again. That day will be a time for punishment for unbelievers. That day will mean preservation and deliverance for believers – those brought to faith by grace through the Gospel. You and I and all Christians, all believers in Jesus, have been

declared righteous, like Noah, by grace alone through the Gospel. In that faith, we follow Noah's example.

Peter explains in his First Epistle that the water of the flood had a dual purpose (cf. 1 Peter 3:19-21). The water of the flood punished and destroyed the wicked of Noah's day. That same water of the flood that lifted up the Ark also lifted up Noah and his family up and away from the wicked and preserved them. Peter goes on to say that this water of the flood symbolizes Holy Baptism.

In Holy Baptism, the sinful Old Adam is destroyed and the New Person, created to be like Jesus, is brought forth (cf. Romans 6:1-14). That is why Holy Baptism is "the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5b). In addition, we note that Noah was a preacher of righteousness.

Noah was a preacher of righteousness. He called to his generation for repentance. He called to them to believe in the LORD God who was going to send a Savior into the world. You and I too are to be preachers of righteousness. We are to call people to repentance for their sins. Where there is repentance, we are to assure people with the Gospel of the full and free forgiveness of sins in Jesus. Moreover, like Noah, we are to demonstrate our faith in our daily lives.

Noah continued in the good works of following God's Word, building the Ark to God's specifications, gathering food for himself, his family and animals, and housing the animals on the Ark which the LORD God caused to come to him. We too are called to bring forth good works of faith – the fruit of faith in Jesus. In thoughts, words, actions, attitudes and behavior, we are to show that we are indeed Christians. When we fail, we return to the cross for the forgiveness we need daily and for the renewed strength we need daily to continue as God's chosen people – believers in Jesus. Thus, we are ready for Jesus' Second Coming to preserve and deliver us.

CONCLUSION

Our double preparation during this Advent Season is certainly obvious in this first text for this First Sunday in Advent. God destroyed the wicked in Noah's time. The wicked – unbelievers – will be destroyed when Jesus comes again. God preserved and delivered Noah and his family, who were declared righteous by faith as testified to by the writer to the Hebrews (11:7). At his Second Coming, Jesus will preserve and deliver all of those whom he has declared righteous by faith – by grace through the Gospel. The Advent Season reminds us to be prepared for Jesus' Second Coming by faith in Jesus.

The Advent Season therefore also reminds us to prepare properly for the celebration of Jesus' first coming – Christmas. Christmas reminds us that Jesus did come into the world to take away our sins by his perfect life and by his innocent suffering and death on the cross.

Be prepared. Be prepared for Christmas. Be prepared for Jesus' Second Coming. Be prepared by continuing in faith in Jesus through God's Word. Amen.