

**Introduction** (Gen 7)

Over the years I developed a series of teachings on planning. In Proverbs 16:1, God says that “the plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.” In Proverbs 16:9, he says, “the mind of a man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.” I believe we have a responsibility before God to plan. Yet, the Biblically-based teachings I have on planning have not been well received by some people, especially in smaller charismatic churches. I had one worship leader who refused to plan the worship list. He said you had to be led by the Spirit, and if you had a planned out worship list, you were not being led by the Spirit. I countered by saying that God is a God of order. When the worship team arrives for practice and there are no song sheets prepared, they waste a lot of their time in very unproductive practices. When people come to a service and the media team does not have a list of songs and overheads are not prepared, people in the congregation cannot participate. Nobody remembers all the words to all the songs. Worship must be planned out. The Spirit of God can lead the worship leader on Monday or Tuesday or Wednesday so that worship team practices are planned and productive. Hearing from the Spirit in advance allows the media team to prepare the overheads, and the end result is that the congregation can all participate in worship.

I believe in planning. I believe that God is a God that plans. In Jeremiah 23:9, He tells us, “I know the plans that I have for you, plans for welfare and not for calamity, to give you a future and a hope.” I believe that God has plans for our individual lives, and also for us corporately. By the way, larger churches do a fantastic job of planning. Everything in their services is extremely well planned.

Today's passage is a wonderful example of a plan by God. God said that He was going to destroy every living thing on the face of the earth with a flood. He wanted to preserve some animals and birds from every species so that they could repopulate the earth after the flood had subsided. He wanted to preserve Noah and his household, because he alone was found righteous on the earth. He was going to repopulate the earth through Noah's family. This was God's plan. He gave Noah the plans for the ark in Genesis 6. He gave Noah the specific measurements and dimensions of the ark. God's plan included a supply of food for Noah's family and all the birds and animals. God's plan was detailed and very comprehensive. What was Noah's response to God's plan for Noah to build an ark. Genesis 6:22 concludes by saying, “Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did.”

In our passage today, God communicates His plan to preserve life during the flood. It was to preserve life so that every species could repopulate the earth after the flood. He was not going to recreate every species; He was going to preserve some from every species, male and female, and then repopulate the earth. Second, we see Noah's obedience to the plan. Third, we see the fulfillment of the plan. God is a God that plans. God is Spirit and Noah was led by God's Spirit in all that He did. We do not know exactly how long it took Noah to build the ark, but it took many years to build it. It was not at the last moment, the day of the flood that the Spirit of God communicated to Noah. It was well planned out in advance.

**God's Plan To Preserve Life in the Flood**

1. God's Plan to Preserve and Repopulate (vs 1-4)
2. Obedience to the Plan (vs 5-16)
3. Fulfillment of the Plan (vs 17-24)

## 1. God's Plan for Repopulation (vs 1-4)

We saw that God was sorry that He had made men. There was so much evil and corruption on earth, even among the sons of God, that God said He was going to blot out from the face of the land every living thing that He had made. But, God was not going to recreate the earth, all the animals, birds, creatures, and man, He was going to preserve some from all the species and then repopulate the earth. That was God's plan.

(Gen 7:1-4) "Then the LORD said to Noah, "Enter the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this time. {2} You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female; and of the animals that are not clean two, a male and his female; {3} also of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth. {4} For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made."

### a. Noah and his household

The Lord told Noah to "enter the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this time." God's plan to repopulate the earth with people was going to be with Noah and his household. There were probably billions of people living at that time. Some scholars say that there were probably seven to ten billion people living. Out of all those people, God said that only Noah was righteous before God at that time.

Jesus said to "Enter through the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it." (Matt 7:13-14) That was obviously true at that time. Only Noah and his household were entering the narrow gate to the ark that lead to life. The billions of other people were on the broad way that led to destruction.

(Matt 7:13-14) "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. {14} For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it."

What was it about Noah that put him on the narrow path that leads to life? We saw in Genesis 6:8 that Noah found favor, mercy, or grace in the eyes of the Lord. In Titus 3:5, we see that we are not saved according to the deeds we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy. Noah found mercy in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was saved because of God's great mercy. No one is saved because of his good and righteous deeds, not even Noah.

(Titus 3:5) "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,"

Why was Noah found to be righteous? In Genesis 15:6, Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. It is our faith in God that reckons us righteous. Paul quotes and explains Genesis 15:6 in Galatians 3:6-7. He said, "Even so Abraham BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. {7} Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham." Noah was a man of faith. That is why Noah is found in Hebrews 11, the hall of faith. Noah believed God and he was righteous by faith.

Noah was a true son of God, and God was going to preserve or save Noah and his family from God's plan to blot out all the living from the earth, and God was going to repopulate the earth through Noah and his household. That was God's plan.

### **b. Seven pairs of each of the clean animals**

God's plan to preserve and repopulate included all the other animals, beasts, birds and creatures on earth. He told Noah to take with him every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female. In Leviticus 11, we are given God's laws of which animals are clean and which are unclean. Clean animals had to have a divided hoof and had to chew the cud. A cow or goat had split hooves and chewed the cud, so those were clean. A pig or camel has split hooves, but does not chew the cud, so they were unclean. A rabbit or dog does not have a split hoof, so it is unclean.

(Lev 11:1-8) "The LORD spoke again to Moses and to Aaron, saying to them, {2} "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'These are the creatures which you may eat from all the animals that are on the earth. {3} ~'Whatever divides a hoof, thus making split hooves, and chews the cud, among the animals, that you may eat. {4} ~'Nevertheless, you are not to eat of these, among those which chew the cud, or among those which divide the hoof: the camel, for though it chews cud, it does not divide the hoof, it is unclean to you. {5} ~'Likewise, the shaphan, for though it chews cud, it does not divide the hoof, it is unclean to you; {6} the rabbit also, for though it chews cud, it does not divide the hoof, it is unclean to you; {7} and the pig, for though it divides the hoof, thus making a split hoof, it does not chew cud, it is unclean to you. {8} ~'You shall not eat of their flesh nor touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you.

The Lord told Moses which animals were clean and that could be eaten and/or touched. God's people were not to defile themselves by touching unclean animals. Up until the flood, God had not permitted men to eat animals. So, God had given Noah understanding about clean and unclean animals long before He shared it with Moses. Personally, I believe that the clean animals were used in worship as sacrifices to God.

In this short passage, God specifies "male and female" three times. It takes male and female to repopulate the earth. There were no male and male or female and female. God's original plan was to create male and female of every species so that they could be fruitful and fill the earth. God's plan to repopulate the earth did not change. God created male and female, and that include mankind. That is God's order. We live in a time where people are getting confused over this very basic law in creation.

### **c. One pair of each of the unclean animals**

Noah was to take seven pairs of the clean animals and birds. God told Noah to only take two of every animal that was not clean. Even though God made a distinction between what was clean and what was unclean, all of creation was created by God. The tigers, pigs, camels and other unclean animals were important to God, and His plan was to preserve some of all the unclean species and have them also repopulate the earth. God cared about all animals and creatures. I also believe that God cares about all people. In John 3:16 we find that God so loved the world. He loves everyone in the world. In 1 John 2:2, Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the world. God has made provision for all mankind. His love and mercy is available to all.

## 2. Obedience to the Plan (vs 5-16)

(Gen 7:5-16) “Noah did according to all that the LORD had commanded him. {6} Now Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water came upon the earth. {7} Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood. {8} Of clean animals and animals that are not clean and birds and everything that creeps on the ground, {9} there went into the ark to Noah by twos, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. {10} It came about after the seven days, that the water of the flood came upon the earth. {11} In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. {12} The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights. {13} On the very same day Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark, {14} they and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, all sorts of birds. {15} So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life. {16} Those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him; and the LORD closed it behind him.”

In verses one through four, God gave the plan on preserving and repopulating. In verses five through sixteen, there was obedience to the plan. Three times it mentions as God had commanded. In verse five, it says that “Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him. In verse eight, the animals and birds entered the ark as God had commanded Noah. In verse sixteen it says that “those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him. All of creation that was being saved from the flood did as God had commanded.

There are details that are left out in the account. One day, I want to see the video of how it all took place. Did Noah go out and find all these animals and birds, catch them, and keep them until the flood? Or, did God speak directly to them and they just automatically came to Noah at the appropriate time? We do not know all the details. What we do know is Noah and his family, and all the animals and birds did exactly as God had commanded Noah.

In addition to Noah and the animals being obedient to the commands of the Lord, the rains and floods came as promised. All of creation, including the fountains of the great deep were obedient to the commands of God. This speaks of the sovereignty of God. In Colossians 1:16-17, we read that “*by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible...all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things and in Him all things hold together.*” Jesus is Lord over all the earth, all the heavens and all creation. Everything in creation exists for His plans and purposes. In the flood, all of creation was under His command, and every living thing that was being saved from the flood was obedient to God.

After Noah and the living creatures entered the ark, God closed the door. Was Noah able to close the door? Did God tell Noah beforehand that He was going to close the door? Did people see all the animals and birds entering into this ark and try to get in? Did God have to intervene and close the door? We do not know the answers to all those questions. What we know is that everyone and every living creature that God had determined to save went into the ark and He closed the door. God shut the door, and brought the rains. God will do what He promises to do. The key is for us to be obedient to all that God has commanded us to do.

Another interesting bit of information that is given is the timing. In verse six it says that Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water came upon the earth. In verse eleven, it gives the exact day that the flood came. *“In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened.”* Some people do not view the time periods in Genesis as literal. They think a day could be a thousand years and they try to fit creation into the evolution model. I believe the exactness of the year, month, and day leave little doubt about the text. We have to interpret this passage literally. It was on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of the second month of the six hundredth year of Noah's life. That is exact. In Genesis 8:13-14 in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first of the month, the water was dried up from the earth. In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.” It took a year for the water to subside and for the earth to dry up. Again, this is a very specific time period. We also know that *“Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood. So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years, and he died.”* (Genesis 9:28-29) These exact dates and time periods leave no room for any other interpretation.

### **3. Fulfillment of the Plan (vs 17-24)**

#### **a. The waters prevailed.**

God had a plan to preserve Noah and his family, and some of every species of animal and birds, whether clean or unclean. Noah and the animals and birds were obedient to all that God commanded Noah. In verses seventeen through twenty-four we see the fulfillment of the plan.

(Gen 7:17-24) *“Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth. {18} The water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. {19} The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered. {20} The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered. {21} All flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; {22} of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died. {23} Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth; and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. {24} The water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days.”*

First, the flood came upon the earth for forty days. This is the second time that we read that the flood came for forty days. The number forty sometimes symbolizes testing or temptation, and sometimes it signifies completeness. Jesus was tempted for forty days, so in that passage it refers to a time of tempting. But, Hebrews 4:15 tells us that He was “tempted in all things and yet without sin.” The forty in that case also refers to a completeness of temptations. In our passage today, I believe that the forty does not signify testing, but completeness. God was going to completely blot out all living beings.

The water increased and lifted up the ark so that it rose above the earth. It says four times that the water prevailed. The Hebrew word is *gabar* (Strong's H1396), which means to prevail, be stronger, or to act insolently. This was a strong, unrelenting, persistent rain and flood that was

going to accomplish what God intended it to do, which was to prevail over the earth and blot out every living thing from the face of the land.

I grew up in Iran, just a little ways away from where Noah and the ark landed, which on Mount Ararak, which is on the border of Turkey and Iran. The first place that I lived was Agha Jari, and there was a mountain range that separated Mien Kuh from Omedia. We lived in Mien Kuh and the golf club was in Omedia, so we were constantly driving down the mountain to Omedia to play golf. One day, I climbed up to the top of the mountain by the golf club. At the very top of the mountain, I found a fossilized sea shell that was about five inches in diameter. I kept that fossil for many years, and it got lost in one of my parent's moves while I was at boarding school. To me, it was proof that the mountains were covered with water at some point in history.

The text says that all the high mountains were covered and that the water rose fifteen cubits more, which is another twenty-two feet. In a few chapters from now we will come across a man named Peleg. In his day the earth was divided or split up. I believe that all the earth was one continent at this point. I believe there were mountains and high mountains. But, I believe that when the continental platelets or shelves moved, more mountains were formed, and mountains became even higher. The geologists say that it took hundreds of millions of years for the continents to move into their current locations. They use the current rate of movement to calculate the age of the earth. The truth is that it happened in one lifetime, in the days of Peleg, which is after the flood. All the animals and families had the opportunity to spread out before the continents split apart. That is why there are animals and people groups in every continent.

#### **b. God blotted out every living thing.**

In verse twenty-one, we read that "all flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died." God's plan and purpose for the flood had been fulfilled. He said that He was going to blot out every living things, and in verse twenty-three "He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land. Only Noah and those that were with him on the ark survived.

#### **c. The water prevailed for 150 days.**

Finally, we read in verse twenty-four that "the water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days." It takes time for water to drain. As a professional golfer I studied golf course design. When you design a golf course, one of the key design elements is drainage. Every square inch of the golf course has to be included in the drainage plan. There are basically two types of drainage. The primary drainage is what we call surface drainage. Everything has a general slope and drains to lower areas. In those lower areas, called collection areas, a drain is put in and the water will go into underground drainage pipes to lakes and/or ponds. As a professional golfer, we were always looking for the collection areas and drains, particularly around the greens so that we would know what the overall slope was. What looked like a straight putt generally would break toward the drainage area. The second kind of drainage is called subsurface drainage. There were drainage tiles under the green and as the water percolated through the green, it would reach the drainage tiles and flow away from the green. Jack Nicklaus loved to use subsurface drainage tiles and it made reading his greens more difficult. The subsurface drainage is a secondary system and is not as effective as the surface drainage.

The water prevailed on the earth because it needed to drain. It drained off of the higher ground to the lower collection areas. At the same time, it percolated into the ground in the same way that a subsurface drainage tile works. We have large underground water reservoirs and my belief is that these underground reservoirs got filled from the flood waters. In any case the waters prevailed on the earth for one hundred and fifty days. Next week we will read more about the waters receding from the earth.

## **Conclusion**

### **God's Plan of Salvation**

In Hebrews 9:27, we read that it is appointed for all men to die and after this comes judgment. There will be those who are saved from the second death, and there will be those who are not saved. God has given us His plan for salvation and how to escape the coming judgment and destruction. In Acts 2:23, Peter said that Jesus was "delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God." All of us have sinned and are deserving of death. But, like Noah, God wants to give us mercy and grace, and we are saved by His grace. Jesus came and lived a perfect and holy life and died in our place according to this predetermined plan, so that we could have life.

### **Our obedience to the plan (available to all)**

In 2 Peter 2:5, we find that Noah was a preacher of righteousness. Even though he preached righteousness, only seven others went into the ark and were saved from the destruction. God wants to preserve and save your life. In 2 Peter 3:9 we read that God is not slow about Christ's return. Instead, He is patiently waiting, not wanting any to perish, but for all to come to repentance. God is wanting everyone to repent and get into the ark that He has provided. Just as Noah and the animals were obedient to God's plan, we must be obedient and enter into a relationship with Christ. Jesus is our only way. In John 14:6, Jesus said that He was the way, the life, and the truth and that nobody goes to the Father except through Him.

How do we enter into a relationship with Christ. Paul wrote in Romans 10:9-10 that we must confess with our mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead. If we believe and confess we will be saved. Romans 10:13 says that "whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved." That is God's plan and we must be obedient to that plan if we want to enter the kingdom of God.

### **Fulfilment of Plan**

In John 5:24 we read that those who hear God's word and believe have eternal life and do not come into judgement, but have passed out of death into life. In 1 John 5:12 we read that "he who has the Son has the life, he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life." God gave us that scripture so that we could know that we have eternal life. God does not want you wondering whether you will be saved. He wants you to know that you are saved. The question this morning is, "do you have Jesus in your life?" Do you believe that Jesus came and died for our sins and rose from the dead? Are you willing to confess Jesus as Lord this morning? That is the question that God is asking this morning. The destruction and judgment is coming, just as in the days of Noah. God has a plan to save so that none should perish. Will you respond obediently to His plan this morning. Let's pray.