

### Introduction to Chapter 6 *This has a trigger warning*

Adam chose to pursue wisdom on his own without depending upon the Lord (Gen 3:1–7).<sup>1615</sup> As a result, human mastery over creation was subjected to frustration,<sup>1616</sup> replaced by alienation from our environment (Gen 1:26–28; Gen 3:17–19; Rom 8:19–22).<sup>1617</sup> Cursed land becomes dry and unproductive.<sup>1618</sup> Thus, the ground yielded produce only through hard labor,<sup>1619</sup> resulting in anguishing brokenness for humanity.<sup>1620</sup> Lamech named his son Noah, which rhymes with the Hebrew word which means “comfort” or “relief” (*naham*).<sup>1621</sup> He said, “This one shall relieve us from our work and from the painful toil of our hands [arising] from the ground which the Lord has put under a curse” (Gen 5:28–29).

In Gen 3, Moses recounted the fall of humanity; in Gen 4, he depicted the fall of the family; and in Gen 6, he demonstrated the fall of society through institutionalized oppression.<sup>1622</sup>

Throughout the Ancient Near East, people believed that their king enjoyed a father-son relationship with a god because that god had generated him.<sup>1623</sup> Moses reported, “And the sons of the gods saw the daughters of men, that they [were] beautiful. And they took to themselves wives, whomever they chose” (Gen 6:1–2).

In the “right of the first night,” a king or other official could demand that he spend a woman’s bridal night with her before she went to her husband.<sup>1624</sup> Violence could easily erupt from this tyrannical practice.<sup>1625</sup> Due to the behavior of these kings, the Lord limited human life-spans to 120 years (Gen 6:3).<sup>1626</sup> This gave individuals less time to accrue power and to foist their corrupt practices upon others.<sup>1627</sup> God would not permit tyrants to oppress and terrorize others forever.<sup>1628</sup>

Moses wrote, “The Nephilim were in the land in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of the gods went into the daughters of men. And they bore to them those mighty ones from of old, men of renown” (Gen 6:4). “Nephilim” describes particular traits of people, rather than referring to their ethnicity.<sup>1629</sup> They were men of great physical prowess and military might.<sup>1630</sup> Due to the actions of the sons of the gods, women “bore to them those mighty ones from of old.”

As a result of sexual assaults and the resulting violence, human sin reached the point where God intervened.<sup>1631</sup> The deep love of the Lord spurred him to take drastic action.<sup>1632</sup>

<sup>1615</sup>John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 143–4.

<sup>1616</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 94.

<sup>1617</sup>Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall: A Theological Exposition of Genesis 1–3* (ed. Martin Rüter, Ilse Tödt, and John W. De Gruchy; trans. Douglas Stephen Bax; DBW; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2004), 133–4.

<sup>1618</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 82.

<sup>1619</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 229.

<sup>1620</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 202–3.

<sup>1621</sup>Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *BDB*, 636–7, 637.

<sup>1622</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 298.

<sup>1623</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Gen 6:2.

<sup>1624</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 293.

<sup>1625</sup>Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 185.

<sup>1626</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 142.

<sup>1627</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 298.

<sup>1628</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 118.

<sup>1629</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Gen 6:4.

<sup>1630</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 116–7.

<sup>1631</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 308.

<sup>1632</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 147.

He would bring justice (Gen 6:5–7).<sup>1633</sup> Many of Seth’s descendants in Gen 5 deserted his godly way of living until the people of God were nearly extinct.<sup>1634</sup>

Moses noted, “But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord” (Gen 6:8). As Lamech had hoped, his son represented relief for the plight of humanity, beginning a new era in history. In a world terrorized by evil people, Noah stands as a model of righteousness. Although he could not stop the progression of human depravity, he stood firm.<sup>1635</sup> We too must walk in the power of the Holy Spirit within our culture, whatever the cost.<sup>1636</sup>

### Righteous and Blameless

**1) Gen 6:9–10:** These verses portray Noah as both the first man in a new genealogy and as someone unique in his generation.<sup>1637</sup> By writing, “This is the book of the generations of Noah,” Moses communicated that he was beginning a new section of Genesis (Cf. Gen 2:4; Gen 5:1; Gen 10:1).<sup>1638</sup> After racing through millennia between the creation of Adam and these verses, Moses abruptly slowed the narrative to nearly a standstill. He devoted almost three chapters to Noah’s six hundredth year.<sup>1639</sup>

The conclusion of the typical formula to depict a person’s life, such as in Gen 5:6–8, shall not appear until Gen 9:29.<sup>1640</sup> Overall, the flood narrative occupies as much text as the period of time from Adam to Noah and during the era from Noah to Abraham.<sup>1641</sup> The intervening material consists of a masterful account of repeating patterns.<sup>1642</sup> For example, the entire flood story forms a chiasm, a mirror image highlighting that “God remembered Noah”:<sup>1643</sup>

- A Transitional introduction (6:9a)
- B Noah and his world just prior to the flood (6:9b–12)
- C Provision for the flood with a divine monologue establishing God’s covenant to sustain Noah, preceded by observations on Noah and human behavior (6:13–22)
- D Embarkation (7:1–5)
  - E Beginning of the flood with Noah and animals as main actors (7:6–16)
  - F The rising flood: (7:17–24)
  - X God remembered Noah (8:1a)**
  - Ĥ The receding flood (8:1b–5)
  - É Ending of the flood with Noah and birds as main actors (8:6–14)
  - Ď Disembarkation (8:15–19)
- Ĉ Provision for the post-flood world with a divine monologue to sustain the earth, with observations on human behavior (8:20–22)
- Ĕ Noah and world conditions following the flood (9:1–17)
- Á Transitional introduction (9:18–19)<sup>1644</sup>

<sup>1633</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 310–1.

<sup>1634</sup>Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 210.

<sup>1635</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* 119–20.

<sup>1636</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 147.

<sup>1637</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 277.

<sup>1638</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 155.

<sup>1639</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 121.

<sup>1640</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 156.

<sup>1641</sup>Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 212.

<sup>1642</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 125. We will examine several of these when we reach those sections of the text.

<sup>1643</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 156.

<sup>1644</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 125.

This structure reveals that the Lord’s intervention saved Noah, not a boat.<sup>1645</sup> Furthermore, the main purpose of the flood narrative concerns why God preserved Noah, not why he sent the deluge.<sup>1646</sup>

Moses wrote, “Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.” In Hebrew, this section begins and ends with Noah’s name, putting him in the spotlight.<sup>1647</sup> The contrast with his contemporaries anticipates the coming judgment.<sup>1648</sup>

Surprisingly, the words translated as “righteous” (*tsadiq*) and “blameless” (*tamim*) do not appear in the Bible prior to this.<sup>1649</sup> Yet “righteous” frequently occurs in the Old Testament (OT), occurring 206 times.<sup>1650</sup> Typically, a righteous person keeps the moral law and avoids sin, living according to God’s standards (Ezek 18:5–9).<sup>1651</sup> Such people intentionally live for the benefit of creation, their neighbors, and to please the Lord. They are willing to place themselves at a disadvantage to aid others (Prov 12:10; Lev 19:9–18).<sup>1652</sup> Indeed, the Lord used the righteousness of Noah to save the world.<sup>1653</sup>

Not only was Noah righteous, “he was blameless (*tamim*) in his generation.” Usually, this trait describes sacrificial animals free from any defect (Exod 12:5; Lev 3:1).<sup>1654</sup> By coming after the pronouncement of Noah’s uprightness, this phrase carries the similar meaning of “sound, wholesome, unimpaired, innocent, having integrity” (Job 12:4; Prov 11:5; Prov 13:6).<sup>1655</sup> Thus, the term connotes Noah’s wholehearted commitment to his relationship with God.<sup>1656</sup> Only those who abstain from sin and live in a manner pleasing to the Lord can dwell in his presence (Ps 15; Ps 119:1–3; Acts 3:17–21; Rev 6:15–17).<sup>1657</sup>

Nevertheless, this does not mean that Noah never committed sin.<sup>1658</sup> After all, even David could make this claim after committing adultery and murder (Ps 51; 2 Sam 11:2–4, 14–15; Ps 101:1–4).<sup>1659</sup> Instead, Noah was blameless in comparison to the people living around him (Gen 7:1; Ps 14:1–3; Rom 3:9–12).<sup>1660</sup> God expected blamelessness from every Israelite (Deut 18:13), although only a few achieved this goal (Job 2:3).<sup>1661</sup> Among all the people in the Old Testament, only Job comes close to Noah’s stature (Job 1:1).<sup>1662</sup>

Due to his behavior, those living close to Noah had no excuse to criticize his ways. As a “seed of the woman” living among the “seed of the serpent,” Noah provides a model for believers living in a hostile world (Gen 3:15).<sup>1663</sup>

The quality of Abraham’s righteousness provides further clarity to Noah’s situation (Gen 15:6). God crediting him as righteous points to a pattern in which the Lord bestows his favor and then chooses to see a person as upright in character and conduct as result of that

<sup>1645</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 157.

<sup>1646</sup>Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary*, 124.

<sup>1647</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 277.

<sup>1648</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 169.

<sup>1649</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 133.

<sup>1650</sup>Result of Logos 7 word study on צַדִּיק (*tsadiq*).

<sup>1651</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 169–70.

<sup>1652</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 133.

<sup>1653</sup>B. Johnson, “צַדִּיק” (*tsadiq*), *TDOT* 12: 239–64, 258.

<sup>1654</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 277.

<sup>1655</sup>Brown, Driver, and Briggs, “צַדִּיק” (*tsadiq*), *BDB*, 843,

<https://archive.org/stream/hebrewenglishlex00browuoft#page/842/mode/2up>.

<sup>1656</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 133.

<sup>1657</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 170.

<sup>1658</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 277.

<sup>1659</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 133.

<sup>1660</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 311.

<sup>1661</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 170.

<sup>1662</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 311.

<sup>1663</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 133.

person's trust in him (Cf. Gen 6:8–9 with Gen 12:1–3). Such faith results in a change of heart which subsequently leads to righteous action.<sup>1664</sup>

Both Noah and Abraham serve as exemplars of a trusting relationship with the Lord which resulted in salvation despite their occasional failures (Gen 9:20–21 and Gen 16:1–4). Just as Israel did not particularly deserve exaltation to the position of God's chosen people (Deut 7:6–8), so the Lord chose Noah from among all the people on earth.<sup>1665</sup>

As a righteous and blameless man, Noah would not suffer the destruction about to come upon the rest of the people.<sup>1666</sup> Yet, God did not save him for his sake alone, but for the preservation of humanity and even animals in a new era.<sup>1667</sup>

Moses continued the description of this great man, writing, "With God Noah walked." Apart from Enoch (Gen 5:22–24), Scripture depicts no one else this way.<sup>1668</sup> As with Enoch, the Hebrew form of the verb indicates that Noah and the Lord walked in fellowship with each other.<sup>1669</sup> While God saved Enoch from mortality, he prevented Noah from drowning.<sup>1670</sup> Intimate communion with the Lord brings deliverance from death.<sup>1671</sup>

Thus, Genesis attests that walking with God in a relationship based upon trusting him results in a state of salvation and a concomitant change of heart to reflect the character of God (Hab 2:4). Our obedience to the Lord flows from the righteousness which God grants to us as people of faith. While upright character and conduct proceed from justification, those whom the Lord deems righteous do not perfectly practice them. Nevertheless, the pattern of behavior which the virtuous exhibit stands in stark contrast to that of the wicked whom God will destroy. In a world terrorized by evil people, we must remain committed to Christ even at great risk.<sup>1672</sup>

As in Gen 5, at the end of ten named generations of only one ancestor each, three sons stand at a turning point of history. This section of the genealogical record concludes with, "And Noah fathered three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth." By repeating Gen 5:32, Moses named the male passengers on the ark.<sup>1673</sup>

Commentators disagree concerning the spiritual condition of Noah's sons. Moses recorded no overt statement about their righteousness.<sup>1674</sup> Some conclude their father resembled that of their father, for Moses mentioned them before he detailed the corruption of the human population in Gen 6:11–12 (Cf. Ezek 14: 19–20).<sup>1675</sup> Others note they may have come under God's protection as a reward for Noah's righteousness (Gen 19:12–15; Josh 2:1–6, 12–14).<sup>1676</sup>

**Read Gen 6:9–10.** How do we know that the flood story has been inserted into Noah's genealogical record? Describe the relationship between righteousness and blamelessness. What results from walking with God?

<sup>1664</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 330

<sup>1665</sup>Warren Malcolm Clark, "The Righteousness of Noah," *VT* 21, no. 3 (7 January 1971): 261–80, 277.

<sup>1666</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 311.

<sup>1667</sup>Clark, "The Righteousness of Noah," 277.

<sup>1668</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 170.

<sup>1669</sup>Pratico and van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar, 2nd Ed.*, 385.

<sup>1670</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 133.

<sup>1671</sup>Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments*, 58.

<sup>1672</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 120.

<sup>1673</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 170.

<sup>1674</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 311.

<sup>1675</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 170.

<sup>1676</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 311.

## New Creatures in Christ

2) **2 Cor 5:17**: The paragraph in which this verse appears touches upon many different topics within one central theme: Christ has inaugurated a new age in world history.<sup>1677</sup>

Scholars note that 2 Cor 5–7 forms a thematic parallel to Isa 40–66, with reconciliation in Christ fulfilling the promised restoration from exile. Although Paul wrote about reliving the sufferings of Jesus during his ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 11:23–33), the theme of salvation runs concurrently through 2 Cor 5:15–21.<sup>1678</sup>

This verse occurs in the context of Paul’s announcement that, “[Christ] died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for him who died and rose again on their behalf” (2 Cor 5:15). Then the apostle pronounced the effect of our redemption: “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.”<sup>1679</sup>

God has changed our status, making all his people—both men and women—adopted sons of God (Rom 3:21–26; Eph 1:3–8; Gal 3:23–29).<sup>1680</sup> Paul included himself as a prime example of this transformation. Until he encountered the risen Lord, he persecuted those who worshiped Jesus as God (Acts 9:1–6; 1 Tim 1:12–16).<sup>1681</sup> According to Paul, a new relationship with God through faith in Christ makes a person into a restored creation (Cf. Rom 5:12–21). A mere change in moral conduct does not.<sup>1682</sup>

Paul further explained, “The old [things] passed away; behold, it has become new.” Jesus’s death and resurrection divide history into two eras (2 Cor 3:5–6).<sup>1683</sup> As believers, we already participate in the new covenant, the era of the kingdom of God (Luke 17:20–21; Rev 1:9). Due to the incursion of the new creation into this evil age,<sup>1684</sup> the reign of sin and death has been broken. Yet, we still feel the effects of their power unless we live in close communion with the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:16–26).<sup>1685</sup>

Ultimately, the new creation foreseen by Isaiah shall come at the end of this age when Christ returns to earth (Isa 65:17–25; Isa 66:22; Rom 8:16–23). However, the true Israel—the church—has already been ushered into the presence of God (Rom 9:6–8; Eph 2:4–7).<sup>1686</sup> This truth shall remain hidden to many until the resurrection of all humanity (2 Cor 4:14–5:10). Therefore, Paul made this impassioned plea, “Be reconciled to God” (2 Cor 5:20).<sup>1687</sup>

Beginning at the moment of our union with Jesus by faith, believers grow more and more into Christ’s likeness with the aid of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 3:12–18; Rom 8:9–19).<sup>1688</sup> Our obedience and separation from evil testify to the work of God within us (2 Cor 6:14–7:1). This moral transformation verifies our addition into the new creation (Eph 2:1–10).<sup>1689</sup>

**a) Read 2 Cor 5:17.** What does it mean to be “a new creation in Christ”? How has Jesus’s death and resurrection affected world history?

<sup>1677</sup>Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians, 2nd Ed.* (WBC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 318.

<sup>1678</sup>J. V. Fesko, “N. T. Wright on Imputation,” *RTR* 66, no. 1:2–22, 10.

<sup>1679</sup>Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 312.

<sup>1680</sup>Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 159.

<sup>1681</sup>Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 298.

<sup>1682</sup>Werner Foerster, “κτίσις” (*ktisis*), *TDNT*, 3:1000–35, 1034.

<sup>1683</sup>Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 298.

<sup>1684</sup>Scott J. Hafemann, *2 Corinthians* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 243.

<sup>1685</sup>Martin, *2 Corinthians, 2nd Ed.*, 312.

<sup>1686</sup>Peter Balla, “2 Corinthians,” *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 766.

<sup>1687</sup>Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 298–9.

<sup>1688</sup>Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 298–9.

<sup>1689</sup>Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 244.

## Receiving Christ's Righteousness

**b) 2 Cor 5:21:** The Lord has transformed his people into new creations because, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not reckoning to them their sins” (2 Cor 5:19).<sup>1690</sup> Consequently, this verse serves as both the climax and the theological foundation for this section of the letter.<sup>1691</sup> It explains why God no longer counts the guilt of those in Christ against us.<sup>1692</sup>

Paul wrote, “The one who did not know sin on behalf of us sin he made, that we should become the righteousness of God in him.” Scholars consider this sentence one of the most significant in all of Paul’s letters.<sup>1693</sup> However, they disagree whether the verse derives from a previously existing confessional creed,<sup>1694</sup> or whether it represents the apostle’s adaptation of tradition.<sup>1695</sup> That the verse nearly forms a chiasm suggests the latter. Elsewhere Paul modified a hymn or poem by adding interpretative comments or corrections to break the symmetry (Cf. Rom 3:24–26; Phil 2:6–11; Col 1:15–20).<sup>1696</sup>

In these few words, Paul articulated the power of the gospel:<sup>1697</sup>

The one who did not know sin	(a)
on behalf of us	(b)
sin	(c)
he (God) made	(d)
that we	(a')
should become	(d')
the righteousness of God	(c')
in him	(b') <sup>1698</sup>

In “the one who did not know” (*ginōskō*), “to know” adheres to the Old Testament (OT) sense of “one who had acquaintance with something” (Lev 4:22–23; Lev 5:3–5; Rom 7:7; Rev 2:24).<sup>1699</sup> Therefore, this verse attests to Christ’s sinless life (Heb 4:15; 1 John 3:4–5).<sup>1700</sup> Amazingly, cosmic reconciliation resulted from the death of this one who knew no sin, for he was made sin by God (John 1:29; Rev 5).<sup>1701</sup>

The OT sacrificial system as a means of atonement prefigured Jesus’s death (Lev 4:13–14, 19–21; Lev 5:5–7, 10).<sup>1702</sup> However, within the OT, Isa 53:4–12 best describes the redemption of corrupt people by the charging of transgressions to a blameless substitute.<sup>1703</sup> By his death, God made Christ a sin offering for us (Mark 10:45; 1 Cor 11:23–26; Eph 1:7; Col 1:19–20).<sup>1704</sup>

Consider this analogy. When an enormous boulder falls upon the soft sands of the seabed, the resounding thud reverberates in all directions, making ripples in the sand. When

<sup>1690</sup>Fesko, “N. T. Wright on Imputation,” 10.

<sup>1691</sup>Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 312.

<sup>1692</sup>Martin, *2 Corinthians, 2nd Ed.*, 142.

<sup>1693</sup>Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 312.

<sup>1694</sup>Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 138–9.

<sup>1695</sup>Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 312.

<sup>1696</sup>Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 138.

<sup>1697</sup>Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 312.

<sup>1698</sup>Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 138.

<sup>1699</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, “γινώσκω” (*ginōskō*), *TDNT* 1:689–719, 698–9, 703.

<sup>1700</sup>Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 313–4.

<sup>1701</sup>Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 304.

<sup>1702</sup>Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 248.

<sup>1703</sup>Fesko, “N. T. Wright on Imputation,” 12.

<sup>1704</sup>Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 248.

Jesus rose from the dead, that momentous event affected everything in the cosmos. Both the past and the future, including the era in which we live, have been forever changed (John 8:56–58).<sup>1705</sup>

As a result of Jesus’s sacrifice for those of us who place our faith in him, we became “the righteousness of God in him” (Heb 7:26–27; 1 Pet 2:21–25).<sup>1706</sup> The apostle announced the reality of this exchange without detailing how it happened.<sup>1707</sup> Since Christ became a curse for us, we receive his virtue (Gal 3:13–14).<sup>1708</sup> Just as Adam’s disobedience was imputed to us so that God deemed us sinners (Gen 3:17–19), so has Christ’s obedience resulted in us being considered righteous. While all people since Adam have sinned on their own, Paul likely referred to the Jewish concept of corporate solidarity, in which the acts of our representative head count as ours (Lev 4:3; Rom 5:12–21; Gal 3:27–29).<sup>1709</sup>

Therefore, when the Father sees us in Christ, he views us with Jesus’s perfection (Col 2:13–14).<sup>1710</sup> As a result, he shall declare us righteous at the final judgment (John 5:24; 1 John 4:15–19; Heb 10:11–22). The reality of living in Christ yields a firm conviction that God shall confirm our acceptance when we stand before him as our judge (Phil 3:17–21; 2 Tim 1:8–14).<sup>1711</sup> To become a new creation in Christ requires being declared legally righteous in God’s sight and starting to live according to God’s standards (2 Cor 5:17).<sup>1712</sup>

First Corinthians 1:30 closely parallels 2 Cor 5:21.<sup>1713</sup> In that verse Paul emphatically proclaims God’s grace: “By his doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

Since our standing with God derives solely “from him,” we can boast only in the Lord (1 Cor 1:31). We possess righteousness, holiness, and redemption exclusively through our union with Jesus. Therefore, we stand legally acquitted, set apart for God’s service, and redeemed from slavery to sin (Rom 6:5–7, 15–23).<sup>1714</sup> Consequently, our obedience to God flows from the positional righteousness we enjoy as people of faith (Ps 32:1–2; Hab 2:4). The Lord grants us the presence of the Holy Spirit, who empowers us to live new lives characterized by holiness (1 Cor 2:12–16; Gal 5:16–26).<sup>1715</sup>

In fact, to claim that God declares us righteous without living accordingly denotes the fraudulence of our professions of faith (Rom 8:1–14).<sup>1716</sup> Over time, a genuine continuity develops between God’s righteousness and ours.<sup>1717</sup> We are found in Christ, not having a righteousness of our own but that which comes from God through faith (Rom 4:22–25; Phil 3:9).<sup>1718</sup> The empowering of the Holy Spirit enables us to live as “a new creation” in

<sup>1705</sup>Edward T. Oakes S.J., “The Apologetics of Beauty,” in *The Beauty of God: Theology and the Arts* (ed. Daniel J. Treier, Mark Husbands, and Roger Lundin; Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 220.

<sup>1706</sup>Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 314.

<sup>1707</sup>Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 144–5.

<sup>1708</sup>Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 251.

<sup>1709</sup>Douglas Moo J., *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 327–8.

<sup>1710</sup>Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 248.

<sup>1711</sup>Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 141.

<sup>1712</sup>Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 251.

<sup>1713</sup>Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 140.

<sup>1714</sup>Ciampa and Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 108–9.

<sup>1715</sup>Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ*, 194.

<sup>1716</sup>Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ*, 209.

<sup>1717</sup>Thomas J. Stegman, S. J., “Paul’s Use of Dikaio-Terminology: Moving Beyond N.T. Wright’s Forensic Interpretation,” *TS* 72, no. 3 (1 September 2011): 496–524, 503, <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Paul%27s+use+of+dikaio-+terminology%3A+moving+beyond+N.+T.+Wright%27s...-a0265290416>.

<sup>1718</sup>Don Garlington, “Imputation or Union with Christ? A Response to John Piper,” *Reformation and Revival Journal* 12, no. 4 (1 December 2003): 45–113, 78, [http://www.thepaulpage.com/files/Piper\\_Rejoinder.pdf](http://www.thepaulpage.com/files/Piper_Rejoinder.pdf).

accordance with the age to come, yet in this present age.<sup>1719</sup> Now able to face God’s glory without perishing, the Lord transforms us into the image of Jesus (2 Cor 3:7–18).<sup>1720</sup> No longer can we partner with lawlessness. Being righteous requires living righteously (2 Cor 6:14–7:1).<sup>1721</sup>

In 2 Cor 8:9, Paul demonstrated this integration of being and doing while appealing to the generosity of the Corinthians. He accomplished this with another statement of Jesus’s sacrifice to spur them to action on behalf of others.<sup>1722</sup>

Not only does Christ deliver us from sin, he incorporates us into a new world-wide covenant community (Eph 1:18–23; Eph 3:8–11).<sup>1723</sup> By stating, “As the father has sent me, so I am sending you” (John 20:21), Jesus commissioned us to demonstrate who he is to the world: God’s righteousness, wisdom, sanctification, and redemption.<sup>1724</sup>

**Read 2 Cor 5:21.** How could Christ be made sin for us? What are the results of that? How does this truth affect our understanding of Noah’s righteousness and blamelessness (Gen 6:8–9)?

### Violence Filled the Earth *This post has a trigger warning*

**3) Gen 6:11–12:** In Gen 6:9–10, Moses portrayed Noah with the purity of freshly fallen snow.<sup>1725</sup> However, the remainder of humanity resembled filthy sleet (Gen 6:1–7).<sup>1726</sup> Indeed, these two verses form a succinct summary of the collective state of humanity ever since the fall (Gen 3:1–6:4). In Gen 6:11–13, “the earth” (*haerets*) occurs six times and the verb “ruin” (*shakhath*) appears in five places.<sup>1727</sup>

Victor Hamilton captures the idea by translating these verses as, “*Gone to ruin* was the earth...indeed, it had *gone to ruin*...all flesh had *ruined* its way...I will *ruin* them.”<sup>1728</sup> Moses began this section by writing, “And the earth was ruined in the sight of God, and the earth was filled [with] violence.”

The first two instances of “the earth was ruined” describe the condition brought about by sinful humans, making the planet unusable (Jer 13:1–11).<sup>1729</sup> Just as a potter remakes a spoiled pot into something beautiful, so the Lord would destroy and remake the earth (Jer 18:1–4).<sup>1730</sup> The parallelism which Moses employed in this verse indicates that humanity’s

<sup>1719</sup>Gordon D. Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 52.

<sup>1720</sup>Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 250.

<sup>1721</sup>Morna D. Hooker, “On Becoming the Righteousness of God: Another Look at 2 Cor 5:21,” *NovT* 50, no. 4 (1 December 2008): 358–85, 373, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/25442615?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/25442615?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents).

<sup>1722</sup>Hooker, “On Becoming the Righteousness of God: Another Look at 2 Cor 5:21,” 374, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/25442615?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/25442615?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents).

<sup>1723</sup>Richard B. Hays, “Justification,” *ABD* 3:1129–33, 1132.

<sup>1724</sup>Hooker, “On Becoming the Righteousness of God: Another Look at 2 Cor 5:21,” 375, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/25442615?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/25442615?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents).

<sup>1725</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 133.

<sup>1726</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 170.

<sup>1727</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 170–1.

<sup>1728</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 278.

<sup>1729</sup>J. Conrad, “חָשַׁח” (*shakhath*), *TDOT* 14:583–95, 592.

<sup>1730</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 278.

moral corruption took the form of violence.<sup>1731</sup> Thus, this type of sin offends God not only because it attacks him directly but also because it assaults his creation.<sup>1732</sup> Ironically, violence filled the earth rather than people and animals (Gen 1:21–22, 27–28).<sup>1733</sup>

The term “violence” (*khamas*) is broader than only physical assault (Isa 59:2–8; Prov 10:6; Prov 16:29). Yet, it can encompass bloodshed (Gen 34:25; Gen 49:5; Judg 9:4–5, 23–24). Overall, *khamas* denotes “a cold-blooded and unscrupulous infringement of the personal rights of others, motivated by greed and hate and often making use of physical violence and brutality.”<sup>1734</sup> As a result, any antisocial or exploitative acts can be considered violence.<sup>1735</sup> Based upon the context, this brutality consisted of sexual assault committed by powerful kings and officials followed by acts of revenge (Gen 6:1–4).

Moses wrote, “God saw the earth and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.” This verse deliberately forms a strong contrast with Gen 1:31, heightening the sense of tragedy.<sup>1736</sup> By shedding innocent blood, people defiled the earth (Gen 4:9–12; Deut 21:1–9; Isa 21:2).<sup>1737</sup> The pending divine judgment would complete the self-destruction which humanity initiated.<sup>1738</sup> That they were “flesh” (*basar*) emphasizes their fragile mortality.<sup>1739</sup> Based upon the extent of the destruction, the term appears to include both people and animals (Gen 6:17–19).<sup>1740</sup>

Violence begets violence. For example, a person who feels powerless at work may go home and release the resulting hostility in the presence of family members. A child bullied by that parent takes it out on a younger sibling. That tot delivers a swift kick to the family dog, who chases the cat. Those who feel helpless in their experience of abuse tend to hurt those around them. No one carries more potential for violence than a victim (Cf. Gen 4:23–24).<sup>1741</sup>

Adults who experienced neglect or abuse as children are three times as likely to report that they have abused their children. They are 50% more prone to committing intimate partner violence.<sup>1742</sup> Unjustly treated people may have short fuses and long memories.<sup>1743</sup>

**a) Read Gen 6:11–12.** Why was the earth ruined? Who was guilty? How can sexual assault and other forms of violence lead to more brutality?

### The End was Near

**b) Gen 6:13:** Reports of a massive deluge are almost universal in the ancient world, although few come from Africa.<sup>1744</sup> In fact, the closest parallels between other Ancient Near Eastern

<sup>1731</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 134.

<sup>1732</sup>Plantinga, *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*, 16.

<sup>1733</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 171.

<sup>1734</sup>H. Haag, “כַּחַמָּס” (*khamas*), *TDOT* 4: 482–6, 482.

<sup>1735</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 171.

<sup>1736</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 171.

<sup>1737</sup>Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land, 2nd Ed.*, 134.

<sup>1738</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 171.

<sup>1739</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 134.

<sup>1740</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 279.

<sup>1741</sup>Plantinga, *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*, 56–7.

<sup>1742</sup>Izabela Milaniak and Cathy Spatz Widom, “Does Child Abuse and Neglect Increase Risk for Perpetration of Violence Inside and Outside the Home?” *Psychology of Violence* 5, no. 3 (July 2015): 246–55, 250, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4504697/>.

<sup>1743</sup>Plantinga, *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*, 60.

<sup>1744</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 132.

(ANE) texts and Scripture concern the flood.<sup>1745</sup> Three which hail from Mesopotamia bear the most striking similarities to the Genesis account: the Eridu Genesis from Sumer (ca. 2300 BC), the Atrahasis Epic from Akkad (17th century BC), and the Epic of Gilgamesh from Old Babylonia (2150–1400 BC).<sup>1746</sup> Scholars believe their authors derived them from even earlier material.<sup>1747</sup>

Enough major differences occur between ANE versions of the flood and Gen 6–9 to lead some scholars to conclude that they did not issue from common documents.<sup>1748</sup> However, others hold that all four texts either refer to a shared tradition or that Genesis reflects a deliberate revision of the Mesopotamian accounts.<sup>1749</sup>

Those assuming the accuracy of the second view assert that the differences arise from Moses’s theological viewpoint.<sup>1750</sup> For example, the biblical account is simpler and shorter than the other ANE renderings due to the omission of numerous gods.<sup>1751</sup>

In the Genesis flood narrative, the Lord delivered four speeches. Surprisingly, the first time we hear from Noah occurs in Gen 9:25, where he pronounced, “Cursed be Canaan!” Overall, God spoke, and Noah acted.<sup>1752</sup> The Lord’s first speech began by summarizing Gen 6:11–12.<sup>1753</sup> Then God informed Noah of his plan to destroy all corruption yet preserve a righteous remnant. This included the creation which the Lord intended humanity to steward (Gen 1:26–28).<sup>1754</sup>

Moses recorded, “God said to Noah, ‘The end of all flesh has come before me, because the earth is filled with violence from them. And behold, I am about to cause them to be destroyed [with] the earth.’” At this point, God made an irrevocable decision.<sup>1755</sup> Humanity’s progressive degradation called for immediate action.<sup>1756</sup> A similar situation occurred in Canaan during Moses’s lifetime (Lev 18:24–25; Deut 20:16–18).

The word translated as “cause them to be destroyed” (*shakhath*) comes from the root suggesting ruin.<sup>1757</sup> When appearing in the Hiphil verb form, as it does here, it typically depicts the swift annihilation of people or cities through warfare or divine action (Gen 18:27–33; Gen 19:14).<sup>1758</sup> Since people ruined the earth by their sin, the Lord would complete its ruin.<sup>1759</sup> This is a textbook example of the punishment fitting the crime (*lex retaliationis*) (Exod 21:23–25; Ezek 7:1–4).<sup>1760</sup>

According to the Atrahasis Epic, people making too much noise caused the flood. It says: “Twelve hundred years had not yet passed [after the gods created humanity] when the land extended and the peoples multiplied. The land was bellowing like a bull, the god got

<sup>1745</sup>Alexander Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels, Second Ed.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), 224,

[https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/misc\\_gilgamesh.pdf](https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/misc_gilgamesh.pdf).

<sup>1746</sup>Waltke, and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 132. Note that the British Museum’s copy of the Gilgamesh flood tablet dates from the 7th Century BC.

<sup>1747</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 6:16.

<sup>1748</sup>Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 425.

<sup>1749</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 168.

<sup>1750</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 6:16.

<sup>1751</sup>Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 425.

<sup>1752</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 280.

<sup>1753</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 172.

<sup>1754</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 122.

<sup>1755</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 172.

<sup>1756</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 126.

<sup>1757</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 278.

<sup>1758</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 171.

<sup>1759</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 135.

<sup>1760</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 172.

disturbed with their uproar. Enlil heard their noise and addressed the great gods, ‘The noise of humankind has become too intense for me, with their uproar, I am deprived of sleep.’”<sup>1761</sup>

Some scholars hold that the commotion which bothered the deity consisted of people crying out for justice.<sup>1762</sup> Nevertheless, the god’s selfish impulsiveness strongly contrasts with the moral tone of God’s rationale for the flood (Cf. Gen 6:1–7).<sup>1763</sup>

In the Babylonian and Sumerian flood accounts, the gods intended to keep their plan of destruction a secret from all of humanity. However, one deity disagreed with their scheme and revealed it to the Noah figure in the story.<sup>1764</sup>

The Sumerian account of Enki’s intervention says:

“At that time, Ziusudra was king and [atoning] priest...As he stood there regularly day after day something that was not a dream was appearing: conversation a swearing of oaths by heaven and earth...And as Ziusudra stood there beside it, he went on hearing, ‘Step up to the wall to my left and listen! Let me speak a word to you at the wall and may you grasp what I say, may you heed my advice! By our hand a flood will sweep over the cities...and the country; the decision, that mankind is to be destroyed has been made. A verdict, a command of the assembly cannot be revoked, an order of [the gods] An and Enlil is not known ever to have been countermanded.’”<sup>1765</sup>

Similarly, in the Epic of Gilgamesh, the gods decided to hide their plan to wipe out humanity. However, one dissenting god thwarted their effort. The man equivalent to Noah, Utnapishtim, told this tale of the god’s crafty intervention:<sup>1766</sup>

“I will reveal to thee, Gilgamesh, a hidden matter and a secret of the gods will I tell thee...When their heart led the great gods to produce the flood. [There] were Anu, their father, valiant Enlil, their counselor, Ninurta, their assistant, Ennuge, their irrigator. Ninigiku-Ea was also present with them. Their words he repeats to the reed-hut, ‘Reed-hut, reed-hut! Wall, wall! Reed-hut, hearken! Wall, reflect! Man of Shuruppak...tear down (this) house, build a ship! Give up possessions, seek thou life. Forswear (worldly) goods and keep the soul alive! Aboard the ship take thou the seed of all living things.’”<sup>1767</sup>

**Read Gen 6:13.** Why did God intend to ruin all flesh? How does his rationale in Genesis differ from other ANE accounts? Where do you see parallels between them?

### Specifications for an Ark

**c) Gen 6:14–16:** In contrast to other Ancient Near Eastern ANE) accounts, Noah’s salvation was neither an accident nor a thwarting of God’s plan (Gen 6:8–13).<sup>1768</sup> As a result, the Lord

<sup>1761</sup>Lambert and Millard, “Epic of Atra-Khasis,” 26.

<sup>1762</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Gen 6:13.

<sup>1763</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 164.

<sup>1764</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 135.

<sup>1765</sup>Thorkild Jacobsen, trans., “The Eridu Genesis,” in *The Harps That Once...: Sumerian Poetry in Translation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), lines 81–100, <http://www.piney.com/EriduGen.html>.

<sup>1766</sup>Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 425.

<sup>1767</sup>Speiser, “The Epic of Gilgamesh,” in *ANET*, 11:9–27, 93,

[https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET\\_20160815/Pritchard\\_1950\\_ANET#page/n117/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n117/mode/2up),

[http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=309929&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=309929&partId=1).

<sup>1768</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 165.

specified how to build the ark rather than leaving the plan of escape to Noah's imagination.<sup>1769</sup>

Moses recorded brief instructions, giving us minimal details.<sup>1770</sup> However, they are specific enough to imply Noah's lack of familiarity with shipbuilding.<sup>1771</sup> God instructed Noah, "Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood." The Egyptian word for a box, which we translate as an "ark," (*tēbah*) occurs twenty-eight times in the flood narrative.<sup>1772</sup> The only other occurrence of the word appears in the description of the basket where Moses's mother hid him when she placed him in the Nile River (Exod 2:3–5).<sup>1773</sup> Consequently, two remarkable biblical heroes escaped drowning in an ark.<sup>1774</sup>

"Gopher" does not occur anywhere else in the Bible.<sup>1775</sup> Commentators assume that it produced resinous lumber suitable for making boats.<sup>1776</sup> Throughout the ANE, shipbuilders preferred cypress and cedar due to their strength and durability.<sup>1777</sup> Some scholars note that Moses's mother used reeds to make his basket, the same material for the ship built by Atrahasis.<sup>1778</sup>

The Lord continued his instructions, saying, "Nests (*qēn*) you shall make [in] the ark."<sup>1779</sup> In this case, "nests" appears to be a figurative term for individual chambers of protection against the coming deluge.<sup>1780</sup> The Epic of Gilgamesh employs the same idea for the boat, saying, "Her floor plan I divided into nine parts."<sup>1781</sup> An ark containing rooms and decks denotes the relative complexity of this boat compared to other ships of antiquity.<sup>1782</sup>

People constructed the earliest boats, which measured about ten feet long, from reeds or animal skins. They could safely sail along a river or through marshes. The art of Egypt's Old Kingdom (ca. 2500 BC) first depicted seaworthy vessels. These wooden vessels reached a length close to 170 feet.<sup>1783</sup> A hint concerning Noah's lack of nautical expertise comes here, when the Lord instructed him, "And you shall cover it inside and outside with pitch." The phrase "inside and outside" consists of a technical construction term (Exod 25:11; 1 Ki 7:9).<sup>1784</sup> ANE shipbuilders routinely coated a sea-worthy vessel with pitch,<sup>1785</sup> as it functioned like caulk.<sup>1786</sup>

God commanded, "And this is how you shall make it: three hundred cubits in length [for] the ark, fifty cubits [for] its width, and thirty cubits [for] its height." A cubit was the standard measurement in Moses's era. At eighteen inches, this ran the length from an average man's fingertips to his elbow.<sup>1787</sup> These dimensions equal 440' x 73' x 44'.<sup>1788</sup> Including the

<sup>1769</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 135.

<sup>1770</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 172.

<sup>1771</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 281.

<sup>1772</sup>H. J. Zobel, "תְּבַח" (*tebah*), *TDOT* 15:550–552, 550–1.

<sup>1773</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 172.

<sup>1774</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 280.

<sup>1775</sup>Result of Logos 7 word study on *gopher*.

<sup>1776</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 135.

<sup>1777</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Gen 6:14.

<sup>1778</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 281.

<sup>1779</sup>Brown, Driver, and Briggs, "qin" (*qin*), *BDB*, 890,

<https://archive.org/stream/hebrewenglishlex00browuoft#page/890/mode/2up>.

<sup>1780</sup>P. Mommer, "qin" (*qin*), *TDOT* 13:45–7, 46–7.

<sup>1781</sup>Speiser, "The Epic of Gilgamesh," in *ANET*, line 62, 93,

[https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET\\_20160815/Pritchard\\_1950\\_ANET#page/n117/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n117/mode/2up).

<sup>1782</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 312.

<sup>1783</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Gen 6:14–6.

<sup>1784</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173.

<sup>1785</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 312.

<sup>1786</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 281.

<sup>1787</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Gen 6:16.

<sup>1788</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 282.

end zones, the dimensions of an American football field measure 360' x 160'. The ark was eighty feet longer and approximately half as wide. Assuming that the ark featured a flat bottom, it displaced 43,000 tons of water.<sup>1789</sup> The ark's surface area measured three times greater than that of the tabernacle courtyard (Exod 27:9–13).<sup>1790</sup>

This ship had an enormous carrying capacity. Its proportions would have made it seaworthy,<sup>1791</sup> even when faced with a monstrous flood.<sup>1792</sup> A 17th century Dutchman constructed an ark to 2/5 scale which proved the fitness of Noah's ark for oceanic travel.<sup>1793</sup>

In contrast, the Epic of Gilgamesh records that the god Ea commanded, "The ship that thou shalt build, her dimensions shall be to measure. Equal shall be her width and her length...One (whole) acre was her floor space, ten dozen cubits the height of each of her walls, ten dozen cubits each edge of the square deck."<sup>1794</sup> Thus, Utnapishtim's boat formed a perfect cube of 180'.<sup>1795</sup> It displaced three or four times as much water as Noah's ark,<sup>1796</sup> with five times the carrying capacity.<sup>1797</sup> A recently discovered Babylonian version of the Atrahasis Epic (ca. 1750 BC) describes the boat as a round vessel constructed from palm fibers placed over wooden ribs. Bitumen covered it to provide waterproofing. About two-thirds the size of a football field with 20-foot-high walls, it would have bobbed upon the water like a cork.<sup>1798</sup>

Verse 16 begins with a word difficult to translate (*tsohar*), in large part because it appears in this form only here in the Old Testament.<sup>1799</sup> Most likely, the Lord said, "And make a vaulted roof, and complete it to a cubit from the top." Many translations use "roof" or "window." However, biblical authors used different words for a flat roof (*gag*) and for a window (*hallon*) (Josh 2:6; Gen 8:6). If Moses meant one of those, he likely would have chosen a less obscure term.<sup>1800</sup> This leaves us with two strong possibilities. Either Noah constructed the roof to leave an eighteen-inch gap where it met the wall, and/or he made the roof to overhang the wall by that amount. The latter option fits with Gen 8:13.<sup>1801</sup> Israelites built the roof of the tabernacle in a similar manner (Exod 26:13–14). In addition, God commanded Noah to "place a door in the side of it. You shall make lower, second, and third [decks]." A division into three parts also occurred in the tabernacle (Exod 40:17–21, 33).

The Epic of Gilgamesh refers to similar details but on a grander scale: "I laid out the contours (and) joined her together. I provided her with six decks, dividing her (thus) into seven parts. Her floor plan I divided into nine parts. I hammered water-plugs into her. I saw to the punting-poles and laid in supplies. Six 'sar' (measures) of bitumen I poured into the furnace, three sar of asphalt [I also] poured inside."<sup>1802</sup>

The Genesis account mentions no rudders or sails for Noah's boat, indicating he

<sup>1789</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 6:16.

<sup>1790</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173.

<sup>1791</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 135–6.

<sup>1792</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 282.

<sup>1793</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173.

<sup>1794</sup>Speiser, "The Epic of Gilgamesh," in *ANET*, 11:28–30, 57–8, 93,

[https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET\\_20160815/Pritchard\\_1950\\_ANET#page/n117/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n117/mode/2up).

<sup>1795</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 282.

<sup>1796</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 6:16.

<sup>1797</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173.

<sup>1798</sup>Irving Finkel, "Was the Ark Round? A Babylonian Description Discovered,"

<https://blog.britishmuseum.org/was-the-ark-round-a-babylonian-description-discovered/>.

<sup>1799</sup>H Niehr, "תְּסוֹחַרִּים" (*tsoharim*), *TDOT* 12:264–6.

<sup>1800</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 282–3.

<sup>1801</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173–4.

<sup>1802</sup>Speiser, "Epic of Gilgamesh," in *ANET*, 11:59–66, 93,

[https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET\\_20160815/Pritchard\\_1950\\_ANET#page/n117/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n117/mode/2up).

would not navigate it. God held Noah’s fate in his hands.<sup>1803</sup> Utnapishtim, however, employed a navigator.<sup>1804</sup> As most of the gods sought to completely wipe out humanity, he could not depend upon the gods to save him.<sup>1805</sup>

**Read Gen 6:14–16.** How is the biblical account of the ark’s specifications like those of other ANE versions? In what ways do they differ? How did Noah’s boat resemble Israel’s tabernacle? Why is the lack of sails or a rudder on the ark significant?

### A Deluge to Ruin All Flesh

**d) Gen 6:17:** Here we learn exactly why the Lord commanded Noah to build a gigantic boat in response to the Lord’s plan to destroy all flesh (Gen 6:6–7, 13–16).<sup>1806</sup> God said, “And I, behold, I am bringing the flood of water on the earth to ruin all flesh which [has the] breath of life from under the heavens. All which is on the earth shall perish.” By repeating the pronoun “I,” for emphasis,<sup>1807</sup> the Lord asserted that the deluge was neither an accident nor a force outside of his control.<sup>1808</sup>

Since a definite article (“the”) almost always occurs with the Hebrew word for “flood” in Gen 6–11, this likely points to the renown of that specific deluge. The only exceptions come when the Lord promised to never again send a flood to destroy all life (Gen 9:11, 15).<sup>1809</sup> “Flood” (*mabbul*) seems to derive from a form of the verb meaning “to rain hard.”<sup>1810</sup>

Akin to Egyptian and Babylonian ideas, Israelites viewed the sky as a solid dome (Job 37:18),<sup>1811</sup> possibly of glass (Ezek 1:22; Dan 12:3).<sup>1812</sup> In the Sumerian tale Enki and the Ordering of the World, the author described the sky as a “well-established roof [which] reaches like the rainbow to heaven.”<sup>1813</sup> Overall, people in the Ancient Near East (ANE) believed that the cosmos consisted of three tiers:<sup>1814</sup> the heavens; the earth; and the underworld.<sup>1815</sup>

<sup>1803</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 135.

<sup>1804</sup>Speiser, “The Epic of Gilgamesh,” in *ANET*, 11:94–5, 94,

[https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET\\_20160815/Pritchard\\_1950\\_ANET#page/n119/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n119/mode/2up).

<sup>1805</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 6:16.

<sup>1806</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 174.

<sup>1807</sup>Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 437,

<https://archive.org/stream/geseniushebrewgr00geseuoft#page/436/mode/2up>.

<sup>1808</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 174.

<sup>1809</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 283.

<sup>1810</sup>P. Stenmans, “מַבּוּל” (*mabbul*), *TDOT* 8:60–5, 61.

<sup>1811</sup>Paul H. Seely, “The Firmament and the Water Above, Part 1: The Meaning of ‘Raqia’ in Gen1:6–8,” *WTJ* 53, no. 2: 227–40, 235, [https://faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/ted\\_hildebrandt/otesources/01-genesis/text/articles-books/seely-firmament-wtj.pdf](https://faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/ted_hildebrandt/otesources/01-genesis/text/articles-books/seely-firmament-wtj.pdf).

<sup>1812</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 20.

<sup>1813</sup>W. Beyerlin, trans., “Enki and the Ordering of the World,” Pages 19–20 in *RANE* (ed. Bill T. Arnold and Bryan E. Beyer; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 20.

<sup>1814</sup>Annalee Newitz, “A Scientific Diagram of the Hebrew Cosmology,” <http://io9.com/5586362/a-scientific-diagram-of-the-ancient-hebrew-cosmos>.

<sup>1815</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 1:8.

Between the heavens and the earth stood “the vault (*raqia*) of heaven” (Isa 40:22),<sup>1816</sup> which some translations call the “firmament.”<sup>1817</sup> Ancient people thought this layer of the sky separated one type of water from another,<sup>1818</sup> isolating the vapor which formed rain from the waters upon the earth (Gen 1:6–8).<sup>1819</sup> Furthermore, this intermediate expanse regulated humidity and sunlight.<sup>1820</sup>

Enuma Elish contains an interesting account of the creation of this layer. In this Babylonian text, the god Marduk formed the vault from the corpse of a rebellious water goddess Even so, he needed restraints to prevent Tiamat from unleashing her waters.<sup>1821</sup> Using a word related to the Hebrew verb “to separate,” (*badadh*) it says, “Then the lord [Marduk] paused to view [Tiamat’s] dead body, that he might divide the monster and do artful works. He *split* her like a shellfish into two parts. Half of her he set up and ceiled it as sky, pulled down the bar and posted guards. He bade them to allow not her waters to escape.”<sup>1822</sup> People believed that rain consisted of water leaking from the upper half of Tiamat’s body,<sup>1823</sup> which the vault normally kept in place.<sup>1824</sup>

Consequently, the flood equated to a heavenly ocean which poured upon the earth.<sup>1825</sup> The release of that celestial sea caused the deluge.<sup>1826</sup> Aside from twelve occurrences in Gen 6–11, elsewhere in the bible the word “*mabbul*” (flood) occurs only in Ps 29:10,<sup>1827</sup> where it sits at Yahweh’s feet.<sup>1828</sup> Akkadian texts call the god Nergal, “king of the battle, lord of strength and might, lord of the Deluge (*abūbu*) (weapon).” They denote the god Ninurta as the “exalted lord who rides upon the Deluge.” Thus, inhabitants of the ANE personified floods as destructive cosmic events.<sup>1829</sup> Yet, even the gods did not always remain in control of such power.

According to the Epic of Gilgamesh, after unleashing their weapon, “The gods were frightened by the deluge, and, shrinking back, they ascended to the heaven of Anu. The gods cowered like dogs crouched against the outer wall. Ishtar cried out like a woman in travail, the sweet-voiced mistress of the [gods] moans aloud.”<sup>1830</sup>

In the Hebrew account, God announced that the breath (*ruach*) of life which he had given, he would take away (Gen 2:7; Ps 104:24–30).<sup>1831</sup> By saying, “all which was on earth

<sup>1816</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 122.

<sup>1817</sup>Brown, Driver, and Briggs, “רָקִיעַ” (*raqia*), *BDB*, 956,

<https://archive.org/stream/hebrewenglishlex00browuoft#page/956/mode/2up>.

<sup>1818</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 122.

<sup>1819</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 62.

<sup>1820</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 1:8.

<sup>1821</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 123.

<sup>1822</sup>“Enuma Elish (The Creation Epic),” *ANET*, 4.135–40, 67. Italics mine.

[https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET\\_20160815/Pritchard\\_1950\\_ANET#page/n91/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n91/mode/2up).

<sup>1823</sup>Min Suc Kee, “A Study on the Dual Form of Mayim, Water,” *JBQ* 40, no. 3 (1 July 2012): 183–89, 186,

[http://jbnqnew.jewishbible.org/assets/Uploads/403/jbnq\\_403\\_mayim.pdf](http://jbnqnew.jewishbible.org/assets/Uploads/403/jbnq_403_mayim.pdf).

<sup>1824</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 113.

<sup>1825</sup>P. Stenmans, “מַבּוּל” (*mabbul*), *TDOT* 8:60–5, 63.

<sup>1826</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 136.

<sup>1827</sup>P. Stenmans, “מַבּוּל” (*mabbul*), *TDOT* 8:60–5, 61.

<sup>1828</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 283.

<sup>1829</sup>Ignace J. Gelb, et al eds., “Abubu,” in *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (CAD)* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1964), 77–81, 77, 80.

[https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/cad\\_a1.pdf](https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/cad_a1.pdf).

<sup>1830</sup>Speiser, “The Epic of Gilgamesh,” in *ANET*, 11:113–7, 94,

[https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET\\_20160815/Pritchard\\_1950\\_ANET#page/n119/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n119/mode/2up).

<sup>1831</sup>Note that the Hebrew word *ruach* means “breath,” “wind,” and “spirit/Spirit,”

<https://archive.org/stream/hebrewenglishlex00browuoft#page/924/mode/2up>.

shall perish,” the possibility remained that aquatic creatures would survive.<sup>1832</sup> However, the sudden change in salinity would likely prove fatal.

“All on the earth shall perish” suggests a world-wide scope for the coming deluge. Yet, similar language occurs in Scripture depicting more limited events (Gen 41:56–57; Deut 2:25; 1 Ki 10:24; Dan 2:36–38).<sup>1833</sup> Therefore, the lack of convincing archaeological evidence for a world-wide deluge occurring at one time does not disprove that Noah’s flood actually took place in the ANE.<sup>1834</sup>

**Read Gen 6:17.** How is the biblical account like other ANE versions? In what ways do they differ? Why doesn’t the lack of archaeological evidence disprove the historicity of Noah’s flood?

### God Establishes a Covenant

**d) Gen 6:18:** In this verse, the Lord began to name those whom he would save through the flood. God said to Noah, “And I shall establish my covenant with you.”<sup>1835</sup> Although this is the first time the word “covenant” (*berith*) occurs in the Old Testament,<sup>1836</sup> many commentators believe the Lord enacted a covenant with Adam (Gen 1:26–30; Gen 2:15–17).<sup>1837</sup> The concept of a covenant between a deity and people remains unique to the biblical milieu. No record of such a compact appears in other religions and cultures.<sup>1838</sup>

That the Lord called it “my covenant” emphasizes that the pact originated with him, not with Noah. God set its terms and sanctions.<sup>1839</sup> In it, the Lord chose to exempt Noah from what he would do to all flesh (Gen 6:5–13).<sup>1840</sup>

A covenant consists of a binding agreement between two parties.<sup>1841</sup> As in Noah’s case, it formalizes and confirms an already existing relationship.<sup>1842</sup> One or both participants agreed under oath to either complete or abstain from certain activities.<sup>1843</sup> Covenants typically obligated their originators to fulfill specific commitments while the other party remained faithful (Gen 17:1–12).<sup>1844</sup>

The Lord announced his covenant with Noah even before the deluge occurred. Thus, the pact which God made after the flood did not consist of an afterthought (Gen 9:8–17). Even before the rain began, the Lord intended to provide for the continuation of human and animal life.<sup>1845</sup> By means of an ark, God would save the righteous seed of the woman as well as representatives of the nonhuman creation (Gen 3:15; Gen 6:19–20).<sup>1846</sup>

God continued, saying, “And you shall enter the ark: you and your sons and your sons’ wives with you.” By repeating the word “you,” the Lord stressed that he made his

<sup>1832</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 174.

<sup>1833</sup>Waltke, and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 136.

<sup>1834</sup>Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBCOT*, Gen 6:17.

<sup>1835</sup>M. Weinfeld, “בְּרִית” (*berith*), *TDOT* 2:253–79, 260.

<sup>1836</sup>Result of Logos 7 word study of בְּרִית (*berith*).

<sup>1837</sup>Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview*, 107.

<sup>1838</sup>Weinfeld, “בְּרִית” (*berith*), *TDOT* 2:253–79, 278.

<sup>1839</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 136.

<sup>1840</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 283.

<sup>1841</sup>Arnold and Beyer, *RANE*, 96.

<sup>1842</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 136.

<sup>1843</sup>George E. Mendenhall and Gary A. Herion, “Covenant,” *ABD* 1:1179–1202, 1179.

<sup>1844</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 123.

<sup>1845</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 284.

<sup>1846</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 121.

covenant with Noah, not with Noah’s wife or children.<sup>1847</sup> Nevertheless, God would preserve the family structure of humanity, extending salvation to them.<sup>1848</sup> The concept of the modern nuclear family did not exist in the Ancient Near East (ANE).<sup>1849</sup> Yet, even today, those who have married can attest that one does not wed an individual but into an entire family.

The Epic of Gilgamesh also notes the inclusion of additional passengers. It says, “All my family and kin I made go aboard the ship...All the craftsmen I made go aboard...I boarded the ship and battened up the entrance. To batten down the (whole) ship, to...the boatman.”<sup>1850</sup>

**Read Gen 6:18.** What constitutes a covenant? How would you describe the pact depicted here? How is this account like the story in the Epic of Gilgamesh? What differences are there?

### Two of Every Kind

e) **Gen 6:19–22:** Noah at last discovered why God commanded him to build a boat far too large for him and his family (Gen 6:15).<sup>1851</sup> The Lord extended his concern to the animal realm.<sup>1852</sup> God said, “And from all of the living, from all flesh, two from all you shall bring into the ark to keep them alive with you. Male and female they shall be.” All types of creatures would survive to repopulate the earth.<sup>1853</sup>

Although God described people in terms of gender in Gen 1:27, this verse represents the first time Scripture depicted the nonhuman creation as “male and female” (Cf. Gen 1:20–25; Gen 2:18–20).<sup>1854</sup> The list of living things gradually becomes more specific and echoes the sequence of the first creation account.<sup>1855</sup>

Moses reported, “From birds according to their kind, and from animals according to their kind, and from all of the creeping things of the ground according to their kind, two of all of them shall come to you in order to keep them alive.” The Hebrew term for “kind” (*min*) allows for a broader range than “species.”<sup>1856</sup> Significantly, God commanded reproduction “according to its kind” for plants and animals but not for humans (Gen 1:24, 26–28). This may indicate that God intended that vegetation and animals propagate more than the same species,<sup>1857</sup> as the term “kind” does not correspond to a scientific species or genus.<sup>1858</sup>

These initial instructions omit God’s command to Noah to bring seven pairs of each type of clean animal into the ark (Gen 7:2–3).<sup>1859</sup> The text also does not indicate how Noah knew the difference between a clean and an unclean animal.<sup>1860</sup> Not until Lev 11 does

<sup>1847</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 283–4.

<sup>1848</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 136.

<sup>1849</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 175.

<sup>1850</sup>Speiser, “The Epic of Gilgamesh,” in *ANET*, 84–5, 94, 94,

[https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET\\_20160815/Pritchard\\_1950\\_ANET#page/n119/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n119/mode/2up).

<sup>1851</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 175.

<sup>1852</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 284.

<sup>1853</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 137.

<sup>1854</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 138.

<sup>1855</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 175.

<sup>1856</sup>Swanson, “מין” (*min*), *DBLSHD*, 4786.

<sup>1857</sup>P. Beauchamp, “מין” (*min*), *TDOT*, 8:288–90, 289.

<sup>1858</sup>Mark D. Futato, “מין” (*min*), *NIDOTTE* 2:934–5, 934.

<sup>1859</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 313.

<sup>1860</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 176.

Scripture differentiate between them. Other Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) peoples experienced fewer dietary restrictions than Moses’s readers faced.<sup>1861</sup> For example, one Egyptian spell found inside a coffin states, “The pig is detestable to Horus.” Another insists that a certain incantation was “not to be said while eating pork.”<sup>1862</sup>

On the other hand, the Lord had not yet permitted meat for consumption (Gen 1:29–30). Thus, the increased number of clean creatures appears to ensure the availability of enough sacrificial animals (Gen 8:20–9:3).<sup>1863</sup>

Noah surely experienced gratitude that he and his sons would not have to find and capture the animals. Instead, God would guide them to the ark,<sup>1864</sup> again demonstrating his power over nature.<sup>1865</sup> Since the Lord selected Noah to preserve life, Moses’s readers likely recognized a similarity to another of their ancestral heroes. God orchestrated Joseph’s sale into Egyptian slavery to preserve life (Gen 45:4–11; Gen 50:15–21).<sup>1866</sup>

In the Atrahasis Epic, the god Enki promised, “I will rain down upon you here an abundance of birds, a profusion of fishes.” Yet the same text states that Atrahasis brought “whatever he had...clean animals...fat animals...he caught [and brought on board]. The winged birds of the heavens, the cattle...the wild creatures...he put on board.”<sup>1867</sup> In the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Noah figure reported, “The beasts of the field, the wild creatures of the field...I made go aboard.”<sup>1868</sup>

God ended his instructions by saying, “And you, take for yourself from all of the food which can be eaten, and gather it to yourself. And it shall be for you and for them for food.” Here we encounter another parallel with the story of Joseph, for he advised the Egyptians to gather and store grain due to the impending famine (Gen 41:33–37).<sup>1869</sup> Unlike in Joseph’s account, the text does not tell us how Noah and his family managed to do this, nor does it specify what types of food they collected.<sup>1870</sup>

Moses concluded this section by stating, “And Noah did according to all which God commanded him. Thus he did.” This brief statement provides insight into Noah’s character (Gen 6:8–9).<sup>1871</sup> It serves as an emphatic affirmation of Noah’s complete obedience, indicating that Noah succeeded where Adam failed (Gen 2:16–17; Gen 3:6).<sup>1872</sup> Such declarations rarely occur in the Pentateuch (five books attributed to Moses). The only other equivalent statements appear when Moses oversaw the building of the tabernacle, when the Israelites camped around it, and when they observed Passover (Exod 39:32, 42–43; Num 1:53–54; Num 2:34; Num 9:5).<sup>1873</sup>

<sup>1861</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 313.

<sup>1862</sup>Raymond O. Faulkner, trans., *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts: Volume 1, Spells 1–354* (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1973), 135, 137. Spells 157–158, <https://archive.org/stream/TheAncientEgyptianCoffin1/The%20ancient%20Egyptian%20coffin1#page/n147/mode/2up>,

<https://archive.org/stream/TheAncientEgyptianCoffin1/The%20ancient%20Egyptian%20coffin1#page/n149/mode/2up>.

<sup>1863</sup>Walton, *Genesis*, 313.

<sup>1864</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 284.

<sup>1865</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 137.

<sup>1866</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 175.

<sup>1867</sup>Lambert and Millard, “Epic of Atra-Khasis,” in *RANE*, 29.

<sup>1868</sup>Speiser, “The Epic of Gilgamesh,” in *ANET*, 11:85, 94,

[https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET\\_20160815/Pritchard\\_1950\\_ANET#page/n119/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n119/mode/2up).

<sup>1869</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 284.

<sup>1870</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 131.

<sup>1871</sup>Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 285.

<sup>1872</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 176.

<sup>1873</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 176.

Consider the tremendous effort which Noah and his family must have undertaken to accomplish this. They needed an incredible amount of timber and pitch. Building such an enormous structure completely by hand would have taken years, in addition to a considerable amount of money. Then, the effort necessary to gather various types of edible plants for people and many kinds of animals had to be exhausting. While the Epic of Gilgamesh focuses upon Utnapishtim's extensive preparations, Moses's account of the flood simply acknowledges Noah's obedience to God's commands.<sup>1874</sup>

**Read Gen 6:18–22.** What echoes of Gen 1 occur in this text? How does this account compare to other ANE flood texts? What differences are there? How did Noah express his faith? What can you do to emulate Noah?

### Receiving a Divine Warning

**4) Heb 11:7:** With this verse, the author of Hebrews concluded the account of heroes of faith who lived prior to the flood.<sup>1875</sup> Just like Noah, the recipients of this letter lived in a hostile environment and required encouragement.<sup>1876</sup> They needed to believe the Lord would do what he promised (Heb 10:32–39).<sup>1877</sup>

This verse begins by stating, “By faith Noah, receiving a divine warning concerning [things] not yet seen, showing reverence, he constructed an ark for the salvation of his household.” Although Gen 6–9 never describes Noah's faith, the flood account does attest that Noah pleased God (Gen 6:9).<sup>1878</sup> His obedience proved his belief.<sup>1879</sup> Some translations state simply that “Noah was warned” (*chrēmatizō*). Yet, whenever this verb appears in the passive tense in the New Testament, it implies that the person received a divine revelation (Matt 2:12, 21–22; Acts 10:22; Heb 8:4–5).<sup>1880</sup>

What was “not yet seen” refers to the deluge (Gen 7:12–13), a catastrophe never previously experienced by the people of the Ancient Near East.<sup>1881</sup> This phrase points to the forward-looking aspect of faith.<sup>1882</sup> Noah believed that what the Lord disclosed in advance would certainly occur (Gen 6:13–22).<sup>1883</sup> As a result, Noah serves as another exemplar of Heb 11:1–2.<sup>1884</sup> Like the other heroes of old in Heb 11, Noah could pursue the correct course of action because he saw beyond the visible world of material senses (Heb 11:13–16).<sup>1885</sup>

<sup>1874</sup>Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 137.

<sup>1875</sup>deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 390.

<sup>1876</sup>Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 339.

<sup>1877</sup>Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews, Rev. ed.*, 287.

<sup>1878</sup>Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 577.

<sup>1879</sup>Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 339.

<sup>1880</sup>Bo Reicke, “*χρηματίζω*” (*chrēmatizō*) TDNT 9:480–2, 481. Confirmed by a Logos 7 word study.

<sup>1881</sup>Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews, Rev. ed.*, 287.

<sup>1882</sup>Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 578.

<sup>1883</sup>Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 339.

<sup>1884</sup>Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 339.

<sup>1885</sup>deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 387.

He trusted in the divine revelation so firmly that he acted as if the flood was imminent.<sup>1886</sup> Belief in the word of God always results in action (Heb 6:10–12; James 2:14–26). We can translate the word which the author of Hebrews used to describe Noah’s emotions (*eulabeomai*) as “to have fear” or “to have reverent awe.”<sup>1887</sup> In the context of faith and the emphasis upon worship, “showing reverence” fits best.<sup>1888</sup> This term also occurs in Heb 5:7 and Heb 12:28.<sup>1889</sup>

Noah expressed his reverent faith by obeying the divine revelation.<sup>1890</sup> He constructed an ark. The word used here (*kataskeuwō*) often referred to the building and equipping of ships.<sup>1891</sup> For example, during the Maccabean revolt,<sup>1892</sup> the king wrote a letter, saying, “Whereas certain scoundrels have gained control of the kingdom of our ancestors, and I intend to lay claim to the kingdom so that I may restore it as it formerly was, and have recruited a host of mercenary troops and have equipped (*kataskeuwō*) warships” (1 Macc 15:3, NRSVCE).

Noah’s obedient trust provided salvation for his household, for the ark he built kept them safe through the storm (Gen 8:13–19).<sup>1893</sup> Furthermore, his reverent act was the means “by which he pronounced sentence on the world.”<sup>1894</sup> Although the term “world” (*kosmos*) has multiple meanings in Greek, the sense here refers to “humanity” (Cf. Heb 11:38).<sup>1895</sup>

Jewish and early Christian sources contended that Noah accomplished this by preaching to people who rejected his message to repent (2 Pet 2:5).<sup>1896</sup> According to Clement of Alexandria (150–215 AD), “Noah preached repentance, and as many as listened to him were saved.”<sup>1897</sup> Since only eight people received salvation, no one believed him apart from his immediate family and their wives (1 Pet 3:20).

Josephus (ca. 37–100 AD) also reported:

“Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and being displeased at their conduct, persuaded them to change their dispositions and their acts for the better: but seeing they did not yield to him, but were slaves to their wicked pleasures, he was afraid they would kill him, together with his wife and children, and those they had married; so he departed out of that land.”<sup>1898</sup>

Despite that tradition, the author of Hebrews did not seem to have preaching in mind, for the letter merely implies a call for bold witness.<sup>1899</sup> Instead, Noah judged his contemporaries by his example of faith and faithfulness (Cf. Heb 11:4–5).<sup>1900</sup> By building such an enormous boat so far from the sea, Noah must have endured ridicule from his neighbors.<sup>1901</sup> As a result of persevering through the loss of prestige among those who watched him work, Noah attained honor in God’s sight,<sup>1902</sup> and he delivered a prophetic

<sup>1886</sup>Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 339.

<sup>1887</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, “εὐλαβέομαι” (*eulabeomai*), *TDNT* 2:751–4, 753.

<sup>1888</sup>Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 578.

<sup>1889</sup>Bultmann, “εὐλαβέομαι” (*eulabeomai*), *TDNT* 2:753.

<sup>1890</sup>Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 578.

<sup>1891</sup>Danker et. al., “κατασκευάζω” (*kataskeuwō*), *BDAG* 527.

<sup>1892</sup>See Intertestamental History at <https://redemptivehistorytheology.com/welcome/intertestamental-history/>

<sup>1893</sup>deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 391.

<sup>1894</sup>Danker et. al., “κατακρίνω” (*katakrinō*), *BDAG*, 519.

<sup>1895</sup>Hermann Sasse, “κόσμος” (*kosmos*), *TDNT* 3:867–95, 890.

<sup>1896</sup>deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 391.

<sup>1897</sup>Clement, *Clement 1*, 7:6, <https://archive.org/stream/antenicenefather01robe#page/6/mode/2up>.

<sup>1898</sup>Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, 1.74,

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0146%3Abook%3D1%3Awhiston%20chapter%3D3%3Awhiston%20section%3D1>.

<sup>1899</sup>deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 391.

<sup>1900</sup>Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 340.

<sup>1901</sup>Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews, Rev. ed.*, 287–8.

<sup>1902</sup>deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 388.

rebuke to his detractors.<sup>1903</sup> After all, the construction of the ark served as a warning of the judgment to come.<sup>1904</sup> Similarly, we who live faithfully to the Lord call others to consider their ways simply by the way we conduct ourselves in their midst (Phil 2:14–15; 1 Pet 2:11–17; 1 Pet 3:13–17).<sup>1905</sup>

While Noah was judging the world, he “according to faith, was made an heir of righteousness.” This implies that God effected the change in Noah.<sup>1906</sup> The author of Hebrews asserted that righteous people trust in God as they persevere through difficult trials which refine their character. As a result, they become truly upright (Heb 10:32–39; Heb 12:7–14).<sup>1907</sup> Those who respond to the Lord in faith receive the righteousness which God bestows upon his people.<sup>1908</sup>

The concept of inheritance comprises a major theme of Hebrews. Jesus has become “the heir of all things” (Heb 1:1–4). Christians are “heirs of salvation” (Heb 1:14) and inheritors of God’s promises (Heb 6:10–12, 17–20; Heb 9:15).<sup>1909</sup> Consequently, the author of Hebrews invites us to imitate Noah, calling us to trust God for salvation from the coming wrath and to witness to the world by living out our faith. As we prepare for that great day when we shall see Jesus face-to-face, may we too prove faithful.<sup>1910</sup>

**Read Heb 11:7.** How does this verse relate to Heb 11:1–2? What had Noah not yet seen? How did he respond to the revelation he received? In what way did building an ark simultaneously judge the world and make him an heir of righteousness?

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<sup>1903</sup>Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 377.

<sup>1904</sup>Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 340.

<sup>1905</sup>deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 391–2.

<sup>1906</sup>Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 580.

<sup>1907</sup>deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 392.

<sup>1908</sup>Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 341.

<sup>1909</sup>Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 341.

<sup>1910</sup>deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews,”* 391.