

# Judgment

## SESSION 6

**Genesis 6:13-22; 7:20-24**

**Memory Verse: Genesis 6:13**

**Judgment will come for all sins.**

In the entire history of the world, God has never, at any time, brought judgment on an innocent person! That's an important truth because people often react to God's judgment by complaining that His punishment is too harsh or that innocent people suffer from His judgment. The truth of the matter is that, aside from Jesus, every human being who has ever lived—past, present, or future—is a sinner. Sin is a universal condition, and God's Word makes it very clear that the judgment of sin is death. This was proclaimed in the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:17), and it was reaffirmed throughout the Bible (Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 6:23).

As you lean into the passages for this session on Noah, prayerfully deal with sin in your life. Ask God to prepare you to help people see the inevitability of judgment on all who sin. Also, look for opportunities to share how our sins can be forgiven and judgment avoided by faith in Jesus Christ.



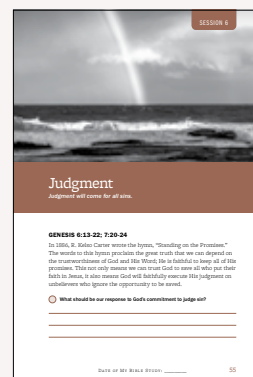
### ***Weekly Podcast: Group Leader Training***

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In 1886, R. Kelso Carter wrote the hymn, “Standing on the Promises.” The words to this hymn proclaim the great truth that we can depend on the trustworthiness of God and His Word; He is faithful to keep all of His promises. This not only means we can trust God to save all who put their faith in Jesus, it also means God will faithfully execute His judgment on unbelievers who ignore the opportunity to be saved. (PSG, p. 55)

**What should be our response to God’s commitment to judge sin?**



## Understand the Context (Genesis 6:8–7:24)

Genesis 6:9 begins the third of the “records” sections that form the outline for the book (see Gen. 2:4 and 5:1). As this section begins, we are introduced to two groups of people: Noah’s family and the wicked rest of humanity. Some Bible scholars see Noah and his family as a part of the lineage of Seth, while the wicked in humanity are from the line of Cain. Whether this is accurate or not, the contrast is sharp.

Noah is pictured as righteous, blameless, and walking in close fellowship with God. Verses 10-12 point to the sinful conditions of humanity, repeating the description given in Genesis 6:5-7. The blunt statement confirms that “every creature had corrupted its way” (Gen. 6:12). The Hebrew word used for “creature” here can mean humans and/or animals, but the context makes it clear that Moses was referring to humanity only. Animals do not sin against God, but humans cannot help but promote depravity thanks to our sin nature.

Throughout Scripture, the eyes of God are pictured as searching throughout the earth, looking, observing, watching. In this passage, God witnessed the increasing corruption of humanity. What started as a single act of disobedience in Eden had exploded into widespread evil at every turn.

Based on what He saw, God made the decision to judge this wickedness. The annihilation of life on earth, however, would not be complete because God also saw Noah. The record states that Noah found favor with God. In a sense, he would become the new

Adam, as life would begin again through him. Through Noah and his family, God would sustain life—both of humans and animals.

This narrative of Noah, the flood, and the ark reinforces the stress Moses put on the judgment of God toward wickedness. These passages introduce a central theme of Scripture: Sin will not be tolerated. In addition, this account serves as a transition between the sketchy history before the deluge and the beginning of the period of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).

Sandwiched between the focal passages for this study, verses 1-19 deal with the details of the ark, instructions for caring for the animals, God’s command to enter the ark (7:1), and Noah’s obedience (7:5). Hidden in 7:2 is an often-overlooked fact that Noah was to carry seven pairs of clean animals and one pair of unclean animals. These clean animals would be used for sacrifice and food (9:3) after the flood. They were symbols that Noah and his family would survive the storm.

**As you read Genesis 6:13-22; 7:20-24, identify what God reveals about Himself as Judge. (PSG, p. 56)**



**PREPARE:** On the board, write: *Noah’s ark: What do you know/remember about this story?*

**INTRODUCE:** As the group arrives, direct attention to the question on the board. Provide markers and encourage individuals to write as many different things as they can about the story. Review responses.

**ASK:** **What are the first couple of things that people typically think of when they hear “Noah’s ark”?**

**SHARE:** Explain that most people do not view the narrative surrounding Noah’s ark as through the lens of judgment and grace. *We see the account open as God’s response, in judgment, to the wicked condition of the inhabitants of the earth, but even that is an illustration of His faithfulness.*

**DISCUSS:** Read the opening paragraph on page 55 of the PSG. Lead the group to talk about why we can trust God’s promises. Encourage adults to share why judgment is a part of God’s faithfulness to His promises.

**ASK:** **What should be our response to God’s commitment to judge sin?** (PSG, p. 55)

**TRANSITION:** *Today, we will begin a three-session examination of the story of Noah. In today’s session, we will learn that God’s judgment will come for all sins.*

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## Group Activity Option

### Music

Provide copies of the *Baptist Hymnal* (2008) and lead the group to sing “Standing on the Promises” (Hymn 339). Before singing, ask the group to call out some promises of God. Ask: ***How have you experienced God’s faithfulness?*** Share the information from the opening paragraph in the PSG (p. 55). Encourage the group to express their trust in God as they sing the song.

## Judgment Announced (Genesis 6:13-17)

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**13** Then God said to Noah, “I have decided to put an end to every creature, for the earth is filled with wickedness because of them; therefore I am going to destroy them along with the earth. **14** Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it with pitch inside and outside. **15** This is how you are to make it: The ark will be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. **16** You are to make a roof, finishing the sides of the ark to within eighteen inches of the roof. You are to put a door in the side of the ark. Make it with lower, middle, and upper decks. **17** Understand that I am bringing a flood — floodwaters on the earth to destroy every creature under heaven with the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish.”

**(v. 13) Put an end:** This does not speak of the absolute destruction of all life. Rather, it speaks of the end of the wickedness of humanity. While God was determined to deal with the sinfulness of humanity, He also had a plan in place to preserve life through Noah. He chose to spare Noah by His grace because Noah trusted the Lord and found favor in the Lord’s sight (Gen. 6:9).

**(v. 13) Creature:** God’s words indicate that all living beings would face His judgment. This applied to both people and animals. However, readers should recognize that when God spoke of the earth filled with wickedness, He was placing the responsibility on humanity, not on animal life. God’s judgment was coming, and animals would suffer because of the wickedness of humans, whom God gave dominion over creation.

**(v. 13) Destroy:** The word suggests ruining or annihilating something. The coming destruction was the result of exceeding wickedness of those living on the earth, yet it would not be complete. Noah and his family, along with a selection of animals, would begin anew the inhabitation of the earth. Other passages suggest that Noah preached about the coming judgment, but he was ignored (Luke 17:26-27; Heb. 11:7). As a result, no one else was saved.

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### Key Word

#### Ark

Following the announcement of judgment, God addressed rescue and restoration in the form of a large boat. The word **ark** (*tebah*) is found only here in the flood account and in the narrative of baby Moses being placed in a basket along the Nile River (Ex. 2:3,5). The word “ark” is akin to the Egyptian concept of a box or a coffin. The dimensions indicate that this was probably a rectangular, flat-bottomed barge-like vessel.

**(v. 14) Pitch:** This was a tar-like substance made of hydrocarbons and used for waterproofing. **Pitch** occurs naturally around the world and can be extracted from tree sap. Roofing tar or coating is a modern version of pitch. Moses’s basket was also lined with pitch to keep it watertight, just like Noah’s ark.

**(v. 17) Flood:** A deluge or torrential rain. According to Genesis 2:5, God had not sent rain on the earth before this. Thus, this **flood**, which also included waters erupting from the “vast watery depth,” apparently provided the first rain since creation as God opened “the floodgates of the sky” (Gen. 7:11). The Hebrew word for “flood” is an ancient term that appears only in this episode and in Psalm 29:10. This word appears to have been created primarily to describe the flood of Noah.

**(v. 17) Breath of life:** Here, this phrase emphasizes animal life. The phrase harkens back to creation as God made living things (Gen. 1:30). But it also echoes the creation of Adam, where God breathed into him the “breath of life” (Gen. 2:7). Later, in 7:22, the term is used inclusively for both human life and animal life.

**(v. 17) Everything on earth:** At this point, biblical scholars are somewhat divided over the extent of the flood, particularly on whether it was universal or localized. It should be noted that the word **earth** can also be translated as “land,” which could refer to a certain region. However, chapters 6 and 7 rely on inclusive language that suggests **everything** was covered.

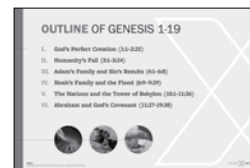
The wickedness problem that covered the earth also argues for a wide-ranging flood. For God to have a new beginning through Noah and his family, all the former life must be removed. The narrative emphatically states that no one—animal or human—escaped this annihilation except those in the ark.

# EXPLORE Genesis 6:13-17



**APPLICATION POINT:** Believers should know that sin results in death.

**PREPARE:** Highlight **Pack Item 2** (*Poster: Outline of Genesis 1–19*) on a focal wall. Briefly summarize the previous sessions and introduce the title and theme for this session. Use Understand the Context (PSG, p. 56) to explain that the next three sessions focus on Noah.



**READ:** Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Genesis 6:13-17**, as the group listens for language that indicates God's coming judgment.

**DISCUSS:** Distribute copies of **Pack Item 12** (*Handout: Characteristics of Noah's Ark*). Encourage adults to work in groups of two or three to review the article and to highlight key characteristics of the ark. After a few minutes, review verses 14-16 and allow volunteers to share their thoughts from the text and from the article. Highlight the statement from page 57 of the PSG that begins: *Also of note is the fact that it was God's prerogative. . . .*



**SHARE:** Remind adults that God had created the earth perfectly, but sin had grown exponentially after the fall. Emphasize that God's judgment was just and that the ark was His gracious provision for a righteous man and his family.

**ASK:** **What are the dangers of ignoring sin?** (PSG, p. 59)

**TRANSITION:** *Once the ark was built, God instructed Noah to take his family and all the animals inside. Then, they had to wait.*

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## Group Activity Option

### Bible Skill

As background for Genesis 6:13-17, lead the group to read and reflect on the emotions of God expressed in Genesis 6:5-8. Explain that the Bible speaks frequently of the emotions of God such as anger, hatred, sorrow, jealousy, joy, compassion, and love. Make a list of God's emotions expressed in these verses and others you think God might have felt. How do you respond to these divine emotions? Explain that God can experience these emotions and express them without the acts of sin which so often accompany these emotions among humanity.



## Rescue Promised (Genesis 6:18-22)

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**18** “But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark with your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives. **19** You are also to bring into the ark two of all the living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. **20** Two of everything — from the birds according to their kinds, from the livestock according to their kinds, and from the animals that crawl on the ground according to their kinds — will come to you so that you can keep them alive. **21** Take with you every kind of food that is eaten; gather it as food for you and for them.” **22** And Noah did this. He did everything that God had commanded him.

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### Key Word

#### Covenant

A **covenant** is a binding agreement or an oath-bound promise between two people or groups of people. Most ancient covenants were between equal parties. Covenants generally contained both obligations and benefits for each side in the agreement.

Old Testament covenants between God and humans were different in that they were certainly not between equals. God is always pictured as the One taking the initiative to pursue the covenant relationship with His people. Another essential element in the majority of the covenants found in the Old Testament was that obedience to God was required.

This covenant with Noah was very one-sided. God promised to protect and preserve Noah and his family with Noah’s only obligation being faithful obedience. Noah responded to God’s command/promise by building the ark, gathering the animals, and entering the ark. The covenant promise was given here in Genesis 6:18 and fulfilled in 8:20–9:17.

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**(v. 18) *Your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives:*** Although the biblical record states that Noah was righteous and blameless, that doesn’t mean that he was without sin. However, this promised preservation of Noah and his family clearly illustrates the grace and mercy of God. God clearly regretted the wickedness of His created world, yet He responded in mercy and grace. In fact, this is a central theme of the Old Testament.

While many think of God as being angry and judgmental in the Old Testament, time and again He withheld His anger and acted with mercy toward sinful humanity. Judgment came through the flood, but mercy and grace also appeared in God’s plan to continue human life and animal life through Noah.

**(v. 20) *Two of everything:*** The implication here involves a male and a female of each kind of animal. God’s design was to replenish each species through these surviving pairs. Two different times in verses 19-20, the text speaks of keeping them alive. Note that the listing here echoes the creation of birds, livestock, and crawling creatures in Genesis 1. No group of God’s creation was to be left out.

**(v. 20) *Livestock:*** This term refers to land animals in general, not just domesticated **livestock**.

**(v. 20) *Animals that crawl:*** This term generally refers to small animals that creep along the ground. While the term is occasionally used of animals in general, more specific use suggests small, scurrying animals such as mice, weasels, and lizards.

**(v. 21) *Every kind of food:*** Notice that God’s instructions cover all the details, including **food** for the animals and the people aboard the ark. Based on passages such as Genesis 1:29 and 9:1-5, it makes sense to assume that humans were vegetarians at this point. Only after the flood does it appear that people began to eat meat. The amount of food stores necessary for this months-long journey boggles the mind.

**(v. 22) *Noah did this:*** The narrative highlights Noah’s obedience to all that God commanded. In the Hebrew construction, **did** is placed at the beginning of the verse and at the end, emphasizing the committed obedience of Noah to God. His obedience is highlighted three more times in chapter 7 (vv. 5,9,16).

This obedience was an essential part of the covenant relationship. Obedience was directly related to faith in God’s promises. With obedience to God’s directions came the covenant’s benefits. Disobedience negated the blessing.

## EXPLORE Genesis 6:18-22



**APPLICATION POINT:** Believers should celebrate God's offer of salvation.

**READ:** Call for a volunteer to read aloud **Genesis 6:18-22**, directing the group to listen for the order with which God continued to execute His plan.

**RESEARCH:** Group adults into two smaller teams. Assign the first team to read the information about verse 18 (PSG, p. 60). Encourage them to prepare to explain the covenant. Assign the second team to read the content for verses 19-22 (PSG, pp. 60-61) and prepare to explain God's plan for the animals. After several minutes, call for the groups to share their discoveries.

**ASK:** **How are obedience and God's offer to rescue related?** (PSG, p. 61)

**DISCUSS:** Encourage the group to share how verses 18-22 demonstrate God's grace and care for His creation. Point out that even in the midst of rebellion and sin, God always provides security and blessing for those who are faithful to Him.

**TRANSITION:** *After Noah's family and all the animals were on the ark, the rain began and the flood covered the earth.*

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### Group Activity Option

#### Natural

Prior to the session, find out if anyone in the group has visited the Ark Encounter in Williamstown, Kentucky. If so, enlist them to share about their experience. Highlight how the scale of the ark can help people visualize just how big a project God commissioned Noah to complete. If time allows, show elements from the Ark Encounter website to supplement the conversation.

## Judgment Executed (Genesis 7:20-24)

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**20** The mountains were covered as the water surged above them more than twenty feet. **21** Every creature perished — those that crawl on the earth, birds, livestock, wildlife, and those that swarm on the earth, as well as all mankind. **22** Everything with the breath of the spirit of life in its nostrils — everything on dry land died. **23** He wiped out every living thing that was on the face of the earth, from mankind to livestock, to creatures that crawl, to the birds of the sky, and they were wiped off the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark. **24** And the water surged on the earth 150 days.

**(v. 20) *Twenty feet:*** Some contemporary translations adjust distances from the Hebrew word for cubits to the Imperial system of **feet**. A cubit was the distance from the tip of the middle finger to the elbow—about 18 inches. To give an idea of the amount of water unleashed on the earth, Mount Ararat where the ark settled as the flood waters receded (see 8:4) was almost 17,000 feet above sea level.

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### Key Doctrine

#### Salvation

There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. (See Acts 4:12; Titus 2:11-14.)

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**(v. 21) *Every creature perished:*** This universal destruction mirrors the universal corruption noted in Genesis 6:12. The emphasis on annihilation is seen in the words such **every creature**, along with similar, all-inclusive wording in verses 22-23. Of course, this did not include those in the ark.

**(v. 22) *Breath of the spirit of life:*** The gift given to all creatures was taken away because of the wickedness of humanity. The apostle Paul reminded readers of the impact of sin on the natural world (Rom. 9:20-22). God's redemption involves the creation.

**(v. 23) *Wiped out:*** One of the dominant characteristics of Hebrew writings, and especially Hebrew poetry, is a literary device called parallelism. This occurs when a truth is stated once and immediately repeated in a slightly different manner. This repetition often indicates emphasis.

Parallelism in verses 21-23 includes various ways of describing the destruction of every living thing. Such emphasis paints a vivid picture of the total destruction of life outside the ark. Genesis 7 also uses parallelism to describe the flood itself as the water levels continued to rise (vv. 17,18,19,24).

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### Key Cross Reference

#### Only Noah was left

In the end, God promised not to destroy the earth again through a flood (Gen. 9:11), but He also promised by His prophets and apostles a future day of judgment. Read the following passages and record what each says about God's coming judgment:

- Joel 2:1-14
  - John 3:36
  - Romans 2:4-8
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
  - 2 Peter 2:1-9; 3:1-13
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**(v. 24) *150 days:*** Not only do repetition and parallelism add emphasis to this cataclysmic event, but Moses, the author of this narrative, also emphasized the length of the flood. Taking the event as a whole, we find it consumed more than four hundred days, not including the time taken to build the ark.

Look at the progression: Seven days between the command to enter the ark and the start of the flood (7:4,10); forty days of rain (7:12); **150 days** of surging waters (7:24); 150 days of receding waters (8:3); forty days of waiting before the first bird was released (8:6); seven days of waiting until the second bird's release (8:10); and then seven more days for the release of the third and final bird (8:12). Such an emphasis on time heightens the importance of this event in Hebrew history and the seriousness of God's judgment.



## EXPLORE Genesis 7:20-24



**APPLICATION POINT:** Believers should find urgency in the promise of God's judgment.

**EXPLAIN:** Provide a brief overview to establish the context between Genesis 6:22-7:20.

**READ:** **Call for the group to read silently Genesis 7:20-24**, looking for what happened to the rest of life on the planet as a result of the flood. Encourage adults to share how these verses depict God's judgment and how they feel reading these verses.

**EMPHASIZE:** Direct the group's attention to the information on page 62 of the PSG. Focus on the statement *Verse 23 may appear just to be redundant. . . .*

**ASK:** **Why do some people doubt that God will judge His creation?** (PSG, p. 62)

**TRANSITION:** *Believers should find urgency in the promise of God's judgment.*

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### Group Activity Option

#### Memory Verse

Direct the group to read aloud Genesis 6:13 together several times. *Why would a believer want to memorize this verse? What can we learn from this verse? How can we apply this verse to our own lives?* Point out that what God promised in Genesis 6:13, He fulfilled in Genesis 7:20-24. Emphasize that God always keeps His promises. *While we usually think of that in positive terms, it's also true when it comes to judging sin. He will always judge sin.* Point out the Summary Statement for this session (PSG, p. 55). Challenge adults to think about how this truth should affect the way they see their own sin and the sins of others.

## CHALLENGE

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**SUMMARIZE:** Review these points from Apply the Text on page 63 of the Personal Study Guide:

- *Believers should know that sin results in death.*
- *Believers should celebrate God's offer of salvation.*
- *Believers should find urgency in the promise of God's judgment.*

**DISCUSS:** Guide the group to discuss the first question set under Apply the Text (PSG, p. 63): **How can we celebrate God's offer of salvation? How should knowing that sin results in death create urgency in what we do?**

**PRAY:** Close in prayer, acknowledging that God is sovereign and just. Thank Him that He takes sin seriously and pray that the group would take sin seriously too.

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## After the Session

Reinforce the session by texting the group and encouraging them to read and reflect on the following passages: Genesis 6:13; Romans 3:23; 6:23; and 1 John 1:8-10.

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