



# Judgment

*Judgment will come for all sins.*

## **GENESIS 6:13-22; 7:20-24**

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.

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

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# UNDERSTAND **THE CONTEXT**

## **GENESIS 6:8–7:24**

God reveals several things about Himself through His actions in the flood account of Genesis 6–7:

- He takes great interest in human affairs and pays attention to the deeds of the wicked and deeds of the righteous.
- God was grieved by humanity’s wickedness but pleased with Noah’s righteousness (6:9). God distinguishes between the wicked and the righteous. Therefore, the wicked are set apart for judgment while the righteous are saved from destruction.
- God declared He was going to destroy every living thing on earth with a flood, with the exception of Noah, his family, and every type of creature on the earth. God is the Judge of the entire earth. Everyone will one day stand before God and give an account to Him. What’s more, God has the right to judge the entire earth because it all belongs to Him (Ps. 24:1).
- God demonstrated His grace when He provided Noah a way to be saved from the flood. The God who pronounces judgment is the God who provides a way to be saved. Though the text does not reveal the number of years it took Noah and his family to build the ark, it surely gave people time to repent before the flood came, but they did not. This shows that people should not take lightly the grace God offers them.
- God did what He said He would do both in His judgment and salvation. He is faithful to keep His word. He sent the flood, and every creature on the earth died with the exception of Noah, his family, and the animals. He is just as faithful to His promises of judgment on those who reject Him as He is to His promises of blessing on those who love Him. We should not take lightly God’s wrath against sin nor His commitment to righteousness.

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

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# EXPLORE **THE TEXT**

## **JUDGMENT ANNOUNCED** (GEN. 6:13-17)

<sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it with pitch inside and outside. <sup>15</sup> This is how you are to make it: The ark will be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> 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.”

### **VERSE 13**

Verse 13 has three parts. First, God stated that He had decided to destroy *every creature* on the earth. Second, God gave the reason for doing so. Third, for emphasis, God repeated His irrevocable decision to destroy the earth and every living thing on it.

This is the first time in Scripture God communicated His intentions for others to another individual. God took Noah into His confidence. In essence, God was calling Noah to be His prophet, or as Peter wrote, “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Pet. 2:5). He revealed to Noah that He had decided to destroy every creature on the earth because of His outrage over the wickedness of humanity (Gen. 6:5-7). Regrettably, all of the earth suffers because of human sin. ***I have decided*** emphasizes the certainty and immediacy of God’s judgment.

***The Creator will ultimately uphold justice  
and do what is right.***

Also of note is the fact that it was God’s prerogative to make the decision to destroy the earth. It is His creation to do with as He pleases. While human beings cannot be trusted to always do what is just, in His perfect timing, the Creator will ultimately uphold justice and do what is right by executing judgment on the wicked. Isaiah proclaimed that the Lord “is exalted by his justice, and the holy God demonstrates his holiness through his righteousness” (Isa. 5:16).

**BIBLE SKILL:** *Reflect on the emotions of God expressed in Genesis 6:5-8.*

The Bible speaks frequently of the emotions of God such as anger, hatred, sorrow, jealousy, joy, compassion, and love. God can experience these emotions and express them without acts of sin, which so often accompany these emotions among humanity. Read Genesis 6:5-8 and make a list of God's emotions expressed there and others you think God might have felt. How do you respond to these divine emotions?

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### VERSES 14-16

Immediately after pronouncing His intention to destroy the earth with a flood, God revealed to Noah how He was going to save Noah and his family. Because of God's grace and Noah's commitment to God, God was going to save Noah and his family, along with the designated animals. The Lord commanded Noah to build ***an ark***. In the Hebrew text, this is the only imperative God gave to Noah. Everything else God instructed Noah to do in this section is connected to this one command.

Noah was to construct it of ***gopher wood***. It is unclear what the word *gopher* means. Some propose it was a type of cypress, pine, or wood that is now extinct; others suggest gopher may refer to the particular types of beams to be used and not the actual type of wood. God told Noah to build an unspecified number of ***rooms*** in the ark and instructed him to seal it all ***with pitch inside and out***.

The Hebrew word for *ark* in Genesis 6-9 is only used one other instance in the Old Testament, in Exodus 2:3-5. There, it is the papyrus basket in which the baby Moses was hidden among the reeds on the banks of the Nile. There are similarities between these passages. Probably the most prominent is that both men were saved from drowning by the grace of God in order to inaugurate a new era for His people (see Ex. 1:22).

The dimensions God gave Noah for the ark indicate it was to have a rectangular shape. In Hebrew, its height was to be 300 cubits, its width 50 cubits, and its depth 30 cubits. A cubit was understood to be the

length from a person's elbow to the end of the extended middle finger, about 18 inches. Therefore, it was about **450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high**. To help visualize the size, it was about the length of one and a half American football fields. It was six times longer than it was wide, and it was ten times longer than it was high. It was essentially to be an enormous flat-bottomed, barge-like vessel designed to ride out the tempest without any manual steering. Noah and his family would need to trust God to protect and direct them during the storm.

The Hebrew word translated **roof** in verse 16 only occurs here in the Old Testament; therefore, there is some question as to its meaning. If it does mean roof then this verse indicates it was to extend out over the sides of the ark about 18 inches (a cubit) all around it. However, some scholars believe it is referring to an 18-inch opening that was supported by the posts of the roof to extend all around the ark just under the roof, providing the ark with ventilation. Also, God instructed Noah to put one door on one side of the ark. There would be only one way in or out. And given the number of animals that were to join Noah's family in the ark, God made sure there would be enough room for all of them by instructing Noah to build three decks within the ark.

#### **KEY DOCTRINE:** *Salvation*

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

#### **VERSE 17**

Parallel to verse 13, for a third time God repeated His pronouncement that He was going to destroy **every creature under heaven with the breath of life in it** and **everything**. By repeating this a third time, God was expressing His intentions with the greatest emphasis. It was only after God gave Noah instructions to build the ark that God told him He was going to bring a flood on the earth as His instrument of judgment.

 **What are the dangers of ignoring sin?**

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## RESCUE PROMISED (GEN. 6:18-22)

<sup>18</sup> “But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark with your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives. <sup>19</sup> You are also to bring into the ark two of all the living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> Take with you every kind of food that is eaten; gather it as food for you and for them.” <sup>22</sup> And Noah did this. He did everything that God had commanded him.

### VERSE 18

After declaring His plans for the wicked, God revealed His plans for the man who walked with God, Noah. God was going to establish His **covenant** with Noah. Making a *covenant* was the establishment of a bond between two parties both legally and relationally. The agreement to establish a covenant may involve responsibilities required by both parties for the covenant to stand (often called a bilateral covenant); in other cases, the initiation and fulfillment of the covenant expectations may fall primarily on one of the parties (often called a unilateral covenant). The covenant God would make with Noah was a unilateral covenant, much like the covenants God would make with Abraham and David. In His covenant with Noah, the Lord graciously obligated Himself to save Noah and his family from the flood without any demands on Noah to earn God’s grace. Noah had the promise that God would use him to inaugurate a new age. Nevertheless, at the same time God recognized Noah’s faithful obedience to Him. It is an example of the truth of 2 Chronicles 16:9, “For the eyes of the LORD roam throughout the earth to show himself strong for those who are wholeheartedly devoted to him.”

***Faithful obedience to God is the sign of authentic faith in God.***

### VERSES 19-22

Next, God revealed His concern for the survival of every type of bird and animal on the earth by instructing Noah to bring into the ark a **male and female** of every kind of living creature He had created. God intended to use them to repopulate the earth, and God intended to use the ark and Noah to protect and care for them until He did. God was

preserving that which He had declared to be “very good” at creation (Gen. 1:31). Just as God brought the animals to Adam to be named (2:18-19), God would bring these animals to Noah to be saved. Therefore, in verse 21, God instructed Noah to go out and gather food that would be edible both for the people and all of the animals that would be on the ark.

Noah, this righteous man who walked with God, set the standard of what it means to be a servant of the Lord. He ***did everything that God had commanded him*** to do. His faith in God was demonstrated by His faithful obedience to God. Faithful obedience to God is the sign of authentic faith in God.

○ How are obedience and God’s offer to rescue related?

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○ Where does God want you to step out in faith?  
How does God’s promise to Noah encourage you to respond in obedience to Him?

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## **JUDGMENT EXECUTED (GEN. 7:20-24)**

<sup>20</sup> The mountains were covered as the water surged above them more than twenty feet. <sup>21</sup> Every creature perished — those that crawl on the earth, birds, livestock, wildlife, and those that swarm on the earth, as well as all mankind. <sup>22</sup> Everything with the breath of the spirit of life in its nostrils — everything on dry land died. <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> And the water surged on the earth 150 days.

### **VERSES 20-24**

Here the focus of the biblical text shifts from the ark to the effects of the flood on the earth. After forty days of rain, the ***water surged*** above the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water (7:17-18). The water



continued to rise until its height was more than **twenty feet** above that of the mountains (literally 15 cubits which equals 22.5 feet, half of the height of the ark).

Verses 21-22 continue with its focus on the effects of the flood. Verse 21 begins with **every creature perished** and verse 22 ends with **everything on dry land died**. Also, using the same expressions to list every creature on the earth that God had created in Genesis 1, the text reports that every creature that was on the earth when God brought the flood perished. The bracketing statements at the beginning of verse 21 and end of verse 22 along with the inclusive language of “every” and “all” in these verses emphatically communicates that no living being escaped or survived God’s judgment He executed with the flood.

### ***The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is life to all who place their faith in Christ.***

Verse 23 may appear to be redundant, but its redundancy serves an important purpose. Repetition is one of the main ways the biblical writers expressed emphasis and built toward the climax of their message. In this instance, the text builds to the climactic contrast between what happened to every living being on earth because of human sin and what happened to the one who was a godly man: **Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark**. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is life to all who place their faith in Christ (see Rom. 6:23). Noah and his family did not survive because of their own wisdom or ingenuity. They lived because the Lord graciously saved them. Noah depicted a future hope for humanity.



**Why do some people doubt that God will judge His creation?**

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# APPLY THE TEXT

- + 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 as a group ways you see God's mercy and grace in this passage. How can we celebrate God's offer of salvation? How should knowing that sin results in death create urgency in what we do?**

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**What difficult thing is God asking you to do? How can you respond like Noah?**

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**Memorize Genesis 6:13.**

## *Prayer Needs*

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