

The Great Flood (Part 3)

Beauty and Noah's Floating Zoo
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As I did last time, I would like to begin this sermon in those first few critical verses of Genesis 6. So, we will start with the first four verses this afternoon.

Genesis 6:1-4 Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed [carnal] flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." There were giants [Nephilim] on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

These verses set the stage for all that follows them in chapters 6, 7, 8, and on into chapter 9.

What the sons of God did when they took wives from the daughters of men is the beginning of a process. This process eventually led to God's decisive and destructive judgment on the pre-Flood world. Every human person except those eight on the ark died as a result of God's judgment. And all those deaths—billions of people, perhaps—all died because of what started right here—"When the sons of God saw the daughters of men were beautiful; they took wives of all whom all they chose." These verses contain significant details in describing the true extent of humanity's corruption. And, this is just the beginning.

The principle of Bible study that I am leaning on here as I go through these things is the one found in Deuteronomy 8:3 and Matthew 4:4 where it says that, "Man shall live by every word of God." This principle, which Jesus tells us in the New Testament, suggests that every Word of God, every word of God's Book is significant in some way. Not always in the same way as any other word, but it is there for a reason. Details that God puts into His Book are not extraneous by any means. He does not throw filler words into the story or lesson. He is not trying to pad out a story. The details are significant.

So then, the Bible is efficiently written to pack the most information into the shortest amount of space. In many cases, the writing is extremely tight and streamlined so that you only get the gist of what was going on. But that "summary" is very concise and precise in its wording. So, every word counts. And we can say that is especially true in these first nine chapters of the book of Genesis because those nine chapters cover over 1650 years. If you look at it in your Bible, that is probably only about six to eight pages! Everything is written with an economy of words.

So when the Bible says something, and gives you a detail, it is significant, and worthy to be thought about.

Now, today's excursion will be quite lengthy. It will not be my normal 15 to 20 minute introduction. It will be longer today because I think it is important to go over. What we are going to concentrate on right now is the phrase, "The sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful." (Genesis 6:2)

It is interesting to me that among all Bible helps that I consulted to get some ideas of what this might mean, only a handful even dared to comment on this phrase at any length. Some might have mentioned it in passing, but they did not explain anything. It is almost as if they thought that what it meant was self-evident. And maybe it is to them. I do not know. Maybe I am thick in the head, and need a bit more help than that.

But, I was very surprised and intrigued that they did not try to make any comparisons to other parts of the Bible, or to mention why this would be something at all. Because, obviously, it had something major to do with what went on next in the narrative.

"They saw that they were beautiful, and they took wives of all they chose." And suddenly the earth is corrupt. Why did they not go back to the beginning of this process and think about it? What went wrong?

Maybe it really is self-evident, and needs no explanation, however the basic thing that I get out of it is that this indicates that the men—the sons of God—chose wives solely or primarily on the basis of the women's looks or sex appeal. The key words there are "solely," and "primarily."

A preacher named, J. Trapp, wrote many years ago,

"Beauty is a dangerous bait, and lust is sharp-sighted. It is not safe gazing upon a fair woman! How many have died of the wound of the eye! No one single means have so enriched hell as beautiful faces. Take heed our eyes! Be not windows of wickedness and loopholes of lust!"

I suppose it may be like that for some men. They see a beautiful woman, and the mind just starts going, and suddenly they are just full of sin. And evidently for some women, it can be that way too. They see a handsome guy and the next thing. . . well, I will not go any further.

But the Bible itself is typically neutral on beauty. Beauty is a thing that can be used for good, or evil. Some of the Bible's major characters are described as beautiful. And, as in certain cases, the beauty gets them into trouble, or gets other people into trouble.

For instance, listen to this list of "beautiful people." Sarah: She got Abraham into trouble, so much so that he thought he had to lie to get her out of Pharaoh's and Abimelech's houses. Rachel: Think of all the things that Jacob had to go through because Rachel was beautiful. Moses was a beautiful child, it says. Job's daughters: There were none in the east more beautiful than Job's daughters. David: He was very comely, and ruddy of face. Bathsheba: Oh boy! was she beautiful. Absalom was a very good looking man with a thick head of hair. Tamar was so beautiful that, without her knowing it, she incited her half-brother Amnon to lust after her. Esther was so beautiful that she caught the King of Persia's eye.

Even Israel personified—God, Himself, says that she was beautiful, and it attracted Him to her. And Helel was the ultimate in beauty. (Ezekiel 28)

Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells us that God made everything beautiful in its time. So, in a way, as ugly as someone might be, or as ugly as something might be, at a certain point, in its time, it is beautiful.

But, Proverbs 31:30 tells us that charm is deceitful and beauty is passing. It is not something that sticks around. A young beautiful woman becomes the old lady. Well, not that old ladies are ugly—I think I need to mention that. But, there is a certain passing of things.

The Psalms speak of the beauty of our Lord. It also speaks extensively about the beauty of holiness, which is really what God wants us to be beautiful in.

So, beauty can work for good or evil. It just depends upon the use to which it is put to. Of course, what J. Trapp is referring to when he was talking about "loopholes of lust," and "windows of wickedness," is what we call in the Bible (I John 2:16), "the lust of the eyes." That is what the apostle John called it. It is very easy to be wrongfully attracted to something or someone that looks good. It catches the eye and then things start going downhill.

It is simply attractive, and catches our attention. And then, our desires kick into high gear, and it is at that point that we become willing to say or do anything to have the object of our lusts. When we have reached that point, we have entered the stage of lust. This is beauty's dark side. It has the ability to lure a person from the way that is right.

Turn to Proverbs 6 to see how it is put. This is in a section regarding adultery.

Proverbs 6:25-26 Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids. For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.

It takes him from the way that is right, and it leads him into sin. Now, beauty does not have to do that, it can be in all purity. That is the way that it is supposed to be. But, beauty has the ability, because we are carnal men and women, to turn our heads away from what is right, and pretty soon we are leaving the right way and God's way behind us.

There is an interesting parallel between what happened here in Genesis 6, and what happened in Genesis 3, where Adam and Eve are in the Garden and are confronted by the serpent. Eve is convinced and deceived, and she takes of the fruit. But, notice how it describes this action in verse 6:

Genesis 3:6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. [And not only that] She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

So what this did was that it set up a parallel. Turn back to Genesis 6 and let us look at this again.

Genesis 6:2 . . . that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.

And then later on, they had these children, which became known as Nephilim.

Now, the interesting parallel between these two sins tells us something. Eve saw the fruit, and that it was pleasant to the eye, and she took it, and ate it.

These sons of God saw the daughters of men, and that they were beautiful, and they took wives of all they chose.

It is very similar language. In a way, God is telling us that what happened in chapter 6 is a result of what happened in chapter 3, and it follows the same sequence or course. It is a cycle or a pattern of sin. It starts with the eye and then goes into the mind as an attraction and pleasantness—a judgment of beauty and goodliness. And then it turns into an action. Notice the verb. In both instances, they "took." The idea found in the word "took" is that they did it (1) on their own, and (2) it was something that they were forbidden to do originally.

It is like the kid reaching into the cookie jar when his mother had told him not to go in there unless he has asked first. But, he did it anyway, took the initiative, and took the cookie that he was forbidden to take. This is the same sort of thing.

God is showing us that not only did Eve do it, not only did Adam participate, but that all humanity was following the same pattern. Seeing, being attracted, lusting, and then taking.

So what we are looking at is a three-step process: seeing—being attracted—taking action. And none of these three acts are by themselves intrinsically sinful.

You can see. God gave us two eyes so that we could see. We can make judgments that things are attractive and/or beautiful. That is fine. God has given us a mind to make judgments in this fashion. And that is good. We can even take action on those sorts of things, and they do not necessarily have to be evil or sinful.

However, the sinful part of this three-step process is actually not mentioned. The evil, the sin, is lust. That is a desire that has gone beyond the bounds. It is almost as if God left it out on purpose when He was talking about this pattern of sin because he was talking about men. He was talking about carnal, fleshly people. He said that in Genesis 6:3. He said that they were fleshly and carnal. "I'm not going to strive with this any longer."

So, we have this carnal element that is added to the pattern, and that is the lust that occurs between the attraction and the action—this is what always gets people into trouble.

There is a good reason why coveting is the tenth commandment right there at the end. Because, like Paul said, it goes right back to the beginning. Covetousness is idolatry. In many ways, covetousness is the big bad one of those last six, because it gets us into more trouble than you might imagine—desires that go beyond the bounds.

When we allow our desires to go beyond the bounds, what are we doing really? We are saying to God and to ourselves, "I am able, by my own will, to contravene the bounds that God has set up." What does that mean? It means that you make yourself God (idolatry).

This next passage is a very well known section of Scripture dealing with temptation. It is found in James 1, and I want to read this and plug it into what is happening in Genesis 6:

James 1:12-17 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be

tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

James is describing the same process to us, as what happened in Genesis 3 and Genesis 6. But first, as he is getting into what he is going to say regarding temptation, he tells us and assures us that temptation is a natural part of life. It is going to happen. It is part of our sanctification process, as a matter of fact. It is a Christian's duty and goal, he says here, to endure it and to overcome it, so that he will be given a crown of life—eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

So, there is no way that any of us are going to be able to go through life without facing temptations of one kind or another. We have to take that as a given, and then do what he says here—be proved, which means tested, overcome, and get through those tests in a godly way.

He also tells us that we should not accuse God of tempting us because the temptation does not begin with God at all. Remember, He made everything beautiful in its time, and He has put all these things here and has given us eyes to see, and a mind to make judgments. But, the temptation comes from within—from ourselves—it is our own uncontrolled desires that drag us away from our morals and God's commandments.

If we let our desires run free, sin is assured and incurs the death penalty. This is the process where James said that desire has conceived, gives birth to sin, and as it matures leads to death. That is the process.

Now, there are two interesting details, here, that I would like to talk about. The first one is that James describes the desire, lust, sin, death cycle in terms of conception, birth, growth/maturity, and death. And that is exactly what we are seeing in Genesis 6. Men desired the beautiful women. They lusted for them. They took them for themselves as wives in some illicit way. The Bible does not say how. It just says that they took whichever ones that they chose. And then, (it does not end there) they brought forth evil progeny. And the eventual result was death for the whole human race—not just for one, not just for the progeny, but it was for everyone—except the eight who God put onto the ark, saved by God's grace.

So, what we see here in James 1, in parallel with Genesis 6, is that Genesis 6 is a perfect illustration of how this cycle works—the cycle of desire, lust, sin, and death. And it shows us not just how it works in the individual, like James showed, but how it works in society and frankly in all mankind.

Back in the first book, so very early in the first book, God shows us in two places (1) In individual scenarios with Adam and Eve in the Garden, and (2) In Genesis 6, in a society-wide example, how carnal men go off the track and incur His wrath.

So, in many respects, in the first few chapters of the Bible, we are already without excuse of an illustration of what can go wrong, how badly it can go wrong, and how quickly it can go wrong. That is, unless we are in control of ourselves.

The second thing I want to point out from James 1 is that he warns us in verse 16 not to be deceived. As soon as James talks about temptation, he tells us and warns us, "Do not be deceived my beloved

brethren." And then he quickly follows this by telling us that God gives us every perfect and good thing.

Now, what James does by telling us this is imply that temptation is itself a result of deception. He goes through and he tells us that temptation is there. You need to battle it. But if temptation goes on too long, it turns to lust, lust becomes sin, and sin grows up and results in death. But the thing that you have to watch out for is deception. God is not the author of deception. God created everything, originally, in a good and perfect state. And so the deception is not from God. So, if the deception is not from God, who is it from? Well, you have two answers. One is Satan the Devil and his demons. And the second is human nature, which is a subset of the first one, because human nature was formed because of the deceptions of Satan.

By deception something convinces us that a desirable thing or person should be ours no matter what the cost. And then, that deception continues by persuading us that our means of acquiring that thing or that person is justified. "The end justifies the means."

Yet, the object of our desire is in most cases, good—even perfect. Solomon tells us that a goodly wife is a gift from God. So, the beautiful women were not the problem, necessarily. They had been made beautiful by God. It was a fine thing. But, it was the deception that turned them into something else.

So, what we are seeing here, I think, in Genesis 3 and 6 is that a gift from God is by deception taken, misused, and corrupted. God provided the woman for the man. Think of this. I think that this is what happened in the antediluvian world.

God made women for some very specific purposes. If we would go back to Genesis 2:18 we see that God tells us that the first reason he had,

Genesis 2:18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him" [suitable for him, fitting for him].

So, God made a woman to be a companion for a man. And then, just a few verses later, in verse 24, we see that after God made Eve, Moses records the following comment,

Genesis 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

So, these are two huge purposes that encapsulate a lot of other things. But, the first one is that they are to be essentially equals. They are comparable. They are suitable for one another. Mr. Armstrong said that when there is more than one, there has to be a leader. So, God chose Adam to have the authority. But, He made Eve to be comparable to him. And certainly, their spiritual potential is the same.

The second thing is that they were to be joined as one flesh; that they were to be so close, so comparable to one another, so united together, that they became a single thing—one, a unit.

Genesis 6:2 describes a corruption of the God-ordained purposes. First, men began to objectify the women, and value them only for their beauty and sexuality. This has to do with the first point from Genesis 2:18—that God had made them comparable to men. Now what happens when you objectify

someone, in this case a woman? Well, depending on the situation, the men did one of two things. They either put the women on a pedestal, began to nearly worship them, (we know of many, many ancient cultures that basically had a female goddess as their deity, and in this way they worshipped the concept of women, particularly their fertility aspects) or they could have done is just the opposite. Instead of putting women on a pedestal, they degraded women into second-class citizens—essentially sex slaves.

So, it could go either way, either to an overdoing of it—of raising them up onto a pedestal—or pushing them down into second-class citizens. I do not know which one happened before the Flood, but most likely both happened, just as it eventually did after the Flood. However, either way the God ordained suitable companionship that He had designed to create a loving environment for a family and to produce godly seed became perverted.

As mentioned, a gift of God was by deception taken, misused, perverted, and corrupted.

Now, the second thing that they did in Genesis 6 is in the phrase, "They took them wives of all whom they chose." What this means is that they began to undermine the second big principle: they began to treat the marriage covenant lightly.

It could had been wholesale adultery; it could have been spousal abuse of some sort; it could have been rampant divorce; it could have been multiple marriages (back to back to back); it could have been polygamy (which is multiple marriages simultaneously); or maybe some other thing or things. Whatever perversion of marriage that one could think of, evidently they were doing it.

So what we see is that God is telling us in so many words that the breakdown of marriage led to the breakdown of families, which led to the breakdown of their society, which led to their Day of the Lord.

Could there be a parallel to today? Why of course there is! The comparison is very obvious. Jesus tells us that as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be when the Son of Man returns. Satan the deceiver has deceived the whole world (Revelation 12:9). This was drilled into our heads by Mr. Armstrong who told us time and time again that Satan has deceived the whole world. He deceived the whole world before the Flood too, and he has deceived the whole world after the Flood.

How does he do it? He destroys the family, starting with marriage. The first time it ended in the water. Peter tells us that in the same way that it happened the first time, it is going to happen again. But the second time, the time of the end, is a time of destruction by fire rather than water. God promised with His covenant and rainbow that He would not use water as the destruction again.

Satan is using the same tactics in our time, for the same reasons. He wants to corrupt as many people as he can to thwart God's purpose for them. He wants them to sear their minds with all kinds of perversions. He wants them to get to the point where they cannot repent—ever—because they are so wicked and corrupt.

Why do you think that God brought on the Flood? So that their corruption would not go too far to ever be repented of. He also said, "I'm not going to strive with them. They are flesh. They can have an end point. So, I'm giving them 120 more years. That's all I am going to give them because if I give

them more, they will get to the point where the unpardonable sin will rear its ugly head, and I want to save them." And God will do the same thing now in our time. He will end it early. He says that He will have to cut it short in righteousness.

"In righteousness" is a very important phrase. That is what God is interested in.

Satan especially wants God's called-out-children to be caught in that net—perversion, starting with the lust of the eyes and leading to all sorts of terrible things. And, we have such ready access to such things these days. It is just so easy. It makes me wonder if they had something like the Internet, mass printing, or other mass communication before the Flood, to incite so many to the mass perversion before the Flood.

II Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

This is what I meant that God will cut it short in righteousness. He will let it go for a while to let us repent, but He will cut it short in righteousness because He wants all to come to repentance. And if that means their death and resurrection back to physical life in the second resurrection when things will be better, then so be it.

II Peter 3:11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved [by fire from verse 10], what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness?

II Peter 3:13-15 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation.

That goes right back to verse 9 above.

II Peter 3:17-18 You therefore, beloved, since you know these things beforehand, beware lest you fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; [How do we do this?] grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

So, we do have a counter to the wickedness and perversion that is out there. And the counter is that we stick close to God and keep growing in both grace and knowledge of Christ, so that we know what to do and where our strength comes from.

Well, this ends our excursion into the phrase, "They were beautiful." That is only the beginning of the problem. It actually covers a whole lot more. That is why I said that especially in Genesis, in these first few chapters, that everything is written so tightly and economically, you really have to think about these things.

Today, we are going to get into Genesis 7 a little bit, which is the actual beginning of the Flood. There are a few loose pieces I want to pick up from last time when we covered Genesis 6:13 all the way to the end of the chapter. Essentially, this covers God's announcement that He would bring a flood upon the earth; His instructions to Noah about the construction of the ark; His covenant with

Noah to save him and his family by the ark; and Noah's job not just in building the ark, but also caring for the animals and bringing them through the Flood also, so that there would be animal life after the Flood.

Now we see in Genesis 6:22 that Noah did according to *all* that God commanded him to do. He did *everything*. And, he followed the instructions to the letter. We saw in Hebrews 11 that Noah was a faithful servant who did all these things in faith, and he listened to and obeyed God down to the very last detail. He did it for the saving of his family, yes, and by doing so, he condemned the world, yes, but he knew that in responding to God like this his family's lives would be saved, and humanity would be able to live through the flood. Not only all that, but all animal life would be preserved through the Flood as well.

So, he entered into a covenant with God. The terms of the covenant he made with God would mean that he had to get things exactly right for the preservation of all life. This was a huge burden on one man: the preservation of all human and animal life in whose nostrils is the breath of life—on Noah's shoulders. Of course, he had God helping him, but on the other hand, he was only one man.

Now the thing I would like to clean up here is the subject of gopher wood. If you remember, last sermon I played down the idea that it could have been a type of laminated wood. I had said that it was probably more likely to be something like cyprus or perhaps cedar. But, there are a couple of arguments that I did not bring up. After studying it a bit more, I decided to at least bring them up and mention them to you all.

The first argument, and it is pretty good too, is that if it had been cyprus or cedar, why did Moses not just use the Hebrew word for it? We know that in Hebrew there are words for both of these trees. He could have recorded it as, "Go make yourself an ark of cyprus or cedar wood." Would that not have been easier? Well, this tells us that either gopher wood is neither of these types of wood, or that the word that Moses used did not describe the kind of tree that the wood came from. "Gopher wood" may have been something else that he was trying to get across to us.

The second argument is the word itself—transliterated from the Hebrew "gopher." Gopher, from the Hebrew, is related to two other words in this very sentence. That is our word "cover," which is "kaphar," and the noun "pitch," which is "kopher." So, three Hebrew words in this sentence—gopher, kaphar, and kopher—are all from the same root word.

What this indicates (if these three words are indeed related) is that there is something that we are supposed to take from their being so close together in the sentence, indicating to me that whatever wood it was, it was infused or treated with tar, pitch, bitumen, or glue, or some other kind of petroleum-based material because that is what it goes back to—this covering, this pitch, gopher—that it is covered with or it is glued with. We call it laminate.

Now, it might not be laminate, but a treated wood. Today, our railroad ties are soaked in creosote. That is done to help them to endure the elements, as well as for adding some strength to the wood itself.

But, it could be what we know as laminated wood—strips of wood covered in glue, pasted and pressed together making a very strong board.

It might be either way—treated wood, laminated wood—or both. So, laminate is not out of the question. It could have been laminated cyprus, or some other synthesis of both arguments. But it is not out of bounds to believe that it was laminated wood.

Now, let us read the first five verses of chapter 7:

Genesis 7:1-5 Then the LORD said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation. You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female; also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the seed alive on the face of all the earth. For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made." And Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him.

Again, we see that he did it exactly as God had told him.

Now, between the end of chapter 6, and the beginning of chapter 7 seems to be the passing of those 120 years, or certainly most of it, while Noah was preparing the ark because chapter 7 opens just one week before the flood waters would break forth.

One commentator I read said that this was probably a Sabbath that God spoke this on, and He brought the Flood after one more week. I do not know if the Flood started on the Sabbath or not. But, it is certainly a possibility. It does not say.

Anyway, what we know from here is that the ark is finished. All that needed to be done now was to load it and for God to seal it. Then He would send the flood waters, and the waiting would begin.

Last time we saw how big the ark was. It was a massive tanker sized barge with a payload capacity of 32,800 tons. We can say how big it was, that it is a lot, and it is, but it really does not mean a great deal to us—32,800 tons. Most of us do not have a mind to know just how much that really is. We saw, trying to use this building as an idea, how big the thing was, and in that manner tried to figure out how much we could store in a place that large, basically four of our church buildings with extra height added upstairs. That is a lot of space, especially when you figure that there were three different levels of about 15 feet apiece. You can get a lot into an area like that.

But, that big number is still abstract to us. I mentioned last time that the ark had a volume of more than 1.5 million cubic feet. I think we all are familiar with a railroad box car. We see them often as we travel. We notice how large they are. Most of them run about 50 feet long, 10 feet wide, and 10 feet high. That is very large. Now, the railroad car I used for my calculations was a bit smaller than this, running about 44 feet long—I do not know why—probably an older style box car. Even so, using the smaller box car, the ark's capacity is equivalent to 569 standard box cars.

Now, this is one train that is five and a half miles long. That is a lot of time sitting at the crossing waiting and waiting. They would need to have a lot of engines to pull something like that too. Or, if you can think better in terms of successive trains, it would be about 8 freight trains, with 71 cars each. That is a lot of circuses!

Now, another comparison we could make is floor space. Sometimes volume is difficult to grasp in the mind. The ark had more than 101,000 square feet of floor space with its three decks. That is roughly the size of 21 basketball courts, or a little more than two American football fields, not counting the end zones. But if you include the end zones, it is about 1 and $\frac{3}{4}$ football fields. That is a lot of space!

Go and look at just about any stadium, you will see just how big the football field is. The ark could hold two of them! That is a lot of space.

Okay, so it is a lot. Could it be enough to carry all the animals? There are a lot of animals out there. God made things in many varieties. There is no end to Discovery shows and programs about all the different kinds of animals that exist and how weird some of them are. We really like those sorts of programs.

Notice, in Genesis 6, that Moses uses the term "kind(s);" Noah was to bring into the ark animals after their kinds. That is the word we need to think about for a bit—two of every kind, except seven of every clean kind.

Now the Hebrew word for "kind" is "miym." It is a vague term. Scholars are still trying to figure out its etymology, and what the exact meaning of the root is. But, even though it is vague, we do know we can generally think of it as a group or category. That is about as close as we can get to an actual definition—a kind is a group, or category. But, there is a bit of a proviso on this too—it is a group or category of things that have similar characteristics. You cannot just have a bunch of animals and call them a kind. There must be something within the group that are the same or very similar. It is not the equivalent of our biological term "species." Species is way too narrow for the Hebrew term. It may be closer to the scientific term, "genus," which is the next step back up the biological ladder. It is a much broader group.

Some have even said that it is actually closer to the scientific term, "family," which is an even bigger group. Species are grouped into a genus; several genera are grouped into a family, etc.

Perhaps—and I do not know, hence I choose "perhaps," because nobody knows for sure—the limiting feature is whether the members of a kind can reproduce. Perhaps. That would mean that even things of different "species" that could effectively reproduce would be in the same kind.

I do not know if that would include being able to produce fertile offspring, although I would suppose so. The production of mules would not quite fit the situation here.

But, nobody knows. That is what I am trying to tell you. The word "kind" in the Hebrew is so non-specific that we do not know for sure just how big a grouping is intended by Moses. Like I said, it might be larger than a species, and it might be a genus, though it may be as big as a family.

What I think we can say is that despite all the types of dogs in the world today, which seems like hundreds of different varieties of dogs, they most likely would have taken a wolf pair, a fox pair, a hyena pair, and maybe a couple of more pairs of the various dog-like creatures, as well as a dog pair, and that would be enough to reproduce the "kind" after the Flood. So, I do not think that you would be limited just to two dogs, but rather you would have two dogs, two foxes, two wolves, two hyenas—whatever all the various dog kinds that are in the world, and that would still only be a few animals.

You would not have to bring a pair each of the Pomeranians, German Shepherds, and Dachshunds, and all that, because they were all bred over a few thousand years from the original dog kind, which came off the ark. Even though, with the Chihuahua and the Great Dane, or St. Bernard—you might think of them reproducing in a rather comical way—however, they could, because they are all dogs. And that is how all our different dogs have come to be. They were all bred from the canine pair after the Flood.

So after the Flood, when they were all released, the genetic variations that are within the kinds would eventually give us the many different types of canines we know today. And it actually would not take very long. There is enough genetic variation in the DNA that it would not take very long before they would have various types and varieties of dogs once again. This is not evolution, but rather just the natural genetic variation that is there. Some people want to call it microevolution, but these species are not gaining information in their DNA. As varieties are bred, DNA becomes lost as they continue to choose some things, while discarding other things.

Now, I have used dogs as an example today. But, this would happen in the same manner for the other kinds on the ark as well—cats, rats, sheep, goats, deer, elephants, giraffes, and the various antelopes, squirrels, bovines—you name it, there would need to be only a small number of representative varieties within the kind in order to preserve the kind through the Flood.

This, of course, included birds, reptiles, most insects, and various amphibians. But, there were a great many kinds that did not need to go into the ark. Namely, the sea creatures—fish, mollusks, sharks, crustaceans, coral, jellyfish, starfish, sponges, and other sorts of things—they would have no problem, for the most part. Probably even mammalian creatures like dolphins, and whales, and possibly even the sea lions, and those sorts of animals could have also survived, perhaps. There would be a lot of swimming for a while, but they probably did. You have aquatic reptiles—worms, nematodes, and microscopic animals of all kinds—they would not need to go onto the ark because they have survival mechanisms they could use in this situation.

So now, in doing our calculations regarding the space needed for the animals that were going to be coming onto the ark, we can eliminate much more than half of all the known species. Actually, it is more like about 9/10ths of the known species we can eliminate from needing to be on the ark, because they could survive as they were.

Believe it or not, there are more than a million known species of animals, but after we eliminate all the water creatures, there are really no more than about 20,000 species remaining of land animals and such that Noah would have to take along.

However, remember that a species is not really a kind. A species is a rather narrow grouping. So in reality, Noah probably took fewer kinds than 20,000 species—probably just several thousand kinds.

I have also mentioned before that it says here that Noah took one pair of unclean animals, and three pairs plus one of the clean animals. And the one extra would be the one sacrificed (Genesis 8:20) of the clean animals afterward.

This is the way that it should be understood, I believe.

In the Hebrew it says, "seven sevens." And it is very confusing. But what it means is pairs. So, there are three pairs of clean animals with one extra, so seven for each clean kind.

So, let us just say that Noah took a pair of all the unclean kinds, and seven of each clean sort into the ark with him. Even with expanding things out this would total only about 50,000 animals. This is a very conservative figure. One author did a feasibility study and tried to do this as closely as he could to the Scripture. He said that in reality, Noah could have taken as few as 2000 animals, depending on how you define a kind.

Now, we still have not gotten to the size of things. Biologists calculate that the average size of most land animals is about the size of a sheep, or smaller. This of course is an average of elephants and shrews, rhinos and mice, and everything in between from the very small to the very large. And some say that it is even smaller; that in reality, we should be thinking about the size of a beaver, or as small as a rabbit. It just depends on who you are reading, and how they do these calculations. So, probably somewhere between a sheep and a rabbit is the average size of a typical land animal.

However, let us use the largest average, the size of a sheep. A sheep, as he is going off to market, needs only about 12 cubic feet of space, a pen or slot of about 2 feet by 2 feet by 3 feet. Now, if we multiply 12 cubic feet by 50,000 animals, we would need about 600,000 cubic feet of space for their lodging. Remember, the capacity is 1.5 million cubic feet. This means that the animals would need not quite half of the space—about 40 percent of the ark. You would still have 60 percent of the space for storage.

Let us say that we double the size given to each animal, you will come out with the animals getting 80 percent of the space, with 20 percent for storage.

Now if the average size is more like a beaver, or even a rabbit, and we reduce their living space by about one-third, this would mean that instead of 40 percent of the ark being used for the animals' lodging, it would be only 15 percent of the space needed for them. If there were fewer kinds, the percentage would be reduced even further. Let us say we use genera for kind, and that we would have about 16,000 kinds, we would only need 13 percent of the space for their lodging. If we do it by family, roughly 2000 kinds only, the animals would have been confined to only 2 percent of the ark's total available space.

So, it really all depends on how many, and how big these animals are. But you can see that however we choose to do it, the ark was plenty big enough to carry representatives of all the world's kinds safely through the Flood.

Now, there are two more factors that we can add to these calculations.

It has been supposed that the rabbit or beaver size is actually more representative, because God would have probably brought young animals to Noah, those on the verge of being sexually active. What this would mean is that on the other side of the Flood, they would have all their bearing years in front of them. They would be able to produce more than an older pair would likely do. So instead of full-grown lions, you would have two just beginning to reach sexual maturity. They also would probably be hardier, young and strong, and their rooming requirements most likely would be reduced.

The second thing is that it is probably true that once the animals were situated on the ark, God caused them to hibernate. To me, that would be a wise thing to do. You do not want a bunch of wild animals freaking out with the sounds, the rocking, and whatever else was happening while in the ark. God would have probably caused them to at least be calm, and perhaps actually to hibernate.

This, too, would have greatly reduced their space requirements for exercise, and allow more for storage of things other than foodstuff, which also means much less work for the eight people of Noah's family would have to do—cleaning, feeding, and such things.

Even so, I am sure that they were kept very busy. There could have been as many as 50,000 animals on board. There was a lot to do, maintain, and things of this nature.

Now, the rest of the room on the ark, up to 60 percent of its capacity, would be for food, rooms and comforts for Noah and his family that would last a whole year, and other cargo—most likely the equivalent of books and other records to be preserved, tools, furniture, art works, and other things. It was essentially a time capsule of the things from before the Flood. I am sure that they would have brought many things we would never have considered—building materials. I am sure that they had a room just for lumber because who knew what the earth was going to be like when this was over. If they wanted to build something like a house, or dig a well, they would need building materials and tools to do the job.

If you were faced with what Noah was faced with, knowing that the earth would be destroyed, and all the people in it, what would you bring with you? What if you knew that you had up to 120 years to think about and prepare, what would you include?

Let us conclude today in Matthew 19:24-26

Matthew 19:24-26 "And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

If God could provide for the saving of human and animal life through the Great Flood, He can certainly provide for us in these uncertain times. And of course, more than that, He will make a way through it all for us so that we survive and thrive, all the way into the Kingdom of God.