

Lessons From The Life of Noah Genesis 6-9

There is a movie based on Noah's life about to come out. I don't know much about it, but I know the director is an atheist and so we can't assume it will be accurate to Scripture. Noah's life may be entertaining to the world, but Noah's life is important to us for other reasons. His life should encourage us because one thing we see in Noah's life is God's faithfulness.

Romans 15:4, "For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." The Scriptures give God's people hope. Why? Because the One who inspired the Bible is a God of hope. A little later in Romans 15:13, "May the God of hope fill you with all peace and joy in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you will abound in hope." God gives us hope as we learn to trust in Him through trusting His inspired Word. Our peace and joy in life comes through the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives who works through the Word to empower us to trust the Lord and act on His Word.

Romans 15:4 says that what was written in earlier times was written to give us hope. We have hope because we can look back on the Old Testament and see how God relates to His people in complete faithfulness. Studying the Old Testament the right way should be an encouraging endeavor. **The Old Testament was written to give us hope.** Genesis was written to give us hope. How? Genesis shows us how the world began, how sin entered the world and it shows us how God is the One who from the very beginning seeks to save the lost. Noah is an example of God's grace at work.

Noah broke the sinful pattern of his day by walking with God and this morning we're going to do an overview of the life of Noah from Genesis 6-9.

Let's start with Genesis 6:1-12. Let's begin with:

1. Noah's Start – Genesis 6:1-12

Noah, like Enoch, broke the sinful pattern of his day. Noah lived during a very rebellious time as it says in Genesis 6:5 that the wickedness of man was great on the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually. Why is that bad? **What is true on the inside of a person comes out on the outside.** We are what we think. We live out the thoughts and intentions of our hearts. If the human heart is bad on the inside the lifestyle will be bad on the outside. Remember Mark 7:20-23. The Pharisees were concerned with the outside of the man, but Jesus told them what is on the inside of a person is the main problem. Man was so bad during the days of Noah that it says God was sorry He made man on the earth.

When it says in Genesis 3:6 that the Lord was sorry he made man, some translations say "Repented." The King James Version says, "And it repented the Lord that He had made

man on the earth. Repentance means to change your mind. Does God change his mind? We know from other verses of Scripture God does not change his mind. Malachi 3:6, “For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.” James 1:17, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom **there is no variation or shadow due to change.**”

Repentance is an anthropomorphic expression for the pain of the divine love at the sin of man. The exceeding sinfulness of man grieved the heart of God. Sin grieves the heart of God. Sin matters to God.

What does the Lord God decide to do with this exceedingly wicked generation? Genesis 6:7 shows us God decided to blot out man, animals and birds. The good news is that God’s destruction is not total. His destruction was not designed to bring the human race to an end. Why? “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” **God’s mercy is seen in the midst of His wrath, pledging the preservation and restoration of humanity through Noah.** Why is that so important? Why did God preserve the world through Noah?

Look back to Genesis 3:15. One paragraph after man disobeys the Lord God and falls into sin God promised that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. God tells Satan that one of Eve’s descendants will crush His head and in the process defeat sin, Satan and death. We will look at this later, but the New Testament shows us how Noah becomes the man through whom God will fulfill His promise to provide the seed of the woman who will one day crush the head of the serpent. We read in Luke 3:36 how Noah is in the Messianic line. Noah is a distant relative of Christ the Messiah, the seed of the woman who will crush the head of the serpent.

What does it mean in Genesis 6:8 when it says that Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord? Did Noah do something to earn God’s favor? Look over at Hebrews 11:5-7, “By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. By faith Noah, being warned *by God* about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” Noah found favor with God because Noah trusted God. He believed God’s Word and he acted on the revelation God gave him. That is how Noah pleased God and that is how you and I please God. We please God by responding in faith and obedience to the revelation we’ve been given which is the revelation about Christ in our day.

Let me give you an overview of what happens next in Noah’s life. When Noah was 480 years old, 120 years before the FLOOD (6:3), Noah was warned by God that the world would be destroyed by water. In response to that revelation Noah believed and he acted on what he knew to be true. **Noah found favor with God by trusting the revelation He was given by God. In response to the divine revelation he had Noah got to work preparing the ark and he got to work warning sinners about the wrath to come.** 2

Peter 2:5 describes Noah as a preacher of righteousness. Noah knew the wrath of God was coming and so he went out and warned people about the wrath to come.

Noah was a preacher of righteousness. He warned people about their sin and the wrath to come. He knew there was a day coming when the living God would judge his creatures in righteousness. That style of preaching is not real popular in our day, is it? Warning sinners about their sin and the wrath to come. But that is what the apostles did and that is what you and I must do. Acts 17:29-31, “²⁹ Being then God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. ³⁰ The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.” Peter in 2 Peter 3:8-10, “⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.” Jesus came first to take away sin and He is coming again to judge sin and there needs to be something about the wrath to come in our gospel presentations because that is what we are saved from.

Romans 5:8-9, “⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.” I Thessalonians 1:9-10, “For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.” The good news of the gospel is that Jesus bore the wrath our sins deserve on the cross so we will never face God’s wrath in the future.

Noah is an example of a man who started strong. How? He trusted the revelation God gave him with an active faith. Look back at Genesis 6:14-16. Noah is given exact instructions for building the ark and he gets to work. Then one week before the flood, God led Noah and his family into the ark and supernaturally directed the animals also to enter. When all were safely inside, God shut the door. Genesis 7:16, “Those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him; and the Lord closed *it* behind him.”

After the Lord closed the doors behind Noah, his family and the pairs of animals the flood comes. Let me give you a quick flood chronology (The MacArthur Study Bible):

1. In the 600th year of Noah (second month, tenth day), Noah entered the ark (Gen. 7:4, 10, 11).
2. In the 600th year of Noah (second month, seventeenth day), the flood began (Gen.

7:11).

3. The waters flooded the earth for 150 days (5 months of 30 days each), including the 40 days and 40 nights of rain (Gen. 7:12, 17, 24; 8:1).
4. In the 600th year of Noah (seventh month, seventh day), the waters began to recede (7:24; 8:1).
5. The waters later receded to the point that (600th year, seventh month, seventeenth day) the ark rested on Ararat (Gen. 8:3, 4).
6. The waters continued to abate so that (600th year, tenth month, first day) the tops of the mountains were visible (Gen. 8:5).
7. Forty days later (600th year, eleventh month, tenth day) Noah sent out a raven and a dove (Gen. 8:6). Over the next 14 days, Noah sent out two more doves (Gen. 8:10, 12). In all, this took 61 days or two months and one day.
8. By Noah's 601st year on the first month, the first day, the water had dried up (Gen. 8:12, 13).
9. Noah waited one month and twenty-six days before he disembarked in the second month, the 27th day of his 601st year. From beginning to end, the Flood lasted one year and ten days from Gen. 7:11 to Gen. 8:14.

Have you noticed how the flood seems to be a trump card for Scientist's who want to do away with Scripture? Bill Nye in his debate with Ken Ham kept going back to the foolishness of the flood as evidence that the Bible is not true. Although modern science mocks any notion of a universal flood, the flood is a significant truth taught in the Word of God - "The cataclysmic deluge described in Genesis 6-9 as God's Judgment on the earth is mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament (Gen. 10:1, 32; 11:10; Ps. 29:10; 104:6-9; Isa. 54:9) and in the New Testament (Matt. 24:38-39; Luke 17:26-27; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:3-7). That more verses are devoted to the flood than to the creation (Gen. 12) or the fall (Gen. 3) suggests the significance of the account." Why do modern scientists want to dismiss the flood? They think they have Scientific reasons but I think there are theological reasons.

If the flood really happened, and we believe the Bible so we believe it did, there are 4 theological lessons that flow from it: (1) The flood demonstrates God's hatred of sin and the certainty of His Judgment on it. (2) God's giving people 120 years to repent before Judgment came demonstrates His patience in dealing with sin. (3) The sparing of one family demonstrates God's saving grace. (4) The flood reveals God's rule over nature and over humanity. The flood is an example of the holiness and the mercy of God at work. His holiness is seen in judgment and His mercy is seen in sparing 8 people - Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives.

In Genesis 6-8 Noah looks like a spiritual all star doesn't he? He broke the sinful pattern of his day by taking God at His Word. He followed the Lord's instructions for building the ark and he went out and warned people to flee from the wrath to come. God kept his promises to Noah and when he got off the ark, Noah, along with his family began the work of repopulating the earth. You start to wonder at this point if Noah might be the seed of the woman who is now going to crush the head of the serpent – he sure looks like a worthy prospect. But not all who start well finish well. Look at Genesis 9:20-21.

2. Noah's Shame – Genesis 9:20-23

Among the things preserved in the ark was sinful human nature. We see Noah's sinful nature on display in Genesis 9:20-21, "Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard. He drank of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent." Despite the cleansing judgment of the flood, man was still a sinner. The Bible says in Romans 5:12 that when Adam sinned all sinned." Adam's sin nature was passed down through Seth who passed it on to Noah who was a tenth generation descendant of Seth. **The tragic story of Noah's drunkenness and the sudden unveiling of his son's rebellious heart provides graphic evidence that creation was still under sin's curse.**

Henry Morris writes, "The first time wine is mentioned in the Bible occurs here in connection with the drunkenness and shame of Noah. Undoubtedly the nature of wine was well-known and there is no information in scripture that Noah was not fully cognizant of what he was doing when he made and drink his wine. Scripture does not hesitate to call attention to the failures of even the most saintly of men. Noah, having stood strong against the attacks of evil men for hundreds of years, remaining steadfast in the face of such opposition and discouragement as few men have ever faced, now let down his guard, as it were, when it seemed that all would be peace and victory from now on."

Noah may not have intended to drink in order to get drunk but he did and his drunkenness led to his shame. **As we keep reading through the Bible we see time and time again drinking that leads to drunkenness being connected with sin and shame.** Let's look chronologically at the flow of Scripture as it relates to the shame associated with drinking and drunkenness (Genesis 19:30–35; Lev 10:9; Deut 21:20; Prov 20:1; 23:29–35).

What about us today, this side of the cross? Ephesians 5:18, "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." The issue is what controls you. If the effects of wine control a person (I think other drug use could fall into this category because of the effects of other drugs on the brain which takes control of the mind) bad things will inevitably happen. **Nothing good ever happens to people in the Bible who get drunk with wine.** You can't find one good outcome to anyone getting drunk - but you can find a whole lot of sin and shame and things people regret.

Look at Genesis 9:22. Noah's drunkenness leads him down a path to shame. His drunkenness impelled him to throw off his clothing and he lays down in his tent in a naked drunken sleep. As Noah lay there sleeping, Ham, his youngest son, entered his

father's tent. Genesis 9:22, "Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside." The Hebrew word for saw means gazed at. Instead of looking away Ham stared at his father's nakedness. Ham's heart was revealed through his shameful act of gazing at his father's nakedness. After the fall nakedness in public is always used in the sense of shame.

Ham goes out of the tent and finds his other two brothers Shem and Japheth thinking they too will share in the satisfaction of looking on their father's shame. **Where Ham dishonored his dad the other two sons do the right thing** – They take a different approach to their father's shame. Genesis 9:23, "But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father's nakedness.

Shem and Japheth do the right thing. They refuse to even look at their father. Doing what they could to help him, they cover him with a garment. **Shem and Japheth reveal their faith in Noah's God through their actions of protection.** Henry Morris, "The act of Shem and Japheth plainly testified of both their respect for their father and their own reverential faith in the Lord. Ham's actions revealed a heart of rebellion and unbelief – not only against his father but also against his father's God." Again, let's remember what a person does on the outside is the result of what is taking place on the inside.

One thing we can learn from Genesis 9:20-23 is that a parent's sin puts their children in an awkward position. When a parent chooses to sin often the children suffer the most. I have a friend who is in his early 30's and he really looks up to his dad and this past week his dad sent him an email telling him he has been looking at pornography for the past 20 years – sort of a confession. When a parent chooses to live in sin it always trickles down to the children. Why should you and I battle sin? One reason is that we don't want the consequences of our sin to trickle down to our family.

Another reason is that our sin leaves a blight on the testimony of Christ. That is why God holds leaders in the church to a high position in terms of their character. I Timothy 3:1-2, "The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Therefore an overseer must be above reproach." I Timothy 3:7, "Deacons likewise must be dignified." Elders must be above reproach in their character and deacons must be dignified in their character. You also have not a drunkard and not addicted to much wine. Why? Because if you tamper with alcohol it will inevitably lead you down the path of sin and shame at some point in your life. Noah is a sad example of that.

Noah's sons responded as a result of the conditions of their hearts and they were rewarded accordingly – Two sons were blessed and one was cursed.

3. Noah's Sentence – Genesis 9:24-29

Eventually, Noah wakes up from his drunken stupor and notices that a garment has been placed on him and he learns what happened. How does Noah respond? Look at Genesis

9:24-27, “When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. So he said, “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants He shall be to his brothers.” He also said, “Blessed be the LORD, The God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. “May God enlarge Japheth, And let him dwell in the tents of Shem; And let Canaan be his servant.”

Noah’s prophetic words begin with Ham (in the person of his son Canaan), then Shem and then Japheth, from youngest to oldest. **Because of the seriousness of his offence Ham receives first attention.** “Cursed be Canaan’ A servant of servants He shall be to his brothers.” Allen Ross writes, “Noah was not punishing Ham’s son for something *Ham* did. Instead, Noah’s words referred to the nation of Canaanites that would come from Ham through Canaan. Ham’s act could not be left without repercussions.¹” The point of Noah’s curse is that the descendants of Ham, the Canaanites, would be in servitude to the descendants of both Shem and Japheth. The descendants of Ham would be cursed and the line of Shem will be blessed. We see in the book of Deuteronomy God commanding His people to wipe out the Canaanites because their sin and idolatry.

After Ham comes Shem. Where Ham is cursed, Shem is blessed. Genesis 9:26, “He also said, ‘Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem and let Canaan be his servant.’” Shem had demonstrated his faith in the Lord by seeking to cover the shame of his father’s nakedness. Henry Morris, “Not only by his action of filial respect, but apparently also by a character of life closely observed by his father Shem had long indicated his love for the Lord God and his faith in God’s promises.” We know from Luke 3:36 that Shem is in the Messianic Line. **The seed of the woman who would crush the head of the serpent went through Shem to get to Christ.** The elect line of promise will be Shem’s offspring, which is spelled out in the genealogy of 11:10–26, ending in the appointed “Abram” (12:1–3).² Shem and his recipients are blessed to be the line through which the Messiah comes through which the whole world is blessed.

After Shem comes Japheth. Genesis 9:27, “May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be His servant.” Japheth’s descendants will be blessed because of their favorable position with Shem. He will be protected by Shem and will live in peace with Shem. To reside in the “tents” of Shem is tantamount to declaring that his “God” is Japheth’s as well. Japheth will be welcomed in the camp of Israel and privileged to benefit from the tent of meeting, but the Canaanites will be driven from the land (e.g., Exod 3:8, 17; Deut 7:1; 20:17), accepted only as servants.”

Genesis 9:28-29 ends with Noah’s death, “Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood. So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years, and he died.” This ends the line of Seth that began back in chapter 5. Noah holds the tenth and final position

¹ Allen P. Ross, “Genesis,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 41.

² K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, vol. 1A, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 423.

in the record – He is the vital link between two worlds. The pre-flood world and the post-flood world. Why is that important? Here is where we go from God’s faithfulness to Noah to His faithfulness to us.

4. Noah’s Savior – Luke 3:36

Look over at Luke 3:36. Do you ever get bored with genealogies? What’s the purpose? We can’t pronounce their names so why bother with genealogies? Luke 3:36 shows us something very important about Noah, the most important thing. You see Noah in Luke 3:36. Now look back up at verse 23 – Do you see how Noah was a distant relative of Jesus? Why is that important? Noah is the man God chose to carry on the promise of Genesis 3:15. **God preserved Noah and his family in order to fulfill the Messianic promise of Genesis 3:15 and to bless the whole world through the person and work of Christ.** You and I are blessed because God fulfilled His saving promises through Noah and through Shem all the way down to Christ who came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).

Where did we begin this lesson? Romans 15:4, “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” How do the Scriptures encourage us when we connect Noah all the way to Christ? They encourage us because God keeps His promises. God can be fully trusted because He does not lie – All His promises are yes and amen. We see that in the promise of Genesis 3:15 fulfilled through Noah, through Shem all the way down to Jesus Christ.

Noah died, but God’s promise carried on through his son Shem all the way down to Jesus Christ. Luke’s gospel was primarily written for Gentiles to show how Jesus Christ is the perfect man who came to save sinful man. Luke 19:10, “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Aren’t you thankful we serve a God who promised our salvation thousands and thousands of years ago and Galatians 4:4-7, “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.”

Noah isn’t the only man in the Bible who sinned. All sinned and all fall short of the glory of God. You and I have sinned as well. The starting point for handling sin the right way is trusting what the Word of God says in Galatians 4:4-7 and acting on it. You trust that God sent Jesus to bear the curse of your sin on the cross and you trust that you are God’s child because of His finished work and you rely on the Holy Spirit who indwells you to live a new life that pleases God. You live now as God’s blood bought child in the power and intimacy the Holy Spirit produces.

I just finished teaching a class on Wednesday nights called Handling Sin Biblically. Rick thought I would be good at it because I get a lot of practice and he was right. I do sin and I do need to learn to handle my sin biblically. We all do. If you have a besetting sin in your life remember when the fullness of time came God sent His Son to go to the cross to bear the wrath your sins deserve and that you are redeemed (bought with a price) and you are God's child with the power of the Holy Spirit living in you to empower you to please your heavenly Father. Learn to be like Christ.

Christ found ultimate joy in doing the Father's will. John 14:31, "So that the world may know that I love the Father I do exactly as the Father commanded Me." If you know Christ then you love Him. You can't know Jesus as your Savior and understand what He died to save you from and feel no love for him in your heart. That's impossible. You love because He first loved you. How do you show him you love Him? John 14:15, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Our faith and our love for Christ are shown through grace motivated Spirit empowered obedience to His Word.

Noah walked with God for a long time and then he got close to sin and it bit him. It destroyed his relationship with one of his sons. If you've been walking with God and now you're getting close to sin in an area of your life have the courage to turn and walk away. Pull a Joseph and run the other direction as fast as you can from anything that might lead you down the path of sin and shame. Romans 13:13-14, "Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires."