

### Message 3 Noah and the Ancient World

We know in the spiritual realm that God judges the angels, so he will certainly judge us. How can we escape? For this we must look to the history of Noah. Peter writes, ... *[God] did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; (2 Peter 2:5).*

In the far distant past an ancient world existed - descendants of Adam and Eve, infiltrated by fallen angels. When these were destroyed by a great flood of water, God saved Noah. The real story of Noah is found in Genesis, chapters 6-9, not in the Russell Crow movie, *Noah!*

A worldwide flood may seem hard to believe while we have stable weather. However, there is strong evidence of such. 1) From geological studies, there is abundant evidence of massive earth movements caused by water around the world, and not from volcanoes or earthquakes. 2) Fossil records within compressed soils are in such vast abundance that could only be from mass water movements bringing sudden trapping and death. Fish fossils exist even on the top of the Himalayan mountains. 3) Ancient stories of a great flood with a boat saving a few people exist in diverse people groups all around the world. 4) The dimensions of the Ark given in Genesis have been shown to be feasible for a strong, seaworthy vessel. 5) Finally, the Chinese character for ‘large boat’ contains sub characters for small boat, “eight” and “mouth” (i.e. 8 people). These are not proof but strong evidence indeed for a worldwide flood through which a family of eight were saved, from which we are all descent.

What was written in the Bible is for instructive purposes. What can we learn from this history?

#### 1. God could again bring destruction to the persistent ungodly.

... *[God] did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people...; 2 Peter 2:5*

We learn that ungodly people in the ancient world were destroyed by the flood. Genesis says, *v5 The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. v6 The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. (Genesis 6).* From this we realise God’s actions were not simply cruel in sending the flood. This contrasts with the Gilgamesh Epic description of the flood. There the gods destroyed the earth because they were fed up with the noisy humans disturbing them!

What is going on in human hearts today? As I prepared this message, on my left I could hear outside the building people yelling at each other at a road intersection. On my right Lisa, my wife, and a sister were discussing humanitarian missions. We are in a mixed society.

God found in Noah a righteous person - *Genesis 7:1 I have found you righteous in this generation.*

#### 2. Righteousness is a protection.

... *but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness... 2 Peter 2:5*

Noah was protected through the flood because he was righteousness. “... the Lord know how to rescue the godly from trials ...” (2 Peter 2:9). Further, *Genesis 6:9 ... Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. Noah listened to God and did everything God commanded him. (Genesis 6:22).*

I recently read an article about a Singaporean accountant/auditor who resisted pressure to lie about his team’s work progress for fear of reprimand by their fierce boss. He informed the

boss honestly and politely by email explaining why they needed more time. He was rewarded with a promotion.

“Righteousness is not the same as sinlessness. A righteous person is one who seeks to be holy. But when he or she fails, then repents and asks God’s forgiveness. In Noah’s time sacrifice was the visible manifestation of the repentant heart, showing awareness that sin deserves death. Sacrifice was the divinely ordained and gracious ritual that allowed for a substitute death in place of the sinner.” (T. Longman *Genesis*. p.124.)

Noah was not only righteous, he was a preacher of righteousness...

### 3. Others were protected through the flood

... and seven others; 2 Peter 2:5

Noah and seven of his family members were also saved. This is implied in the Hebrew where Noah is called “the eighth”. Of course, there were many saved animals along for the ride! Are you a righteous person? Who are the “seven others” who may be saved along with you?

Noah’s story is used in the New Testament as an analogy of the coming judgment in the end times. Jesus uses it (*Matt 24:37-41*) to indicate the suddenness and thoroughness of God’s future judgment against evil. It is also used as analogous to water baptism (e.g. 1 Peter 3:20-21), uniting with Christ, dying to self and receiving a new life. Joining with Jesus, we have an assurance of his presence with us in this life and especially on the Day of Judgment.

*Isaiah 43:2 [God] says, “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. ...”*