



NG Study Guide: **Genesis 7:1-24 :: “Beginning of Judgment”** [4.13.25]

Love God + know the Bible better:

1. Read the passage cited above, and try to answer the questions below before your group meets.
2. Regularly review the notes at the bottom.

The Study

Thesis: God’s judgment is certain, complete, and wholly justified in His righteousness. Yet, because of His exceeding mercy, He provides a means of rescue from judgment for those who place their faith in Jesus. Through faith, bearing fruit in obedience, the Lord preserves us from His righteous judgment and brings us life.

Subject: God floods the earth and preserves Noah

Object: Escape God’s judgment by running to Him

Context: Following the fall in Genesis 3, humanity has continued to multiply on the earth, but so has sin. The Lord’s heart is grieved at the violence, sexual depravity and evil that is increasingly prevalent throughout the world, permeating all humanity (Genesis 6). He pronounces judgment by means of a great flood, but provides a means of repentance and escape through the ark that He instructs Noah to build. Now, as the time of the flood draws near, the Lord gives specific instructions to Noah.

A. Receive God’s warning (1-4)

1 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. 2 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; 3 also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth. 4 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.

1. The Lord’s call (1) *1 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.* The Lord beckons Noah into the ark, just as the time of the Great Flood begins. Notice that He doesn’t tell Noah to “go” into the ark, but rather to “come”. The implication is that the Lord will be present in the ark with Noah. If we consider *why* the Lord beckons Noah specifically, we can observe that the Lord contrasts Noah’s righteousness to the present wickedness of the generation around him. This righteousness was not because of Noah’s good works, but Hebrews 11:7 reminds us that it is on account of his faith. When the Lord calls us to follow him in obedience it is not a call towards producing our own good works, but rather a call towards faithfully believing that what he commands is good, and that obedience will therefore bring about good.

2. The Lord’s command (2-3)

2 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; 3 also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth. The Lord’s call comes with a command. As he calls Noah into the ark, he specifies that Noah bring seven pairs of each clean animal and two pairs of each unclean animal. While the specifics of “clean”

and “clean” animals will not be outlined in Scripture until the time of Moses, in Genesis 9, Noah uses the clean animals for sacrifice. It is probable to assume that clean animals needed to be more prevalent for the sake of sacrifice, as well as food. With regards to God’s command, he provides the specifics in addition to his general call into the ark. At times, it can be tempting to feel like God’s commands are burdensome, or as if they don’t make sense to us. However, Psalm 119:93 reminds us that God’s commands lead to life. The Lord indicates that the specifics of his command to bring each animal into the ark is for the purpose of “keeping the species alive on the face of all the earth” (2). This is a picture of how following our own sinful desires can lead to destruction, while Lord’s commands lead towards life.

3. The Lord’s warning (4)

4 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. The Lord provides Noah his command seven days before the rain falls on the earth. It is interesting to note that the number 7 is typically indicative of a time of completion, preparation, or divine timing throughout Scripture. Additionally, the number 40 typically points to a time of testing throughout the Word (for example, Jesus was tempted for 40 days in the wilderness, Israel wandered for 40 years in the wilderness). This shows us that the flood would be a complete and total judgment over the world for its wickedness accomplished in the Lord’s divine timing. Also, the specific commands to Noah show us the Lord’s desire to make His values and commands clear. He does not leave us confused or wondering at his intentions, so that we are without excuse when the time of judgment comes. In the same way that He provides Noah ample time for preparation and humanity over 100 years to repent, He provides us time and warning to turn back to him when we go astray. *“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.”* (2 Peter 3:9)

B. Responding to God’s judgment (5-16)

5 And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him. 6 Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth. 7 So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. 8 Of clean animals, of animals that are unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth, 9 two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. 10 And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth. 11 In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. 12 And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights. 13 On the very same day Noah and Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark— 14 they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every sort. 15 And they went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which is the breath of life. 16 So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in.

The concept of a divine judge is a tension point within our modern culture. However, we will see that divine judgment is necessary in order for humanity to have a foundation for morality. In this section, the Lord pours out judgment on the world, but the word also reminds us of his merciful means of rescue.

1. The value of obedience (5-9)

5 And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him. Just a few verses earlier, the Lord told Noah that he would flood the Earth by means of “rain”. Until this point, the concept of rain has not been introduced into the narrative, so it is reasonable to assume that Noah would not have known exactly what to anticipate. Again, however, we are reminded that Noah is considered righteous on account of faith, and in verse 5 we see that faith produces the fruit of obedience, as Noah does all that the Lord commands him. We are reminded that true obedience involves seeking to follow God without compromise. He brings his entire family onto the ark, as well as the specific animals that the Lord commands. We also see that Noah and his family go into the ark “because of the waters of the flood” (7). They recognize the reality of God’s judgment and respond appropriately. At times, we do not run to God because we do not recognize the reality of His coming judgment, nor His desire to rescue us. Therefore, the greater reality of God’s order goes largely unnoticed in our culture. As a result, because we don’t see the reality of judgment, the very concept of a God who would judge is distasteful to many “modern” sensibilities. However, as followers of God, with the understanding that the Lord’s command brings us

away from destruction and towards life, we are motivated to follow Him in obedience. Continued obedience brings us into greater alignment with the Lord's design for humanity, and we find His commands to lead to a flourishing life, and come to greater realization of the destruction that can come with seeking to live life on our own terms.

2. The necessity of judgment (10-12)

10 *And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth.* Once again, we are reminded of the sovereignty of God's timing, as he brings the flood exactly 7 days after he commanded Noah to enter into the ark (10). Verse 12 reminds us of the time of judgment that is now coming onto the Earth. Verse 11 clues us into the ancient understanding of the structure of the world. "The fountains of the great deep or broken up" illustrates the ancient understanding that the land mass on the world was supported by pillars and surrounding those pillars that supported the land mass was water. Also, the same verse indicates that the "windows of heaven were opened", so the vast deluge of water would have been coming both from above land and underneath. When we read about this judgment, it can make us feel uncomfortable. However, we must understand that the reality of a righteous, divine judge is necessary as a foundation for all human morality. Outside of a righteousness that is greater and separate from ourselves, we have no basis from which to judge what is right or wrong. Right it becomes relative to the individual apart from a righteous God. Without God's righteous judgment, we cannot extend our view of injustice outside of the relative morality of human understanding (i.e. "it might be right for me, but it's not right for you"). Without God, we have no grounds for our sense of injustice. However, if we recognize that God pronounces judgment over evil, we find relief for the constant injustices that occur within the world, and we find an answer to our cries for justice. Since God judges evil, we can seek to continue to pursue righteousness, grace, and mercy, knowing that God will provide justice (Romans 12:19)

3. The Lord's protection for the faithful (13-16)

16 *So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in.* As Noah, his family, and the animals God had gathered, entered into the ark, the time to shut the door had to come. It is notable to observe that Noah didn't shut the door, the wicked outside the door didn't shut it, but it was God who shut the door. The ark would be an impenetrable picture of God's mercy. As the flood of God's judgment continues to rise and rise, the ark would remain safe. Throughout Noah's life, he preached a call to repentance for the people around him. Conceivably, had they responded, they would have been able to be rescued from God's judgment as well. At no point did Noah decide to shut the door, but it was God himself who shut the door. As we look forward to Christ's return, we must recognize that God had given humanity 120 years to repent in the time of Noah because of his patience. Since the first coming of Christ, human beings have had over 2000 years to repent and come back to the Lord, again because of God's patience. However, there is coming a time where the proverbial door of the ark will shut, and Christ will return to judge evil once and for all. As a reflection of God's mercy towards people, just as Noah didn't shut the door to repentance, followers of Christ do not discount anyone from the ability to turn from wickedness, repent, and come to Christ.

C. Rescue from God's judgment (17-24)

17 *Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. 18* *The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, and the ark moved about on the surface of the waters. 19* *And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. 20* *The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. 21* *And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. 22* *All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, all that was on the dry land, died. 23* *So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. 24* *And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.*

1. God's judgment is complete (17-20)

17 *Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth.* These verses remind us of the completeness of God's judgment. Once again, the number 40 indicates a complete time of testing, and we see the increasing severity of judgment. The waters increased (17), prevailed

(18), and then exceedingly prevailed (19), reaching higher than the mountains. Verse 20 indicates that the waters increased to the point of 15 cubits (approx. 22.5 feet) above the highest mountains. Covering the entirety of the Earth. There would have been nothing that could have escaped God's judgment. As I've shared my faith and asked the question, "Why do you believe God should give you eternal life?", I've been met with responses akin to "my good deeds outweigh my bad deeds", "I'm a good person", "I feel like I live better than most people", "I help out others". The basis of these statements is the idea that we can somehow avoid God's judgment by our own good works. However, the Word of God reminds us that not a single person can be considered righteous by their own good works (Romans 3:10), and so there is no way that a person, by their own efforts, can circumvent God's righteous judgment.

2. God's judgment is final (21-23a)

23 So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth... Here we are face-to-face with the aftermath of God's judgment. Humanity had, in violence and depravity, been destroying each other and creation. As a result, God brings about judgment to end that destruction. Verse 22 uses the words "all in whose nostrils was the breath of life". Juxtaposed with Genesis 2, where God breathes life into man, these words create a stark reminder of the consequences of sin. Sin brings about destruction and rightly deserved judgment. Even in His mercy and patience, our good God must eventually act against sin. Verses 21-23 remind us of the finality of God's judgment, that once God has declared judgment- it is sure and it is inescapable. But with that being the case, what hope is there for us humans who sin daily? The ark reminds us that even in the midst of judgment, the Lord provides a means for salvation.

3. God's mercy is greater (23b-24)

Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. **24** And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days. As the waters remain on the face of the earth, floating securely on the waters is the ark. 3 times in this passage, we are reminded that the waters of God's judgment rise higher and higher. Yet, two times we are reminded that the ark was "lifted up" and floated above" the waters (17-18). God is just, but he is also merciful, so in the face of His righteous judgment, He also provides a means to demonstrate His mercy. For Noah and his family, that was a physical ark that would preserve them over the face of the waters. One of the family members preserved alongside Noah on the ark was his son Shem. Shem's family line would lead to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to Judah, to David, and eventually to Jesus. 1 Peter 3:18-22 directly connects the story of Noah to our salvation in Christ. Just as Noah ran into the ark and was saved from the flood, when we run to Jesus, we are saved from God's final judgment over sin and are gifted salvation. Christ bore the penalty for our sins on the cross and rose again, providing the gift of His righteousness as we place our faith in Him. As we continually run to Jesus, He grows our faith so we obediently follow His commands, experiencing His life-preserving mercy until we experience the fullness of eternal life at His return.

Study Guide Qs

- 1. How does understanding God's righteous judgment help us feel a sense of justice, as well as motivate you towards obedience?**
- 2. Talk with your group about areas where the Lord is calling you to trust and obey Him more fully. What might that look like?**
- 3. How does understanding the depth of God's mercy encourage your heart today?**
- 4. Invite your group to pray for specific people you want to invite into relationship with Christ.**

"Disciples Who Dig Deeper" (optional or alternative study)

- 1. Here is a deeper dive into Genesis chapter 6 and 7, that explores the idea of God as a Judge:**
<https://podcast.gospelinlife.com/e/lord-of-the-storm-1729024218/>

2. Here is an encouraging song to remind us of the the safety we have in relationship with the Lord:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqa8O1ktxk8>

Love your neighbors (inside + outside the group) better:

1. Who would like to share how they sought to befriend or build relationship with their neighbors inside or outside the group?
2. Are there some needs that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbors inside or outside the group?

Disciples who make disciples:

1. Who would like to share how they recently sought to make disciples?
2. Here is a disciple making idea to consider for the weeks ahead:

Share your faith with neighbors where you live, work, study, and play- emphasizing the righteousness of God and the mercy He shows us in Jesus Christ.

Prayer [Loving God and Neighbors better]:

Close the NG meeting with a time of group prayer. Encourage each participant to pray, but don't force anyone to pray. Encourage the group to keep their prayers brief so that each person can pray.

Notes:

1. Preparation and participation: Group participants should read the teacher's notes contained in this study guide prior to your meeting and be prepared to discuss the content. Remember the purpose of preparation and participation is to accelerate growth as disciples who loves God supremely, loves neighbors like self, and make other disciples who do likewise. **Seek to involve as many group participants as possible.** A good group discussion time allows people to get to know the passage and one another better.

2. Consider what about the passage is particularly exciting, challenging, or confusing?

If a leader is uncertain about a question of doctrine or theology don't hesitate to follow-up with your coach during the week. Then revisit the issue(s) when the group gathers next time.

3. The "Disciples Who Dig Deeper" section provides some optional or alternative study and discussion activities. As a group leader, you can choose to focus on the "Disciples Who Dig Deeper" section, include part of that section in your group meeting, or not use it at all. Try to give the group sufficient notice so they can be prepared for the meeting.

4. The "Love your neighbors" section encourages participants to love neighbors inside and outside the group better. As a leader, discuss this section frequently.

5. The "Disciples who make disciples" section provides a helpful idea, and encourages participants to be disciples who make disciples. Leaders should regularly encourage the group to review and discuss this section.

Next week: Resurrection Sunday

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 :: "A Gospel-Centered Life"