**June 24, 2020 | A Study on Chapter 7 of the Book of Genesis**

**The Flood**

In the preceding chapter Noah built the ark in obedience to God observing the specific instructions he was given.  In chapter 7 the ark is complete and it is time to make preparations for the coming flood.  God tells Noah “Go into the ark, you and your whole family because I have found you righteous in this generation”.  Steve’s Father’s Day message on Sunday was timely and he did a much more thorough job than I have in describing the character of Noah.  Of Noah’s positive attributes, the most important was his witness to his family which resulted in their accompanying him on the ark, however it was Noah whom God found righteous.  That is not to say that the rest of his family were not righteous, we are not told that one way or another.  We will study Noah’s 3 sons in much greater detail in the next chapters but I want to point that righteousness before God is not inherited.  A question I would like for you to reflect on is: How were people saved during Old Testament times?  As we study the generations of Noah’s sons in the coming weeks, that might be the appropriate time to discuss that issue.

In chapter 6 God instructs Noah to take into the ark a male and female of each **kind**of animal.  Here in chapter 7 God give further instructions that he is to take 7 of every kind of clean animal.  A couple interesting but unimportant points.

1. Some speculate that the phrase “each king of animal” means that Noah took only animals from a general hierarchy rather than each individual animal.  For example one pair of cats rather than 2 lions, tigers, cheetahs, jaguars, etc.

2. Did Noah take 7 clean animals of each kind or 14 (v. 2)?  I tend to think 14.

It would seem that the purpose of taking a larger number of clean animals was to allow for sacrifices (see 8:20).  Notice that God tells Noah that he will send the rain in 7 days.  Jack Kelley of *Grace Through Faith* makes the interesting comparison to the 7 year tribulation period during which people will have the opportunity to repent.  If that 7 day period was to allow for repentance, it is clear that none took advantage and indeed they may have mocked Noah for his folly.  In his second letter, Peter warns of scoffers who mock Christians asking “Where is this second coming he promised?”  Peter uses the flood as an example of God meting out justice (3:3-9) according to his time table.  According to verse 9, the animals that were to enter the ark *came* to Noah so I would think that God selected the animals and sent them to Noah. That saved Noah the arduous task of rounding up animals that would probably be uncooperative.  The term “herding cats” comes to mind.  David Guzik notes that God never has a problem getting animals to do what He wants, man however is more stupid than animals.

In verse 11, we see the first recorded specific date in human history, the 17th day of the 2nd month of Noah’s 600th year (see also 8:13).  Matthew Henry noted that the month would be November, just after the autumn harvest which would provide food supplies for the ark.   Steven Lloyd writes in *Evangelical Times* that the flood is a marker of one of the 3 following epochs in history: the initial creation, the flood itself which is a “de-creation”, then the recreation of the world after the flood. Perhaps God cites this specific date to call our attention to its importance.

The rain continued for 40 days and nights, a period of time mentioned several times in the Bible and associated with testing and purification .  Moses spent 40 days and nights on Mt. Sinai with God, Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights before being tempted by Satan, Jesus appeared to His disciples for 40 days after His resurrection.  While Moses spent 40 days with God, the Israelites waited for 39 days before they cast the golden calf.  Last week I mentioned the similarities of the flood with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.  Lot’s wife died because she looked back at the life she was leaving behind.  If any of Noah’s co-inhabitants in the ark lost their patience before the end of 40 days or longed for their prior life, they had no way to act on such impulses since they had no escape from the ark as it rose with the floodwaters for 150 days.  As we will see in the chapters to follow, after God’s cleansing of the earth, life regenerated but so did sin.