

WHY NOAH?

Genesis 6-9

INTRODUCTION: Something very special happened in the 1990s in the realm of Sports. You see, those of us who grew up in the 90s didn't merely watch sports; we experienced the pinnacle of athletic greatness. It was the decade of GOATS. You Gen Zers will never understand what we experienced.

- Basketball was dominated by the GOAT, Michael Jordan. Not only Jordan we had Magic Johnson, Larry Bird, Karl Malone, Shaquille O'Neal any one of those were game changers.
- Baseball gave us larger-than-life figures like Jose Canseco, Mark McGwire, Ken Griffey Jr., Barry Bonds, and Cal Ripken Jr.
- In boxing, Mike Tyson wasn't just a boxer; he was a phenomenon. You were happy to spend way too much of your hard-earned money to watch a fight that will likely last less than 30 seconds.
- The NFL of the '90s belonged to stars like Deion Sanders, Emmitt Smith, and Brett Favre.
- Even hockey had icons like Wayne Gretzky.
- Then there was **BO JACKSON**... Bo knows... pretty much all those sports.

Those men changed how the game was played. They also changed how the game was watched. You see, '90s kids are always looking for the standout, the superstar, the GOAT. We watched documentaries on those men. We read books about those men.

I suppose most of us never really shake that habit. We carry it into other realms of life as well, even into the study of scripture.

Yes, when a 90's kids reads the Bible, we are looking for the GOAT. In some texts, it's very difficult to determine, but other texts make it easy.

NOAH for example, was the GOAT of his Era. Think about it - God's destroyed EVERYBODY else, but this guy and his family. The only reason his family didn't get destroyed was because they were related to NOAH.

So, as a 90's kid, I must ask, "What made Noah different?". Well

CONTEXT:

TEXT: Genesis 6:5-8 (ESV)

⁵ The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. ⁷ So the Lord said, "I

will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.”⁸ **But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.**

That's the first verse that indicates something unique about Noah -

1. God Favored Noah

Genesis 6:8 (ESV)

⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

The word translated favor is used several times in scripture, but it's typically used of one man finding favor with another man. It is very rare for it to be said outright that a man has found favor in God's sight. One such example is **Moses** (Exod 33:17).¹

This sort of favor is inferred in the case of **Abram** when we recognize the Lord complied with his request to stay in Gen. 18.²

Why did God show this rare favor to Noah? Well, the context gives us some indication

Genesis 6:9–10 (ESV)

⁹ These are the generations of Noah. **Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.** ¹⁰ And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

So, there seems to be a direct correlation between Noah's practical righteousness and God's Divine favor.

Ezekiel 14:14 (ESV) seems to support this when God says -

¹⁴ even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver but their own lives **by their righteousness**, declares the Lord God.

So, God looks at the earth and regrets the entire project - until he sees Noah and then He hits the pause button and decides to give humanity a chance.

You know the story -

Genesis 6:11–22 (ESV)

¹¹ Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. ¹³ And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the

¹ Gordon J. Wenham, Genesis 1–15, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 145.

² K. A. Mathews, Genesis 1–11:26, vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 346.

earth. ¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.

No real explanation of why God is giving Noah a chance to survive. He just begins with the instructions. God tells him to build an ARK. An ARK was simply a box, like a cedar chest. Think of it like the Ark of the Covenant - it was a chest.

Noah lived inland, it was unlikely that he would have been familiar with the concept of a boat. So God says, make a big rectangular box.

God instructed Noah to make it of **Gopher** wood. To this day, we aren't certain what kind of wood, gopher wood was. Someone said, "the son's on Noah called it that beacuse Noah was always saying - go for wood". Who knows. Apparently, it was lightweight and durable. Some have suggested it was likely Cyprus. Those of us on the coast know that Cyprus doesn't rot easily and stands up well to the elements.

He is to cover it with **Pitch**. Now, what is pitch? That's just a thick sticky tar. Interestingly, it's the Hebrew word kaphar, which is translated over seventy times in the bible and other places as atonement. Atonement must cover every square inch of the Ark, inside and out.

¹⁵ This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits.

A cubit was the length from the elbow to the tip of a man's finger. That would give the Ark a size of - 450 ft. long, 75 ft wide, and 45 ft high. Three million cubit feet of space. Plenty of room for all that the Ark was intended to do. [ARK SIZE SLIDE]

The biblical Ark is one of the largest wooden ships of all time—a mid-sized cargo ship by today's standards.



¹⁶ Make a roof for the ark, finish it to a cubit above, and set the ark door in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks. ¹⁷ For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die. ¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹ And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. ²⁰ Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. ²¹ Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall

serve as food for you and for them.”²² Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

The Ark did not need to carry every kind of animal—nor did God command it. It carried only air-breathing, land-dwelling animals, creeping things, and winged animals such as birds.

In the book Noah’s Ark: A Feasibility Study, creationist researcher John Woodmorap suggests that, at least 2,000 and at most, 16,000 animals were all that were needed to preserve the created kinds that God brought into the Ark.

NOTE: Noah wouldn’t have taken the largest animals onto the Ark; it is more likely he took juveniles aboard the Ark to repopulate the earth after the Flood was over. These younger animals also require less space, less food, and produce less waste.

Hebrews 11:7 (ESV) tell us...

⁷ By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

Imagine, for nearly 100 years, Noah and his sons are faithfully building a boat far from any body of water in a place where rain had never fallen from the sky, simply because God said so.

Consider the mockery he would endure, the names he would be called, nasty things that were said about him on Facebook.

But Noah kept building - why? God told him to, and he trusted God.

THEN IT HAPPENED

Genesis 7:11–16 (ESV)

¹¹ In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the **fountains of the great deep burst forth**, and the **windows of the heavens were opened**.¹² And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

So, **below** the earth, vast caverns of water were emptied.

Above the Earth, remember that earlier in Genesis, we studied this watery shell called the firmament that encapsulated the Earth before the flood? When it says that the windows of Heaven were opened, it seems to indicate that the firmament fell to the earth.

¹³ On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, ¹⁴ they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind,

every winged creature. ¹⁵ They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. ¹⁶ And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him.

Imagine the scene, thousands of animals begin to make their way into the ark. God caused them to go there.

One hypothesis that is founded on good scholarship is that the ritual of migration and hibernation finds its roots right here. Many believe that the rain began to fall in November, the same time that animals currently migrate or hibernate. Scholars suggest that God caused these animals to migrate to a specific place and for many of them to hibernate during the time on the Ark and that many of them still follow that same pattern.

We also know that around this time a funeral occurred. **Methuselah** died at 969 years of age. His name meant “when he dies judgment”. Well, he died... Jewish tradition (Midrashic and rabbinical) holds that Methuselah died seven days before the flood, and that the seven-day delay before the rains began (Genesis 7:10) was a period of mourning for him.

When seven days were complete, Noah and his family made their way onto the Ark, the animals already on board. Imagine the crowd gathered. They had seen these animals going onto the Ark, but they still didn’t believe. Laughing, mocking at Noah.

Until... 16b. ***And the Lord shut him in.***

A great silence falls over crowd as the hand of God reaches down from Heaven and the door slams shut. The only way in was now closed. Any chance they had of repentance was over.

It must have seemed like an eternity as they stood gazing, wondering, what will happen next... they thunder crashes as the winds begin to pick up... a single drop of water is wiped from a man’s brow, then another, then another.... The skies grow dark, and lightning fills the sky.

Some run for the woods, other’s make their way to high ground... still others rush to the Ark and bang on the door... but God had closed that door and no man could open it.

It is almost too dark to imagine.... The screams, men, women, boys, girls, as the water rose, higher and higher... then they stopped.

Genesis 7:17–24 (ESV)

¹⁷ The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. ¹⁹ And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered.

²⁰ The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. ²¹ And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. ²² Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ²³ He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. ²⁴ And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

Everyone outside the Ark swept away by the Judgement of God... the only people on the Planet were Noah and his family... why are they there?

We said it earlier... *God Favored Noah. Not only that...*

2. God Remembered Noah

Genesis 8:1 (ESV)

¹ But God **remembered** Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided.

Genesis 8:2–4 (ESV)

² The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, ³ and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, ⁴ **and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month**, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

Why is this date important? Why did God put that in this? Mt. Ararat means the mount of Glory or Holiness. Now Well, it was the seventh month. The Jewish calendar begins in October, the legal calendar and if you count seven months from October, you're going to come to the month of April, And then at the seventeenth day

Well, the Passover was April the fourteenth and three days after Passover is the seventeenth day. The Passover is April fourteenth. It's the day that Jesus Christ came out of the grave. Easter Sunday.

Genesis 8:5–12 (ESV)

⁵ And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

You know the story, Noah sent a Raven and it found no place to rest its feet. Noah sent a dove, but it found no place to rest. He sent out a dove again, and it returned with a fresh olive leaf.

Finally, the land dries, and God calls Noah out of the boat. The first thing Noah does is make an offering.

Genesis 8:20–22 (ESV)

²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹ And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man’s heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. ²² While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”

God Favored Noah, God Remembered Noah...

3. God Blessed Noah

Genesis 9:1 (ESV)

¹ And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.”

The idea that God blessed Noah is far more than Him simply uttering a few words over Noah, as one might say the blessing of a meal. The words of God are filled with Power. This is the same voice that spoke creation into existence.

Well according to scripture **BLESSED** has a very clear definition.

- The OT Hebrew word translated Blessed is the word - **BARUK**.
- The NT Greek word translated Blessed is the word - **MAKARIOS**.

In the Greek, the word was never used of humans outside of the Bible. It was only used in reference to the Pantheon of Greek Gods, “The blessed gods”.

Both the OT and the NT usage communicates three basic things:

A. Blessing = Provision

Proverbs 10:22 (ESV)

²² The **blessing** of the Lord makes rich, and he adds no sorrow with it.

You see,

- The blessing of God is not threatened by a recession.
- The blessing of God is not at the mercy of the interest rate.
- The blessing of God can’t be destroyed by a hurricane.
- The blessing of God doesn’t depend upon which party is in office.

The blessing of God equals provision... secondly...

B. Blessing = Power

Remember in the garden, before man was able to fill the Earth and subdue it... God had to BLESS him.

Psalms 67:1–2 (ESV)

¹ May God be gracious to us and **bless us** and make his face to shine upon us, *Selah* ² that your way may be known on earth, your saving **power** among all nations.

C. Blessing = Presence

The Shema - was the blessing that Moses commanded the Priests of Israel to speak over the worshippers.

Numbers 6:24–26 (ESV)

²⁴ The Lord bless you and keep you (**Provision** - As Adam Kept the Garden) ; ²⁵ the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you (**Presence** - God smiles upon you); ²⁶ the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

The greatest of all blessings in that God is present in your life experience.

As a matter of fact in the OT when Moses was trying to decide what to do with the Ark of God's presence. God said, "Place me outside the camp, lest you be consumed". Moses answered and said, "I'd rather you kill us now, than to be apart from your presence".

GOD'S BLESSED NOAH and gave him the provision he needed, the power he needed, and the Presence of God himself that he would need to fill and subdue the Earth.

CONCLUSION/INVITATION:

I will never forget watching one of the Michael Jordon documentaries back in the 90's. They always ended the same way - SUCCESS LEAVES CLUES, you can find the fingerprints of greatness... and young man, if you want to have what Jordan had, you have to do what Jordan did.

Oh, I will never be like MIKE.... But what about Noah, what made Noah the GOAT of his generation? What gave him the power to take God at his word in the face of all the critics?

The NT gives us a clue - **Hebrews 11:7 (ESV)**

⁷ **By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes **by faith**.**

You see, there is another day coming when the Lord will Judge the Earth... this time not by water, but by fire. The only hope you have is to get on board the ARK of safety - the Lord Jesus Christ. You enter by faith... being warned concerning events as yet unseen.

But I urge you to make every effort to secure your place on the Ark today... because one day... that door will also be closed.