

The Ark of Salvation Genesis 7–8

You know, people love to make fun of preppers. You've seen them stockpiling canned food, learning how to purify water with a sock and a paperclip, building bunkers in their backyard like the apocalypse is scheduled for next Thursday.

For those of you who are preppers... I kind of think it's a little silly. I mean, most of us don't have an *"end of the world plan."* I just kinda guess I'll die. But if something did happen ... I have a feeling I'd suddenly think preppers were a lot less silly. In fact, I'd probably be knocking on their bunker door like, *"Hey... so... remember how I mocked you? Any chance you've got room for one more and some delicious, canned beans?"*

People surely thought Noah to be crazy. Here's this man, building a massive ark in a world where it had never flooded before. People must have walked by laughing: *"What are you doing, Noah? Building giant floating contraption? On dry land?"* Then one day... it started raining. Suddenly it wasn't so funny anymore. Noah wasn't crazy, he was prepared. And his preparation wasn't random; it was commanded by God.

I've not been told there is massive societal breakdown coming. But God has also told *us* that judgment is coming. Not maybe. Not possibly. It has been announced. The question is: are we ready? **The difference between the man who laughs... and the man who lives is not intelligence, it's preparation. In Noah's day, preparation meant one thing: getting in the ark.**

Judgment Announced (Genesis 7:1–10)

- God has been patient while Noah built the ark.
 - For years God waited. Then the call comes: **"Go into the ark."**
 - Not build it anymore. Not stand outside it. **Get in.**
 - Now, more than you might recognize, this is a weird thing to get in.
 - This *"ark"* is not the normal word for boat. It's only used a couple of times in Scripture. We hear *"ark"* and think vessel... something you steer.
 - That's not what this is. It just floats.
- This word shows up at the Ark of the Covenant... even Joseph's burial.

- It's container language. This is a box. A floating container.
 - Something you store things in, not something you pilot.
 - It has more in common with a coffin than with a ship.
 - Which means Noah's safety is in his position. **Inside... or outside.**
- The text tells us Noah was righteous.
 - Not because he was perfect, but because he believed God.
 - That belief showed up in obedience. *"Noah did all that the Lord commanded."*
 - Noah is not saved *because* he obeyed. He obeyed *because* he believed.
 - Faith is not the reward for obedience. Obedience is the evidence of faith.
- You are not saved by what you do, you are saved by trusting what God has said.
 - Listen, if you really trust what God has said... it will change what you do.
 - Faith that never moves... isn't faith. Faith that never obeys... isn't alive.
 - That's why Hebrews says, *"By faith Noah... built the ark."*
 - His obedience didn't earn salvation, it proved it. If you don't have works behind your faith, a natural question is: **do you believe God?**
 - There will be lots of people who are going to be surprised on the last day.
- Because belief doesn't just sit there.
 - It moves. It acts. It obeys.
 - The difference between Noah and everyone else is not that he was better, **it's that he got in the ark.** Everyone saw it. Everyone heard the warning.
 - Only Noah believed it enough to move. That's saving faith.
- Then God sets the timeline: *"In seven days... it will rain."*
 - Judgment is not canceled, it's coming. When it comes, it won't matter what you intended to do... or what you meant to change... or what you planned to get around to. Some of you need to go ahead and move from the planning to the following.
 - The question will be the same as it was then: **Are you in the ark... or not?**

Judgment Executed (Genesis 7:11–24)

- The date matters... because it doesn't.

- The 17th day of the second month... no festival, no warning siren, no countdown clock. Just an ordinary day... until it wasn't.
 - That's how judgment comes. Not always with buildup, but with finality.
 - The implication is clear: no one knows the day. No one knows the hour.
 - You don't prepare when it starts. You prepare before it comes.
 - Note: Seriously no one knows when judgement is coming.
- Then the flood is unleashed.
 - The waters God once separated to create a world fit for life, now collapse back in on themselves. The ordered world becomes un-ordered.
 - Creation begins to come undone. Humanity spent chapters blurring the lines God drew and now God removes the lines entirely.
 - The waters above... the waters below... closing in.
- The text makes something very clear:
 - Those inside the ark have the breath of life, and soon... they're the only ones left who do. What's the difference?
 - Not intelligence. Not strength. Not effort. Relationship.
 - Those inside live because they are connected to Noah. Those outside die because they are not. There is no other refuge. No second shelter.
 - Only this coffin-shaped mercy, or nothing.
- Then comes one of the most important lines in the whole passage:
 - *"The Lord shut him in."* Noah doesn't close the door. God does.
 - Which means Noah is not keeping himself safe, God is.
 - His security is not in his engineering... not in his ability... but in the God who sealed him inside. Once that door shut...no one else was getting in.
- I find this to be the funniest of the children's stories.
 - It's like the number one nursery wall murals. Bright colors. Smiling animals. A floating petting zoo. That's not the story Genesis tells.
 - Because what those murals never show... is what's outside the ark.
 - The hills disappear. Then the mountains.

- Every place people thought, "I'll be safe here"... is taken away.
- There is nowhere to hide. Nowhere to run. Nowhere to swim.
 - There is no middle ground. No one was "*close to the ark.*" No one was "*almost safe.*" The flood didn't measure how good you were, it revealed where you were.
 - God's judgment will not ask what you meant to do...only where you actually are. The terrifying part is, everyone outside thought they had more time. Until they didn't.
 - So in the end...the only difference between those who lived and those who died was not intelligence, or effort, or intention, but whether they were inside... or outside.
 - Those who do not know God are in danger. Just as no one knew when the flood would come, no one knows when Christ will return in judgment.
 - Now is the time to be reconciled to God. Today!
- Scripture doesn't just say this happened once, it warns us it will happen again.
 - Noah's Ark is a trailer for the Feature Film of Final Judgement.
 - The prophets say people will run... hide... searching for anywhere to escape the terror of the Lord. Revelation says they will beg the mountains to fall on them... just to avoid facing Him. Think about that. They would rather be crushed than stand before God.
 - When that day comes every escape closes. Every refuge fails. You cannot outrun it. You cannot outthink it. You cannot outlast it. Just like the flood.
 - The question is not: "Will that day come?" The question is the same as it was then: **Are you inside the ark... or not?**
 - But the point of the Ark is that there is great hope in the flood of wrath.
- Because this passage is not only a warning, but also a promise.
 - Listen to what Scripture says: "*The Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment.*" (2 Peter 2:9) That means something very real for you.
 - God does not just judge, **He rescues.**
 - He knows how to bring His people *through* what He brings them *into*.

- You will, if you're His, make it through that final trial of judgement.
 - You do not have to fear the last day. So many Christians live in fear of judgement, oh, that you'd see He can keep you.
 - When your future feels unstable, He is not.
 - When you feel like you're barely holding on, He is the one holding you.
 - Because your security is not in your strength... not in your consistency... not in your ability to keep yourself afloat.
 - Your security is in this: **God knows how to rescue His people.**
- He does it the same way He did for Noah, not by making the storm disappear...
 - But by placing His people somewhere safe *in the middle of it*.
 - He secures those who are His. Not by their control...not by their effort... but by placing them safely inside the refuge He provides.

Judgement Averted (Genesis 8:1–22)

- Then comes the turning point: *"But God remembered Noah..."*
 - That doesn't mean God forgot. God doesn't lose track of His people.
 - In Scripture, when God *"remembers"* ... **He acts.**
 - God remembered Noah and the waters began to recede. God remembered Abraham and Lot was brought out of judgment. God remembered Rachel and her barrenness was opened. God remembered His covenant in Egypt and a nation was delivered from slavery.
 - When God remembers judgment changes course and salvation comes.
 - So don't hear that word like God is recalling information. Hear it like this: *God is turning His full attention toward His people... to save them.*
- That same word shows up again at the cross.
 - A man is dying next to Jesus. No life of righteousness. No record of obedience. Just guilt. Just judgment. With his final breath, he says: *"Jesus... remember me."* He's not asking to be noticed. He's asking to be saved. He's saying: When judgment comes... don't leave me outside.
 - Jesus answers him with a promise: *"Today... you will be with Me in paradise."* Do you see it? Noah is inside the ark...while judgment falls outside. That thief is next to Christ... while judgment is falling on Christ.

- Because in that moment, Jesus becomes the ark. The judgment that should have fallen on the thief... falls on Him. The wrath that should have crushed that man... is absorbed by Christ.
- The only thing that separates those two men on those crosses... is this:
 - One is outside... and one, by faith, is brought in.
 - **The God who remembers... is the God who rescues.** The God who remembers... brings His people safely through the flood.
 - If you are in Christ that means: God has not forgotten you. Not in your trial. Not in your waiting. Not in your confusion.
 - His remembering is not delayed, it is purposeful. When He acts, it will be right on time. Because just like Noah... and just like that thief...
 - **When God remembers His people, He brings them through judgment... into life.**
- The wind passes over the waters. The waters begin to recede.
 - The ark comes to rest. Judgment gives way to new creation.
 - The language should sound familiar. Spirit over the waters. Chaos giving way to order. Life emerging again.
 - God is not just rescuing Noah. He is starting over. But... Noah has to wait.
 - The raven goes out, no return. The dove returns, no rest. Then a leaf. Then finally, nothing. Life is coming back. But not all at once.
 - Noah is living in that space between promise... and fulfillment.
 - That's where we live too. Let's not romanticize it. Even inside the ark... it wasn't easy. Dark. Loud. Uncomfortable.
 - But here's the point: **the worst day inside the ark was still salvation.**
 - Then one day, God speaks again. The same God who said, "Go in..." now says, "Come out" and Noah steps into a world made new.
 - Because the God who shut him in is the God who brings him through.
- Noah's first act? Worship.
 - He builds an altar. He offers sacrifice.
 - Because he knows something we often forget: he didn't survive the flood because he was better, but because God showed mercy.

- God then promises to not disrupt the cycles of the seasons again, but to sustain this new world Noah is going to cultivate.
- **If there is only one place to be safe in judgment... where is that place now?**
 - Because the flood was not just an event, it was a warning. It points forward to a final judgment and a new creation.
 - On that day, there will still be one place of safety. Not a boat. A person.
- Christ enters judgment.
 - He doesn't avoid it, He absorbs it. He bears the full weight of God's wrath. He passes through death itself. On the third day, He rises.
 - The ark was always a shadow. Not Noah stepping into a new world, but Christ stepping out of death. The same God who brought Noah through the flood has brought His Son through judgment.
 - Now everyone who is in Him will pass safely through judgment into a world made new.
- Jesus told a parable about ten virgins waiting for a bridegroom.
 - Five were ready. Five were not.
 - They assumed there would be more time. When the moment came... the door was shut. That's the story of Noah.
 - The rain didn't come slowly enough for people to rethink their lives. It came. The door closed. What was settled... was settled.
- So here's the call. If you are in Christ: stay there.
 - Even when it's dark. Even when it's slow. Even when you don't understand what God is doing. He has not forgotten you.
 - He will bring you through. Every promise will land as surely as that ark.
- If you are not in Christ, this is not the time to wait.
 - The door is still open. But it will not stay open forever. Turn from your sin. Come to Christ. Enter the only refuge God has provided.
 - Because judgment is coming just as He said. People laughed... until they didn't. People will laugh, until they don't.

- The door was already closed. Faith doesn't consider the ark. **Faith gets in.**
- So I'll ask you **are you in Him... or not?**

- I wasn't planning on saying this... but I need to.
 - I had a conversation this week with Justin McMullins about church life, and one thing we kept coming back to was this: **how non-urgent we are about the most urgent problem in the world.** Lostness.
 - Judgment is coming, and people are not ready. There are people in your family... people you work with...who are not prepared for that day.
 - We can get really stirred up, really urgent... about all kinds of things. Things we prefer. Things we like. Things we wish were different. We can talk about it. Think about it. Get worked up about it. Me too. **Check FB. I see you guys urgent about all kinds of things.**
 - But none of those things, not one of them, will matter at all when that day comes. None of them will determine whether someone is ready. None of them will determine whether someone is safe.
 - Oh, that we would feel that same urgency about souls. Because if even the 200 people in this room were gripped by that...truly gripped by that... we would see something here that we could not explain. Something we could not manufacture. Something we would only be able to call revival.

- John Wesley once said:
 - *"Give me 100 men who hate nothing but sin and fear nothing but God, and I will shake the world."*
 - We need people who actually believe this is real. People who hate sin... because it damns. People who fear God... because He judges. People who love souls... because they are eternal and have hope!
 - But it comes down to this: **do we actually believe this is coming?** Or do we live like this life is all there is?
 - If judgment is real, then urgency is not optional. So, don't just answer the question for yourself, **are you in Him?**
 - Start asking it for the people around you. Because the door is still open. But it will not stay open forever.