Fallen... Into Judgment (Genesis 6-9)

People assume that Genesis 6-9 is all about a flood, an ark, a guy named Noah, and a bunch of animals marching two-by-two. No. It’s really about a God who cares deeply about humanity, who waits patiently for mankind to repent, who, when He must judge, always judges fairly, and who always prefers to give grace to sinners like us.

What we learn about God from the Flood

1) Our God Cares Deeply
   - Genesis 6:1-7
   - Humanity has fallen deeply into sin
   - “Sons of God” lusted after “daughters of men;” married and gave birth to “mighty men... men of renown”
     - 3 legitimate options: intermarriage between righteous line of Seth and unrighteous line of Cain, mighty kings building harems, demon possessed men fathering unusually powerful, corrupt offspring
     - Not sure which is correct - doesn’t matter!
     - Point: humanity has become entirely corrupt - v5
     - “mighty men” = men famous for violence (e.g. Jesse James, Godfather)
   - How does God respond? Feels grief and incredible sorrow
     - God is omniscient; humanity’s fall was not a surprise
     - But God is not unaffected by human choices
       - not impassable (i.e. constant state of happiness unaffected by our decisions)
       - Prodigal Son – Luke 15 - passionate, emotionally invested
         - When we sin, God grieves
         - “God didn’t have to care, He chose to care”
   - God cares about what you do! A powerful reason not to sin.

2) Our God Waits Patiently
   - v3 - best option: 120 years till judgment comes
   - God is doing what He will do again much later to the city of Nineveh
     - If all God wanted to do was destroy, there’d be no warning!
     - God gives Noah’s generation 120 years to repent & escape!
   - Some see this story and accuse God of being a vindictive, angry tyrant
   - That’s NOT the picture of God Genesis 6 presents
     - God’s desire: not destruction but salvation - that’s why He warned & waited
     - 1 Peter 3:20
     - During which Noah was a “preacher of righteousness” (2 Pet 2:5)
     - God mercifully gives every chance to repent (1 Timothy 2:4)
   - Our God is not a God who celebrates death and destruction - Ezekiel 33:11
   - Your God is not cruel and vindictive! He is merciful, patient, kind, and good
• Humanity rejected Noah’s warning and continued their violent ways

3) Our God Judges Fairly
• Read 6:11-13
  o Hebrew verb *sahat*, meaning “to corrupt, ruin, destroy”, repeated 4 times!
  o Humanity “ruined” the earth so God would “ruin” them
• The flood was not evil, it was FAIR!
• After 120 years of patient waiting, God brought the flood - Read 7:19-22
• Biggest interpretive issue: global or local flood?
  o Hebrew word *eretz* – can refer to either the whole planet or just the land people lived on
  o Ultimately doesn’t matter!
• Whether local or global, ALL HUMAN LIFE was wiped out, except for Noah’s family
• This forces us to ask... was that “fair” of God?
  o Yes it was!
  o God warns humanity in Genesis 2: “If you sin, you will surely die.”
    ▪ Romans 3:23
    ▪ Romans 6:23
• God’s judgments are ALWAYS fair
• Sometimes we think we want life to be fair. No we don’t!!
  o If God was only “fair” then all of us would die NOW and spend eternity in hell
• God is not merely fair, He is gracious!
  o That’s what we want, not just a fair God, but a gracious God

4) GodDelivers Graciously
• Read 6:8-9
• v8: “Noah found favor”
  o “favor” – Hebrew word for “grace”, first use in the Bible
  o Grace is when you get something good you don’t deserve
• The only reason Noah was a righteous man was because God gave him grace
  o Salvation is never by our works
  o Salvation is always by grace
• That grace transforms him and grows him into an obedient man
• One particular act of obedience dominates our story - Read 6:14-15
  o Incomprehensibly big task - took a century!
• God’s grace worked a miracle in Noah’s life: made him a man of incredible obedience and endurance
  o Noah had no proof the flood was coming. Year after year he continued to work by faith alone in the promise of God.
• God’s grace delivered everyone in the ark - Read 8:1
• Then, in grace, God began to rebuild what humanity had destroyed
Read 9:1 – same task: fill the earth
Read 9:6 – same identity: made in the image of God
Read 9:11-13 – a new covenant promise
  - God owes nothing to humanity, but in grace, He makes a promise
- In this story you see a LOT of sin and death, but also a LOT of GRACE!
- Lesson for us:
  - If God’s grace is powerful enough to save and rebuild humanity after Genesis 6, then it’s powerful enough to save you from any storm and rebuild you after any fall

The same grace that saved Noah is available to you today
- Noah was saved because he was “in the ark”
- We are saved if we are “in Christ” - Romans 5:8
- How do you get “in Christ” - Romans 6:23 - It’s a free gift! Just say “yes” to God’s offer.
Observe & interpret the passages:

Read Genesis 6:1-7,11-13. Why did God send the flood?

To the secular person, a God who would drown the majority of humanity sounds cruel and vindictive. Is God cruel and vindictive in this story? How can you tell?

Read Genesis 6:8-9. Why did God save Noah?

Apply it to your life:

Read 2 Peter 3:3-15. Just like Noah’s contemporaries, we are living in a period between God’s warning and God’s judgment. How should that realization affect how we act and what we value?

If God’s grace can deliver and rebuild humanity after the sins of Genesis 6, it can deliver and rebuild you after any fall. Spend a few minutes in prayer thanking God for His all-powerful grace and asking Him to grow you in holiness.

Memorize: 2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.
Additional Questions:

According to Hebrews 11:7, what led Noah to such astounding obedience?

Read Genesis 9  What similarities do you see between this passage and Genesis 1-2 (repeated words or ideas)? What do these similarities tell you about God’s plan for mankind after the flood?