Congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ,

We saw last week that the whole Bible is about Jesus Christ. But while this is plain and obvious in the New Testament, it is harder to see in the Old Testament. Nevertheless, wherever we are in the Old Testament, we should be asking: How does this passage reveal some aspect of God’s plan of salvation in Jesus Christ? So, last week, in connection with the first half of chapter 7, our focus was **the ark of salvation**. We saw how the ark was a picture of the only way to escape judgment and enjoy eternal life, which is to enter union with Jesus by faith. Well, as we continue with the rest of this chapter, the focus switches to **the flood of judgment**. And what we will see today is that the flood of Noah’s day is a preview of the judgment that Jesus Christ will bring when He returns to earth. So, the warning that we heard last week to receive Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, *today*, will be ramped up a thousandfold.

But before we hear that, there are several details about the flood that we must consider. They are: **When** did the flood happen? **How** did the flood happen? And **What** was the result of the flood? I am sure we have all experienced a flood before. We had the flooding in Auckland in January, and then much more rain and far worse damage in Hawkes Bay and East Coast with Cyclone Gabrielle. But what we read here in Genesis 7 makes those two floods sound like a couple of puddles by comparison. For what is described here is a *global* flood that covered the whole earth and destroyed everyone and everything. But is that really what happened? That is what we will consider with these three questions. And then we will be ready to see how the flood is a preview of the judgment that Jesus Christ will bring when He returns to earth.

1. So, first of all, the **when**, the **how**, and the **what** of the flood.
   1. And we begin with **When?** – when did this flood happen?
      1. Well, by way of some quick review, the command that God gave Noah to build the ark came around **55-75 years before the flood**. How do we know that? We know that because the flood came when Noah was 600 years old. And if you look at chapter 5:32 you will see that Noah became a father when he was 500 years old. So, 100 years before the flood. And when God commanded Noah to build the ark, he told Noah to take *his sons and their wives into the ark*. So, Noah’s sons had to be old enough to be married when God commanded him to build the ark. So, that makes 55-75 years before the flood our best estimate as to how long it took to build the ark.
      2. And once completed, verse 11 tells us that the flood rains began to fall when Noah was 600 years old, and it was in “*the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month*.” And from the genealogies in these early chapters we can calculate that **the flood began 1656 years after creation**. And working back the other way with the genealogies of the Bible, that would make it about 2400 BC, so about 4400 years ago from today.
   2. So, that’s the ‘when?’ of the flood. What about the **How**? – How did the flood happen? Well, verse 11 says, “*On that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights*.”
      1. And we will see in a moment that what is being described here is a global flood – a flood that covered the whole planet. And scientists serve us well here in their efforts to come up with theories for how this could happen. One popular theory among those who take Genesis at face value is called **Catastrophic Plate Tectonics**. We saw in Genesis 1 that earth was originally one super-continent surrounded by water. And according to this theory, changing temperatures in the rocks in the waters around this continent would have the effect of pushing the water of the oceans up onto the continent and covering it. And that would be the fountains of the great deep bursting forth. And we will return to this theory when we look at what happened after the flood, but that water, as it cooled, plus the rain water, would then have caused the ocean floor to sink and begin to crack, pulling apart the super continent to something more like what the earth looks like now. But this isn’t a science lesson, so you can look that up on creation.com if you want to know more. What we can say for certain is that water rose up from the depths, and rain fell upon the earth, for forty days and forty nights. That is how the flood happened.
      2. What is worth noting is the reference to **forty days and forty nights**. For there are three other times where we find a similar time reference in the Bible. Can anyone tell us what they relate to? Moses on mountain. Elijah in the desert. Christ fasting in wilderness. And all four references indicate a period of trial and ultimately the victory of good and the overthrow of evil. And that will be important when we come to the flood as a picture of the Day of Judgment.
   3. But that’s the ‘how?’ of the flood – water from below and rain from above. But what about the **what**? – What was the *result* of the flood? Well verses 17-24 are a description of a global flood that destroyed every living thing apart from those on the ark. And here are the reasons why we can be sure about this:
      1. First, **from this passage**, look at the language: We have the words “*increased*” and “*prevailed*” and “*mightily*” and “*greatly*” many times in this passage. And this is how the Hebrew language always emphasizes something – repetition. A modern English equivalent would be that this was a supercalifragilisticexpialidocious flood!
      2. Secondly, we are told that “*the waters increased and bore up the ark and it rose high above* ***the earth***.” It is not above the ground, which is a word that could have been used, but above the earth.
      3. Thirdly, here and in Psalm 29 where this flood is referred to it is called **THE flood**. Wherever else floods are mentioned in the Old Testament, you do not find the word THE and a different word or words for flood are used. So, this flood was unique.
      4. Fourthly, we also read that “*the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that* ***all*** *the mountains* ***under the whole heaven*** *were covered.*” Again, not just *some* mountains, but all the mountains under the whole heaven. Indeed, they were covered by 15 cubits of water – that is nearly seven meters.
         1. And in case you are wondering, **Mt Everest and the rest of the world’s tallest mountains were not there when the flood happened**. We will look at this in the next few weeks, but they came about as a result of the flood waters receding, and the impact of all that water on the earth’s mantle, causing the spread of the continents, and deep canyons and rising mountains. But again, you can look that up on creation.com too.
      5. Fifthly, we read **2 Peter 3** earlier: “*And the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished*.”
      6. Sixthly, the language from verse 23 on is that **all** flesh died, **everything** that had breath died, God blotted out **every** living thing. And Jesus spoke about this in **Matthew 24:39** when He said, “*and [the people in Noah’s day] were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away*.” And we see at the end of verse 23 that “*only Noah [and we can obviously include his family and the animals and birds on the ark] was left*.” So, if this was just a regional flood that affected a few people and animals, then Genesis 7 would be a lie and the Bible untrustworthy.
      7. And seventhly, if it were just a regional flood, **why build an ark**? Why not just tell Noah to move further away? And why put animals and birds on the ark if there were other animals and birds further away? And I trust we all know how gravity works, so if the flood was just in one region, the water would have flowed away, just as it did in Hawkes Bay back in February. But we are told in Scripture that “*the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days*.” And we will see in chapter 8 that it was only 10 months later that “*the tops of mountain were seen*.” And it was 1 year and 10 days after the rains began that Noah and his family and the animals could finally leave the ark.
      8. And a sermon isn’t the place for us to talk about the fossil evidence and the geological strata evidence for a global flood. Again, you can look that up at creation.com
      9. But for all these reasons, this was not a regional flood; this was a global flood.
   4. And here is why it is important that we understand this. In our Bible study on Wednesday, we talked about the crisis of identity that has gripped especially the western world. And when we talked about the reasons for this, one person said that **the church has much to answer for**. And this is all too true, sadly. For many in the church deny what the Bible says about a six-day creation and a global flood. And once you do that, you will, inevitably, pick and choose what other parts of the Bible you accept or reject. And that is exactly what we have seen in the wider church for many years now. I have shared with some of you a video of a Lutheran church in the USA that recently recited what is called ‘The Sparkle Creed,’ in association with pride month. I won’t tell you what the Sparkle Creed says because it is complete heresy and blasphemy. But if you want to know how a so-called church can end up reciting the Sparkle Creed, I guarantee you that they long ago rejected six-day creation and a global flood. And I guarantee you also that they reject the idea of hell and eternal condemnation for unrepentant sinners.
2. But the divinely inspired Scriptures link the global flood and the return of Christ and Judgment Day and hell. That is not some fanciful or clever connection that I am trying to force into Scripture. It is what the Bible plainly says. And this is what we consider in our next point, which is that **the flood of Noah’s day is a preview of the judgment that Jesus Christ will bring when He returns to earth**.
   1. About a month before the Auckland anniversary floods, I had been onto the council because I could see that the four drains up on the street were all blocked. But they had still not been unblocked when the rain began to fall. And in case you are wondering, they were unblocked the day after the flood! But rain had been forecast and when it came it was heavy, probably the heaviest and most sustained that we have experienced here. And it did not take long before the road was just a giant lake. And then the water started to come down the hill towards the manse. And water was also coming down from the neighbour’s property. And I was outside trying to make sure the lowest drain stayed clear. But eventually, it just could not cope with how much water there was, and the backyard started to fill up. And it didn’t take long before it was lapping at the back door and the sliding door at the bottom of the driveway. And as the cadets and GEMS and their counsellors will remember, because they were helping us rescue whatever we could from downstairs, it was not long before there was ½ a meter of water right through the downstairs. And others of you have experienced flooding too. But we always know, don’t we, that eventually, whether it is 30 minutes or 2 hours or the next day, the rain will stop and the waters will drain away. But not in Noah’s day. It rained for *forty* days and *forty* nights! Plus water came up onto the land from below. And we can only begin to imagine the sheer terror that must have engulfed the people as the rain continued to fall and the waters continued to rise. Some of them, at least, may have had a chance to go up to the door of the ark and beg for it to be opened. But it was too late, and it remained closed. Some surely headed to higher ground. But eventually that was covered too. Think of the drowned and bloated bodies, of animals and people, that would have swirled around. How horrific it must have been. And you know what would have made it worse? Knowing that for 55-75 years, they had watched the ark being built and had heard Noah warn them to repent and join him in the ark, but they had laughed in his face. And now it was too late. And they all drowned.
   2. And the Scriptures are very clear that the global flood of Noah’s day is a preview of the judgment that Christ will bring when He returns to earth. Right now, He is in heaven. But He will come again to bring judgment on those who reject Him.
      1. **2 Peter 2:3-9** links the two events when itsays that the condemnation of the unrighteous is certain. “*If [God] did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah … with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly … then the Lord knows how to … keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment.”*
      2. And earlier we read **2 Peter 3:5-7**, which links the two events also in a warning to people who think that there will be no return of Jesus or Day of Judgment. Peter says, “*For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly*.”
      3. And the Bible calls the place where the ungodly will be condemned for all eternity **Hell**.
         1. **Revelation 20:10** describes it as “*the lake of fire and sulfur where [the ungodly] will be tormented day and night forever and ever*.”
         2. **Mark 9:48** describes it as a place “*where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched*.”
         3. There is no light there, no colour, no beauty, no friendship, no happiness, no creativity and enjoyment; and it will be like that forever!
      4. And when I say that hell is where the ungodly will be condemned for all eternity, I mean all those who refuse to repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. In **John 5:24**, Jesus said, “*Whoever hears my word and believes [in] … me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life*.” You must tell God that you have broken His commandments, resolve in your heart to keep His commandments, and believe that Jesus died on the cross for the forgiveness of your sins. For it is only those who have done that who will escape hell and enjoy the new heavens and new earth, with Jesus.
   3. And in case you are wondering when will Jesus come back? Well, just as Noah did not know for many years exactly when the flood would come, we too do not know when Jesus will return. Jesus said in **Matthew 24:36**, “*But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only*.” So, it could be this afternoon.
   4. But Jesus also said, “*As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man*.” Many people have heard the good news about the forgiveness of sins in Jesus and the warning about a coming judgment and laughed at it. Ha ha! What nonsense! Well, when the flood came, people tried to climb up the highest mountain they could find to escape it. But when Jesus returns, Luke tell us that those alive then who have rejected Jesus “*will say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’*” I know it looks like the sun will always come up tomorrow, just as it did today. But one day it will not because Jesus will come back. But none of us has a guarantee that we will see the sun come up tomorrow, because we might die before then. So, the question is, have you repented of your sin and trusted in Jesus Christ for your salvation? And if not, please do so today! Amen.