



International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

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Genesis 6:9-22 **King James Version** **October 7, 2018**

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, October 7, 2018**, is from **Genesis 6:9-22**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

(Genesis 6:9) These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

Noah's great grandfather was Enoch, who "walked with God" and God took him (Genesis 5:23-24). Noah's grandfather was Methuselah, who lived 969 years (Genesis 5:27). Noah's father was Lamech, who lived 777 years (Genesis 5:31). When Lamech named Noah, he hopefully proclaimed, "He will comfort us in the labor and painful

toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed” (Genesis 5:29). Noah lived 950 years (Genesis 9:29). The account of Noah and his family is from Genesis 5:21-10:32.

The Bible says Noah was righteous or just: Noah did what was right. The Old Testament describes Noah, Job, and Daniel as righteous: “As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they could save neither son nor daughter. They would save only themselves by their righteousness” (Ezekiel 14:20). God declared both Job and Noah to be perfect or blameless: “In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:1). Twice, the Book of Genesis described the way a righteous and blameless Noah behaved toward God: “Noah did everything just as God commanded him” (Genesis 6:22) and “Noah did all that the LORD commanded him” (Genesis 7:5). For a time in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve walked with God. Like his great grandfather, Enoch, Noah walked with God. The NIV adds the word “faithfully” — both Enoch and Noah “walked *faithfully* with God” (Genesis 5:22). The writer to the Hebrews emphasized that Noah lived by or walked with God by faith: “By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith” (Hebrews 11:7). The Bible commands everyone to walk

with God: “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

Peter described Noah as a “preacher of righteousness” — “if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, *a preacher of righteousness*, and seven others” (2 Peter 2:5). When we consider Noah’s life as the Bible describes him, we can easily understand Genesis 6:8 — “But Noah found favor (or grace) in the eyes of the LORD.” The Apostle Paul explained: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:8-10).

(Genesis 6:10) And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

After Noah was 500 years old, he had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Genesis 5:32). Noah was 600 years old when God sent the flood (Genesis 7:6). After the flood, Ham disgraced Noah and Noah said of his three sons: “Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers.’ He also said, ‘Praise be to the LORD, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem. May God extend Japheth’s territory; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem,

and may Canaan be the slave of Japheth” (Genesis 9:25-27).

After the flood, Noah lived 350 years. Since Noah lived 350 years after the flood and Shem lived 502 years after the flood, their direct descendant, Abraham, lived during the lifetime of Noah for 58 years and during the lifetime of Shem for 208 years. As their direct descendant, Abraham would have learned the truth about the LORD and the true Biblical account of the flood directly from Noah and Shem. Isaac and Jacob could easily have learned the truth about the flood from Abraham and from Shem’s firsthand experiences. When God called Abram and changed his name to Abraham, God chose a man who knew the LORD and who knew the man who had walked with God before the great flood. Jesus was descendant of Shem, and Jesus also taught about Noah and the great flood: “As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man” (Matthew 24:37).

(Genesis 6:11) The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

In Genesis 6:5, we read, “The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.” Before God sent the great flood, He looked into every human heart upon the earth, and He saw that every thought of every person except Noah was motivated by the desire to do evil. Only Noah

was qualified to help the LORD make a new beginning and be a godly influence upon his wife, his sons, and their wives. Everyone else on the earth, and perhaps all the creatures under their influence, were suffering from the violence of the other corrupt people around them. No one could possibly find happiness in such a situation. No one accepted God's efforts through Noah's preaching to restrain their evil thoughts and practices. Because God is loving, gracious, and merciful, God made a new beginning with the one righteous man, Noah, and his family.

(Genesis 6:12) And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

Imagine living in a world where no one restrains their evil inclinations and not one person does anything to restrain the evil actions of others; and if someone did try to restrain the evil of others, they would only suffer a violent response. In the days of Noah, no one was trying to do right; and except for Noah, no other human being was doing anything to encourage another to do right — their lives were totally corrupt. The responsibility for all the corruption on the face of the earth rested solely upon all the people on the earth, because God had made everything very good. At one time, they or their ancestors knew the true God and the ways of righteousness and peace; but by the time of Noah, they had all eventually turned from thinking and doing what was right to thinking and doing only evil. God had given them the opportunity to listen to

and see Enoch, who walked with God, and to his son Methuselah, and to the preaching of Noah, but they turned from these godly examples of justice and righteousness to do evil and became increasingly violent. The only option left for God was the right option — a new beginning that would eventually lead to the coming of Jesus the Messiah as Savior and Lord.

(Genesis 6:13) And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

God loved the people He created; therefore, the wickedness and violence that God saw everyone suffering “grieved him to his heart” (Genesis 6:6). God felt sorry that the people He had made had turned from obeying Him for their own good to thinking and doing only evil continually to their own hurt (see Genesis 6:5). When God told Noah that He would put an end to all people except Noah and his family, they died physically in the flood. Noah and his family would also die someday. The people who died in the great flood did not die spiritually. They went to a different place, a spiritual place. We know from the Bible that some of them, if not all of them, went to a spiritual prison. Thus, God put an end to their increasing wickedness and violence on earth from which they and their children and their children’s children would have suffered for generations to come. (For a brief explanation of what Peter might have meant, in my opinion, see [The Spirits in Prison](#))

which accompanies this commentary or read 1 Peter 3:17-22.)

(Genesis 6:14) Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

The ark was not to be used for navigation as an ocean liner or sailboat would be used to travel from place to place. The ark just needed to float until it safely came to rest on dry land. The ark only needed to be a large rectangular box. The Hebrew word for the type of wood used is unknown. Some popular translations translate the Hebrew word as gopher wood or cypress wood. From the Bible, later exploration and abundant oil production, we know there is oil in the Middle East, where Noah would have lived. Pitch (a petroleum product) was used to seal the ark; inside and out between the seams.

(Genesis 6:15) And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

The length of a cubit can vary from person to person, because a cubit is the length of a person's arm from their finger tips to their elbow. [Note: you might ask for volunteers in your class who would be willing to use a yardstick to determine what a cubit's length would be using their arm's measurement.] Usually, the length of a

cubit is given as either 1 foot 6 inches or 1 foot 8 inches. A “royal cubit” was used to standardize the length for government building projects by using the measurement from a king. Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Roman cubits differed in length. Depending on the length of a cubit, the ark could be 450 ft by 75 ft by 45 ft or 540 ft or 90 ft or 54 ft or some other size. The ark’s capacity could have been 450,000 cubic cubits or 1,518,750 cubic feet. It was substantial in size, but smaller than the Titanic at 4,632,800 cubic feet. After all, Noah did not have as many people building the ark as built the Titanic, but the ark achieved its purpose.

(Genesis 6:16) A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

God gave Noah simple and easy to understand instructions for building the ark, and perhaps gave Noah more instructions as the building progressed that the Bible does not record. The ark would have three decks with rooms that might have divided the wild animals from the domestic animals from the birds from the people and from their food in different compartments. God would have told Noah exactly what to do and how to do it. A window one cubit high all the way around below the roof would give the ark needed ventilation, and perhaps shutters or doors would have been added to the windows to prevent water

from entering the ark during times of greatest deluge and rain (though God could easily direct the rain entering from the windows). The Bible reveals how reasonable and wise our God is in whatever He commands us to do.

(Genesis 6:17) And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

The LORD told Noah exactly why He wanted him to build the ark. God has good reasons for telling us to do something, though He may choose not to give us all His reasons immediately, preferring to wait until we begin obeying His initial commands. By telling Noah what He planned, He freed Noah from the fears that can be produced from uncertainty; however, the Bible also promises everyone: “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isaiah 26:3 – KJV). Trusting in God in all situations can give us perfect peace. Unlike some other flood stories that modified the Bible’s account, saying, for example, that the gods were bothered because people were so noisy, the Bible says God sent the flood because the human race had become morally corrupt, which had led to increasing violence.

(Genesis 6:18) But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou,

and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

God made a covenant with or promise to Noah that his family and all that entered the ark would be saved from the great flood. The Bible does not say that the members of Noah's family were righteous as he was. The Bible only says Noah was righteous, "The LORD then said to Noah, 'Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation'" (Genesis 7:1). Later, in a similar situation, God would have saved Sodom and Gomorrah if He could have found ten righteous people in the cities (see Genesis 18:16-33).

(Genesis 6:19) And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

Since Noah and his family and the animals saved in the ark would need to increase in numbers and fill the earth, male and female pairs would be needed. Pairs were of first importance. Later in Genesis, we learn that God told Noah to bring seven pairs of clean animals into the ark: "Take with you seven pairs of every kind of clean animal, a male and its mate, and one pair of every kind of unclean animal, a male and its mate." (Genesis 7:2). We might presume that as God brought some into the ark in seven pairs that Noah easily learned which God considered clean and unclean animals. Noah would eventually need clean

animals for sacrifices and to eat (until they could bring in crops upon the earth). For this reason (and perhaps other reasons), God also gave them permission to eat animals after the flood: “Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything” (Genesis 9:3).

(Genesis 6:20) Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

God told Noah specifically what birds and animals he would need to carry on the ark to keep alive. Furthermore, Noah would not need to go about collecting animals as he built the ark, for God would compel the selected creatures to go to Noah and to enter the ark.

(Genesis 6:21) And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

Noah’s job was building the ark and filling it with all the necessary food for the birds and animals, all types of seeds and plants, for they were not allowed or enabled to eat one another until after the great flood and they left the ark. There would not be conflicts between the animals or between Noah’s family and the animals until they left the ark. God could have done all this by himself, but God respected Noah as a righteous person and gave Noah

responsible work to do in saving the whole human race. God does the same today: God works through and with responsible and obedient people to achieve His purposes when He could easily do everything himself.

(Genesis 6:22) Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

Noah was a righteous man because he believed God and expressed his faith in God by his obedience. Noah did EVERYTHING just as God commanded him. The secret to success in the Christian life and to spiritual growth is to prayerfully seek to do all that the Lord Jesus has commanded us to do as we read the Bible and to trust in the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit to help us walk in obedient faith. The “process of sanctification” is by grace through faithful obedience to Jesus Christ.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. How does the Bible describe Noah?

2. Before the great flood, how does Genesis describe Noah's family?

3. Before God told Noah to build the ark, how does the Bible describe all the other people living on the earth?

4. Name two things God told Noah to do.

5. Name two things God said He would do.

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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