

God and Noah, Odd Ones Out (Genesis 6:9-7:24)

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Preacher: William HC

[0 : 0 0] So I'm going to read the passage that Pastor William is going to preach from. It's a bit long, so you might want to follow through on your phones or Bibles. Going from Genesis 6, verse 9 to the end of chapter 7.

This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth.

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them.

I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So make yourself an ark of cypress wood. Make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out.

This is how you are to build it. The ark is to be 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high. Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof and opening one cubit high all around.

[1 : 1 6] Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens.

Every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. But I will establish my covenant with you and you will enter the ark.

You and your sons and your wife and your son's wife with you. You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you.

Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.

Noah did everything just as God commanded him. Then the Lord then said to Noah, Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation.

[2 : 2 3] 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.

And also seven pairs of every kind of bird, male and female, to keep their various kinds alive throughout the earth. Seven days from now, I will send rain on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights, and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made.

And Noah did all that the Lord commanded him. Noah was 600 years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. And Noah and his sons and his wives and his sons' wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood.

Pairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground, male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark. As God had commanded Noah.

And after the seven days, the floodwaters came on the earth. In the 600th year of Noah's life, on the 17th day of the second month, on that day, all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened.

[3 : 40] And rain fell on the earth 40 days and 40 nights. On that very day, Noah and his sons, Shem, Han, and Japheth, together with his wife, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark.

They had with them every wild animal according to its kind, all livestock according to their kinds, every creature that moves along the ground according to its kind, and every bird according to its kind, everything with wings.

Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life in them came to Noah and entered the ark. The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as God had commanded Noah.

Then the Lord shut him in. For 40 days, the flood kept coming on the earth, and as the waters increased, they lifted the ark high above the earth. The waters rose and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water.

They rose greatly on the earth, and all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered. The water rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than 15 cubits.

[4 : 49] Every living thing that moved on land perished. Birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died.

Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out. People and animals and the creatures that move along the ground, and the birds were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark.

The waters flooded the earth for 150 days. And that is the word of God. Thank you, Venus, for reading that six-minute reading.

And thank you as well for listening through. I don't know if that was the first time you've heard it since Sunday school, but we shall see. So I'm one of the pastors here. Thank you so much for joining us today, those of you who are new, and if you're streaming online as well, it's great to see you.

I'm just reminded as it rains really hard, you know, God has perfect timing, isn't he? That actually, this is a really tough passage, but we live on this side of the cross, and God has promised never to judge the world in this way, so we can be so grateful.

[6 : 21] And in fact, this morning when I saw a rainbow, I was reminded of that truth, so we thank God for that. Also, if you're wondering, I'm going to a friend's wedding after this, so I am a bit more formal.

And it's also a perfect excuse. One of my kids said, I have to wear the Noah's Ark tie today, Dad. So we shall see more of this story soon, but why don't we pray and ask God to help us?

Heavenly Father, thank you so much for your word. We do ask that you would speak to us today, even from such a challenging passage, one that reminds us of the cost of sin, and yet one that reminds us of all who can find grace in you when we stand alone and follow you.

So do speak to us, help us today, in Jesus' name. Amen. So yeah, we're going to continue really the rest of the series through Genesis 1 to 11. We had a pause for Easter, but from this week, next week and the week after, we're going to hear a little bit more about Noah's story.

So forget Star Wars, this is the Noah trilogy. So do make sure that you do read the passage beforehand, just so you can refresh yourselves and understand the story together.

[7 : 38] And so I've already said I look a little bit different from every one of you. So I wonder if you've ever been kind of the odd one out. I don't know whether it's from what you dress. This is a movie.

I'm sure some of you have seen it, Lost in Translation. This guy, Bill Murray, he's the odd one out, right? He's way taller than all the Japanese dudes he's standing in the elevator with. But when have you been the odd one out?

Maybe you haven't been the tallest person in the room, but maybe you were the only one wearing a mask at a friend's get-together. Maybe you're the only one that spoke English at a meeting.

Or maybe you're the only one who's a visitor here today or something like that. Thank you for being here, by the way. Yet on a serious level, perhaps you've also experienced being the odd one out in more serious situations.

Maybe you're the only one who follows Jesus amongst your high school friends now. Or perhaps at work amongst your colleagues, all they talk about is partying, clubbing, hooking up with people, while you're the only one that spends time going to worship and church.

[8 : 45] Or maybe in your extended family, you're the only Christian. I know some of you have experienced this firsthand recently. When you and I are the odd ones out, what do we need to believe to keep going?

When you and I are the odd ones out, what do we need to believe to keep going, to keep trusting God as his people? I think Noah's story today will tell us a lot about this. So meet Noah, right?

The odd one out in his generation. Do you see that in verse 9 to 10? There's a contrast, isn't there? This is the account of Noah and his family.

The Bible describes him as righteous and blameless, a man who walked with God. And yet because of the corruption and violence around him, that made him the odd one out.

Yes, there's a family on the boat. There's animals and birds and pears. Lots of rain. But I hope we'll also see, over the next few weeks, the devastation of sin.

[9 : 49] I hope we'll see the mercy and kindness of God. And I hope we will discover the foundation we all need to stand firm in our time as PCBC English.

So how did we get here? Remember how the book of Genesis began. We saw a powerful yet personal God, didn't we? Right? From Genesis chapter 1 onwards. Someone who can make mankind in his image, who can speak creation by his word.

He makes humanity to live in dependence on him. In a world that speaks of his glory, his goodness, his beauty. And when God created the world, it was very good, he said.

And yet, when our first parents rebelled, it was very bad. And you know what? From Genesis 4 to 6, we are reminded, right? Every generation since the fall of our first parents have refused to submit to the maker.

Every generation since has had people stepping away from the presence of the Lord. And yes, there are glimmers of hope. But things, on the whole, spiral downwards.

[10 : 59] Until Genesis 6 verse 5 reminds us, as we heard from Barry the other week, the wickedness of humanity was great. Everyone's heart was bent towards evil.

And yet, it is through one glimmer of hope from Seth's godly line that we see Noah enter the scene. And he becomes the man whom God shows favor on.

And so let's talk about, though, first, this part of Noah's story. And actually, I want to raise one thing. Many of us come to Noah's story, okay, with Sunday school glasses on.

So if you've grown up in church, or even if you haven't been to church, there's a movie called Noah, right? So you're already primed to think Noah's the main character of the story. But did you notice when Venus read the scriptures, who got all the lines of dialogue?

Who do you think the main character is according to the Bible? Look, Noah got the Russell Crowe treatment, yes. But who spoke the most?

[12 : 04] It was God, okay? And so not just one or two words, right? Actually, God speaks more here than he has actually spoken in every single chapter previously. So if we want to read it right, Noah's story right, actually, he doesn't even say anything until Genesis chapter 9 towards the end.

If we want to get the story right, we need to think about God first, okay? The Bible's a book for us, but it's not about us. It's about God. Let's start with God. Just like if you want to understand someone really, truly, and deeply, you want to listen to what they say, right?

Boyfriends, girlfriends, take note. Here it's no different. As God speaks, we get a window into his heart. And what we see here, I want to share the first point, is that this, God is the odd one out.

I'll say that again. God is the odd one out in this story of Noah. God is unique. He stands alone. And I want to share at least two ways that he is the odd one out, that he stands alone.

Firstly, God is just. And he must judge a world ruined by sin. Verses 11 to 13, I wonder if you heard that repeated word come up, the word corrupt.

[13 : 16] It reminds us again that sin has created such a disaster. Look what sin has done. Look at what it's become. And I know some of us think of sin as just something delicious, something you kind of dabble on the side.

Or maybe you fear it a bit. Sin is like if you break a law. Or maybe you have something concrete in mind. Sin is lying or stealing or cheating on your spouse.

But here God describes sin in a very different way. He uses the word corruption. Did you see that in verses 11 to 13? In the original language, actually corruption has the idea of something that is ruined or spoiled or destroyed.

Think of corruption as like a drawing that's been scribbled over. Or your best jacket that's been left somewhere and now it's moldy.

Or a bathroom that is now beyond repair. It has to be replaced. God is so grieved at how corrupt our world has become. And you can notice, actually the word appears four times.

[14 : 26] It's the author emphasizing. Emphasizing this is the issue at hand and this is what God cares about. And actually you can see, actually when God responds, he's literally going to bring corruption to all the people.

That's how he speaks of the world. As the world has been corrupted, he must now ruin the world himself. And this is strange, right?

We don't often think of a God as someone who deals out punishment. But we have to put ourselves in the mind of the Israelites who heard this. Remember the Israelites who first read the book of Genesis, they were surrounded by different nations, different countries, and they saw the world very differently to the Israelites, didn't they?

For example, the author John Currid explains how in other ancient versions of the flood story because almost every culture has a flood story if you do a bit of digging. And other ancient versions, in their worldview, the gods are bickering and fighting and when a flood comes, there's actually no real good reason for it.

One even says, you know, one ancient story says, ah, man, the gods got so annoyed. The humans are too noisy. We've got to stop this. Man, they're making too much noise. It was kind of like a noise control sort of thing.

[15 : 46] In the Bible, however, the reason for the flood is crystal clear. It is because of sin. It is because of corruption. Look how corrupt humanity has become.

And it's actually only the God of the Bible that gives us permission to name something as evil, right? And to call for justice. If you believe in another God, actually evil's just, God's doing whatever they do.

Or evil doesn't really exist. It's just a figment of your imagination. Only God of the Bible tells us there is evil and names it and is willing to judge it.

And look, if we're tempted to think that our generation, right, thousands of years after Noah, more enlightened, surely, more educated, therefore less deserving of judgment, look again.

Do we not demonize marriage, too, in our world? Do we not idolize and celebrate violence, too? Are we not always trying to redefine what is right and wrong, whether with our parents, whether just in the world around us, what is good and true with no reference to God?

[17 : 02] Friends, we live on this earth and our short lives are filled with so much misery and so much of it is because of our sin and corruption. Only the God of Genesis is grieved by soldiers murdering innocent children.

Only the God of Genesis is sad when men and women degrade each other, when families live and spend their entire lives in selfish greed.

And for this, the God of the Bible is the odd one out. He stands alone. We need to know this. He is grieved by the sin and corruption of our world.

He must judge it. To not do so would actually be wrong of God. Look, the second point I think we can see in chapter 6 is that secondly, God is not just just.

He's also merciful. He's also merciful. He commits to rescue His creation, does He not? One thing I'll miss about lockdown life, I know that a lot of you are feeling like things are getting back to normal.

[18 : 09] Some of you are probably still looking after vulnerable people. But one thing I'll miss about lockdown life is where all the random projects that we got to suddenly have time to do, right? Whether it was making bread or whatever.

For us, it was building our own cubby house, right? Yeah, it looks impressive on pictures, but actually, I had no idea what I was doing. I should not pretend to be a builder so our kids could enjoy a cubby house.

The lack of walls, by the way, is a design feature. The worst part, I think, for me was, you can see there's a roof on that, but it almost didn't have a roof because I didn't get good measurements.

So I fail at this kind of work because I didn't get good measurements. Not so with Noah, obviously, as we heard from verses 17 to 24. God is very specific, right?

He gives clear and specific instructions. And I want you to put aside, okay, will these instructions fly? Can I build it? Whatever. The fact that God gives these instructions is a sign of His mercy.

[19 : 13] The fact that He cares enough about one man and His family is a sign that He cares, that He is willing to save, despite our sin, despite our brokenness.

And two clues, I think, in this section invite us to look beyond just measurements and animals. The first clue is this. Verse 14, there's the word ark that appears, right?

Go make yourself an ark of cypress wood or gopher wood. This is the word that appears in the Bible to describe Noah's rescue boat. Yes, I know ark is a video game, but look, the Bible uses the word here and only one other time in the Old Testament.

Okay? So the word ark is used here and the only other time it's used is when it describes the basket, the basket used to conceal the baby Moses as Moses floats down the river.

All right? Their only hope, their one hope of salvation for the Hebrew people. You see, there's actually a deliberate play on words here.

[20 : 20] There too, in Exodus, the ark is an expression of God's mercy, right? He uses this basket to preserve a redeemer of sorts for God's people.

Someone who can help rescue God's people caught in slavery. Right? This flawed and righteous man floats in an ark. And so anytime we see the word ark, I think we should think God's mercy.

We shouldn't just think big wooden boat will it float. We should think God's mercy to a people with no way out. Okay? Just like sometimes you see sign writing, cross equals love, I want you guys to think ark equals mercy.

Ark equals mercy. This is God sparing the seed of mankind. This is God not wiping out humanity as we deserve. The second clue I think that God has mercy in mind is in verse 18.

Verse 18, God keeps talking, right, after giving instructions and dimensions. He says, I will establish my covenant with you and you will enter the ark. This word is going to pop up again and again in the next few chapters.

[21 : 28] So keep in mind the word covenant. Okay? And actually this word covenant is the first time in the Bible that it appears. Bruce Waltke points out the biggest difference between the Bible's version of the flood, the Bible's account of the flood and other ancient accounts is that the Bible has invested the story with a covenant concept.

What is a covenant? Let me try and explain it this way. There's two kinds of relationships in life. There's business relationships and covenant relationships. Okay?

So you guys go about life and a business relationship goes like this. You sit down and work in your office, I'll give you a paycheck, right? Or you pay me \$4 or \$4.50, I'll give you a flat white.

That's a business relationship. A covenant relationship goes like this. Friend, I'm committed to you no matter what you do to me. Or son, I'll always be your mom or dad.

Or love, I promise to love you for richer or poorer, sickness or health. These are covenant relationships. These are not based on performance, right?

[22 : 39] You don't say in your vows, I promise to love you as long as you earn this much. Or you don't say to your son, I'll always be your mom until you did this, this, this, this, this.

You can't do that. We dare not confuse the two kinds of relationships. And so here, God is not making a business relationship with Noah. He's making a covenant with him, right?

And with creation. There's no haggling. Noah still has no lines. There's no, no bargaining involved, right? There's only God and only he says, I promise to look after you.

I'm committed to you. And yes, we see Noah obey. We'll talk about that soon. But he is loved first in a covenant relationship from God. And when the Bible develops the idea of covenant through the rest of Scripture, we will see this.

Time and time again, God will establish a covenant and he does this by saying, I am bound to you by blood. I'll say that again. I am bound to you by blood. And so that's why for Jesus to one day say, I'm establishing a new covenant, no surprise, he does it by blood, right?

[23 : 50] I am bound to you by blood. Have you ever felt that way about someone? God feels that way about Noah, about God's people. That's why even as God judges the world for its corruption and violence, rightly so, he plans and makes an effort to preserve everything that has lifeblood in them.

You see the connection. Noah and his family are asked to preserve two of every kind of animal and birds. Notice they all have blood. And food to keep them alive, right?

And so I think that's also why in chapter 7, you'll notice actually the creator adds extra pairs of clean and unclean animals to his drive-through order, right? It's not that he wants more animals for a zoo.

He's saying, you're going to one day need to make blood sacrifices and I'm preparing this for you. I'm making sure this can happen. So when you think of God, who comes to mind?

Is your God some kind of, I'm only happy with you if you come to church. Oh, I'm only nice to you because you give me stuff. If that's your idea of God, maybe you have got him confused.

[25 : 01] That's not the God of the Bible. The God of the Bible is the odd one out. He is just, yes, but he is so merciful. He is so committed to his people by blood.

Only he brings justice and mercy to a world that is ruined by corruption and violence. I mean, think about it. Like how Moses did.

One day he will say, hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one, right? He's calling out God as the odd one out. And then he says, because of that, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your might.

And so we want to remember that. How do we turn and respond and love our Lord as the odd one out? We remember he is just yet merciful.

Remember he is just yet merciful. Okay, I've kind of dodged it long enough. Perhaps at this point we also need to address the elephant in the room. Maybe two elephants, right?

[26 : 05] Maybe for you, you're still listening in, but the odd thing out right now, it's not God, but it's this flood story. Okay? Simple enough to understand. Noah gets seven days to obey, get them all in the ark, and the rain's going to fall 40 days and night.

God shuts them in. Flood waters rise, everything outside dies. Only those in the ark are spared. And whatever your Sunday school teacher added into the mix as well.

But for some of you, a flood story like this makes no sense. In a world where people don't live 600 years, where ships don't kind of dock in mountain peaks and floods don't go global, what do we do with this story?

What do we do with this account? Some of these questions, look, they're debated still by Christians in science even today. And look, in the time we have, I don't want to solve every single problem that there is or perceived problem.

I want to share just two things. On the one hand, I think we need to acknowledge that the passage itself that we read actually doesn't require the entire globe was flooded.

[27 : 13] I think it's very possible. I think God can do it. But the passage itself, the text itself, doesn't actually require it. Let me explain. Sometimes, biblical authors, they describe their known world as what is going on.

Genesis 41, for example, 57, this tells us how there was a famine and then all the world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, the guy that planned ahead.

We get, and when we read this and we understand implicitly, we don't go, oh yeah, what about the people in India and China? Did they make it? Look, it wasn't all the world. It was all the known world to Joseph. And even in English, I think we distinguish, don't we, right, between the word the world and earth and land and region.

We have different words of these. And yet actually, in Hebrew, the word I've highlighted, all the world, the word is *eret*, and it could mean any of those things, world, land, region.

And so it's a little bit tricky, isn't it? We need to look at the context. And sometimes, biblical authors, when they describe important events, historical events, things that have truly happened, they sometimes deal with poetic flourish.

- [28 : 28] There's an example in Judges 5, which we were reading with our kids recently. Deborah, one of the judges, sings of how actually the stars of the sky joined in the fight against Israel's enemies.

Judges 5, verse 20. We know what happened, right? Because actually, in the straight account beforehand, it says who fought who. It says how they were defeated.

But Deborah's version is still true, but more dramatic, isn't it? More poetic. So perhaps, like big budget movies sometimes use special effects, sometimes maybe an important story like Noah's gets a special kind of treatment.

We can't be exactly sure. Perhaps the authors wanted to use big language to remind us, to emphasize the big cost of sin and how important this part of the story is.

So maybe we need to read it literarily as well as literally. So that's one end of it. But on the other end, one thing that, if you read this flood account and you read some of the other flood accounts around the world, unlike other ancient myths and legends, the flood story is told in a matter-of-fact way.

- [29 : 45] Did you notice how, as Venus read it, it was just, and this happened, and this happened, Noah was this old, this is what happened. It was just straight, kind of a journalist reporting it.

And actually, Genesis 6, 17, right, was crystal clear. No matter how you read the word earth, it says, every creature that has the breath of life will be destroyed.

Everything will perish. Make no mistake, this was a catastrophic event. Nothing like the world had ever seen before.

This is not a happy children's story about animals being rescued. This is thousands of men and women and animals swept away and drowned.

once God brought order out of chaos by the power of his word, blessing creation. Now, because of corruption, he has released the powers of chaos again.

- [30 : 49] Water from below, we read, water from above, just overwhelming the world, bringing judgment. You see, the point of the flood story is not just science and history, although it's true.

it is making a theological point, a point about who God is. We're meant to see a God who loves his creation so, so much that he will cleanse it from everything that pollutes it.

The question we should ask ourselves is not just, was the flood possible, but who is this God that had to do such a thing? And how should we as corrupt people respond to him?

We look now to the last point. We're going to look briefly at Noah, the odd one, out. I'm wearing a poppy.

It's Anzac Day tomorrow. If you're looking for a war-related Netflix to chew over tonight, can I suggest this one? It's called *A Hidden Life*. *A Hidden Life*, directed by Terence Malick.

- [31 : 54] It tells a true story of an Austrian called Frank Jagerstetter. He was a farmer who refused to fight for the Nazis during the Second World War. So we know Dietrich Braunhofer, a very famous guy.

This person, practically no one knew about him. He was just this obscure farmer in Austria who, when asked to swear an allegiance to Hitler, he felt like he could not do it.

And over several hours of lush cinematography, it's a beautiful movie, the director draws you into his world where this quiet man and his family stood alone.

Don't worry, if you're looking up the reviews, it's great. So just watch it. Look, and I like it because actually Hollywood has a tendency to downplay anything religious. I think there was a movie about Louis Zamperini and they cut out anything that was Christian about him because he was a Christian.

But A Hidden Life is great. It actually faithfully connects Jagerstetter's act of defiance. He connects it with his faith. His refusal to swear allegiance to Hitler was because of his faith.

[33 : 01] And yet in many ways, in his village, no one else did that thing. No one else took a stand. He was the odd one out. And sometimes, if not for this movie, no one would have known about him.

And in a similar way, Noah's words, right, they're few. In our section, we hear from him just three times. But what we see him do is commit to his creator, even as the rest of his generation defied it.

We see Noah obeying the Lord, right? The repetition is important. He does everything that God instructs three times. And yes, he is tainted by Adam's sin, full nature.

His life is not spotless, spoiler alert. And yet secure in God's favor, assured by God's covenant with him and his family. Noah and his family, they obey God.

They follow him, even when no one else does. And I wonder, in the same way, if we were put in that situation, having to obey God, follow God, even when no one else around us does, what can we learn?

[34 : 19] When you and I are the odd ones out at the family dinner, or with friends, or even here at church, if you feel like the odd one out, can I say, it is what we believe about God that will affect whether we keep going with him or not.

Say it again, if you're the odd one out, what you believe about God will affect whether you can keep following him or you'll abandon him. And the same thing Noah needed to know, the same thing that Noah needed to know to stay blameless and not just blend in all the time, is the same thing you and I need to know too.

God is just and God is merciful. God is just and will judge one day and yet God is merciful and he is so committed to his people.

Let me show you an example. And many years later, the apostle Peter, he reflects on Noah's story and he does exactly the same thing. He reflects on God's justice and his mercy.

Let me quote to you from 2 Peter 3, from verse 3. And he's writing here to early Christians. They were definitely the odd ones out. They were refusing to worship the Roman emperor at the time.

[35 : 34] They were arrested and being killed for their faith. And Peter just says, above all, understand that in the last days, scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.

They will say, where's this coming? He promised. Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation. But they deliberately forget that long ago, by God's word, the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water.

And by these waters also, the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. And by the same word, the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

Do you see what he's doing there? This is Peter. He's going back to the Noah story to draw what we need to keep going today. What does he say? Peter goes on to say this.

Do not forget this one thing, dear friends. With the Lord, a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a day. And the Lord is not slow in keeping his promises as some understand slowness.

[36 : 43] Instead, he's patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance. Do you see Peter's remembering God's mercy?

But then Peter keeps going. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar. The elements will be destroyed by fire and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

And now Peter's remembering God's justice. You see this? These two truths about God from Noah's story was enough to keep Peter and the early Christians going.

They did not back down. They kept worshipping Jesus. And what they needed to remember is what we need today as well. When your friends invite you away, when a link is tempting you to stray, when a family member is mocking you today, don't forget the Lord is merciful.

He's committed. He's been patient towards you. And don't forget the Lord is just. He will judge everyone one day. And the day of the Lord is coming.

[37 : 57] It may not be by oh the rain stopped, that's great. It may not be by water but by fire. He will lay everything bare. And so friends, we trust Him.

We obey Him. Like Noah, we pursue righteousness and holiness and godliness that welcomes others to come to repentance too. Don't perish.

Just as once Noah took refuge in God's ark, His protection, we too must take refuge in God's rescue plan for us today. Even if no one follows, we must warn them don't perish.

Find life in God's promised ark. Because friends, it may not have been go-forward that Jesus Christ was hung upon.

But at the cross, we see God's justice and His mercy, don't we? We see a Father who is committed to dealing with our corruption and our rebellion.

[39 : 06] God's and yet He does this by establishing a new covenant, by nailing His own Son to the cross.

And there He says, I'm committed to you. How? Do you know this? I'm bound to you by blood, the blood of my beloved Son. Would that be enough to help you stay and be the odd ones out?

God's mercy. God's mercy. Because remember, our Lord Jesus was the odd one out too. The only righteous man who did not sin. Greater than Noah.

And He invites you to take refuge in Him too. To find life in Him too. To escape judgment and destruction through Him too. And so when we read Noah's Ark, we think God's mercy.

And we think, wow, no one else follows me. I'm the odd one out. We think Jesus, our odd one out. And we continue walking to Him. Let's pray.

[40 : 10] Heavenly Father, we confess that even this past two weeks, we have felt a little bit like people who have been led astray.

Whether it's from friends and family, whether it's from just people that we care about, inviting us to forget God. we've been tempted to stray.

Father, put the cross before us. The cross, our greater ark, our greater rescue. Put that vision of Jesus Christ hung there for our sins in front of us.

Remind us, Lord, that you have made a covenant, a new covenant by your Son's blood. And that because of that, we know that you are just yet merciful to us.

We know that it is worth following you no matter the cost, no matter the shame. Father, would you continue to speak to us through Noah's story because it is our story too, as we are odd ones out trying to pursue you, trying to follow you, trying to live for you in this world, in this day and age.

[41 : 26] So be with us, we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.