

The Scariest Verses In The Bible  
*And the LORD shut him in, Genesis 7:16*

Anybody who's been a believer in Jesus, or even just religious, probably has a favorite Bible verse that means a lot to them. It might be a verse like Psalm 147:3 *He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds*. Or Matthew 5:4, *Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted*.

I'm sure that some of you here today might have memorized Jesus words in Matthew 11:28, *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*.

Those are great and precious promises from God that are designed to strengthen us and encourage us as we face the trials of life.

But I want to challenge you with something this morning. There's a whole bunch of other verses in scripture that do just the opposite of encourage and strengthen. They're verses that nobody seems to claim as their life verse. Nobody in your Bible study group quotes these when you go around the room and share what God's taught you this last week.

For the next four weeks I'd like to look at some of those verses that no one would ever pick for their favorites. These are verses that I've never heard anybody recite. But for the next four weeks I'd like us to zero in on what I've titled, "The Scariest Verses In The Bible."

These are verses that we tend to skip over, but they're just as important, if not more so, as those comforting promises. In fact, for some of you here today they may be eternally more relevant than any comforting verses you've heard, or even memorized.

This week I'd like us to turn to the first of those verses, **Genesis 7 Pg. 6**

*So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.* Genesis 7:16

Now, I'm not a big FaceBook guy, but I have a FaceBook page which I probably post to 2 or 3 times a year. Obviously I don't get a lot of comments to my FaceBook posts so I was really taken back when I posted a link to a review of Darren Aronofsky's movie *Noah*, which came out in 2014.

The review was a scholarly evaluation by Dr. Brian Mattson, who is Senior Scholar of Public Theology for the Center for Cultural Leadership. His take on the movie was that it was a thoroughly pagan retelling of the Noah story direct from Kabbalist and Gnostic sources.

The Kabbala comes out of Judaism and it's supposed to explain the mystical, esoteric nature to the Old Testament. The most famous follower in our day is Madonna, so that'll give you some idea of how biblically true it is.

Gnostic teaching is again, mystical. It all based on supposed secret knowledge that only a select few have attained. Γνῶσις in Greek means “knowledge.”

After posting, suddenly I heard from two friends I hadn’t touched base with in years. It was really interesting. One raked me over the coals for suggesting that scholarship might be important in Bible study. He mocked the concept of using a scholarly evaluation of the movie.

Think about this: the writings of Moses about Noah were penned about 3400 years ago in a radically different culture than ours, in a different language than ours. I don’t know about you, but it only makes sense to me that we would want to take a scholarly look at Moses writings.

I’ve spent the last 48 years studying ancient history, ancient languages, and biblical exegesis so I could understand the Bible in its historical context. Obviously I want to read the Genesis account of Noah in light of that study.

My other critic slammed me for shoddy scholarship. The other one argued against every point that Mattson used in his critique. As I read this friend’s criticism, it became evident that he was what I would call, a “Wikipedia scholar.” Be careful of using the internet for Bible study without some background (you don’t need to go to seminary) but to put things you read in context.

I thought it was kind of humorous, one guy let me have it me for using scholarship and the other questioned every aspect of the scholarly review I had posted. My thought was this: before you go see a movie on any biblical subject it’s important to understand what the Bible says about that subject. That way you can be equipped to have an intelligent discussion with your friends when they ask you what you thought of it.

But, what was even more fascinating to me was both these guys asked me the same question: They said, “What did you expect, a Sunday School lesson?” Of course I don’t expect Hollywood to make a movie with a boat full of happy animals piloted by a smiling Noah like we paint on the walls of the church nursery.

But the truth is, the account of the Noahic flood is one of the most powerful, dramatic, exciting, and challenging stories that’s ever been written. I’d love to see a movie patterned after an adult Sunday School class that took the Bible for what it was saying but at the same time wrestled with questions about the character of God and the struggles of the people who were outside and inside the ark.

That’s one of the things I appreciate about Sight and Sound in Lancaster. They really try to capture the biblical accounts accurately, but at the same time blend in the emotional struggles that the people in the biblical narrative might have been experiencing.

The subject of Genesis 6–8 is the worldwide flood in the days of Noah. As I read these chapters the Bible is clear and straightforward. The planet was filled with wickedness. God judged the Earth and God saved Noah and his family.

The first thing I want us to see today is this:

## *I. God Promises Consequences For Rebellion Against Him*

II Peter 1:4 says there have *been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature.*

God has made some amazing promises all through the Bible. You find them in the Old Testament. You find them in the New Testament. They involve our forgiveness, they involve God's gift of eternal life, they involve God's comfort. But God makes some other promises too.

In John 16:33 He promises, *In the world you will have tribulation.* Galatians 6:8, *He who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption.* Isaiah 13:11, *I will punish the world for its evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud.*

There's a negative side to God's promises just like there's a positive. Some of God's promises are encouraging, but others are downright chilling.

### **Genesis 6:5-7**

Verse 6 is obviously an anthropomorphic expression. In Greek *ánthrōpos* is the word for "human" and *morphē* is the word for "form." And so an anthropomorphism is a way of explaining the actions of God in human terms.

It doesn't mean that God said, "Oh man, I really messed up here." It doesn't mean that God decided that He had made a miscalculation or a mistake, or that he couldn't make up his mind what He wanted.

What it shows is, a change of God's actions resulting from a change in the objects of God's actions.

Martin Luther, one of the key figures in the Protestant Reformation wrote, "Such expressions are found in the scriptures so that we mortals with our feeble understanding might be helped to catch hold on divine truth according to the measure of our poor human ability."

It's like God's using a human object lesson here to help us understand.

God's reaction to the violence and wickedness that characterized society was grief and anger. God is holy and therefore He can't help but be grieved and angry with sin.

And so He said, "That's it. I'm going to wipe out this earth and start again." And that's exactly what he did through a universal, cataclysmic flood, which destroyed the whole earth.

The world that perished was a wicked world, a violent world, one in which even the people of God had compromised until godliness had been almost entirely polluted.

Listen, God promises consequences for rebellion against Him. Ecclesiastes 8:11 says, *Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*

In other words, because God doesn't immediately drop an anvil out of the sky to crush us every time we sin, we think we've gotten away with something. The truth is we all deserve God's judgment.

Now that might not sit too well with you. You might not like that. You may be thinking, "This Ed guy is really offensive here. I may not be perfect, but I sure don't think I deserve God's judgment. I'm going to look up his FaceBook page and post what I really think of this sermon. It ain't gonna be thumbs up."

Well let me see if I can explain it this way. The Bible says, *Whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.* James 2:10

It only takes breaking the law at one point to make us a lawbreaker. How many banks do you have to rob to become a bank robber? How many lies do you have to tell to become a liar?

### **Look with me at Galatians 3, page 1142 Read verse 10**

As far as salvation goes, no one was ever saved by keeping God's commandments. To try to get to God by keeping His law is to be under a curse. Why? Because no one can keep all of it. And all it takes is one violation to bring condemnation. God's standard is perfection.

As far as the Christian life goes all sin is serious. We may be eternally forgiven through faith in Christ but that's no excuse for a lax Christian life.

God counts all sin as sin. If we only stumble at one point we're still guilty.

If I commit a crime I can't ask the judge to let me go simply on the basis that I haven't been trouble with the law before. If I'm guilty, then I'm a lawbreaker and I have to pay the penalty.

That's the way it is with sin. We are not excused from sin because we do other things right.

The Bible says, *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Romans 6:23)

It says, *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.* (Romans 3:23)

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, the New Testament was written in Greek.

The Greek word translated *sinned* is *αμαρτανω*, means "to miss the mark." It was used to describe Greek archers in training missing the bull's eye. That's us. We've all missed the mark of God's perfection.

As hard as it is for us to grasp, we've all sinned against the holy God of the universe. That means we all deserve God's judgment. That's the whole reason for the cross and the empty tomb. That's the whole context of Genesis 6.

God wants us to understand that He promises judgment if we continue in rebellion against Him.

If we had to just stop there we'd be hopeless. We're all sinners. God judges sin. What's the way out?

*I. God Promises Judgment*

*II. God Always Makes A Way Of Salvation*

## **Back to Genesis 6**

### **Read Genesis 6:13-14; 17-19 7:4-15**

Henry Morris, in his book *The Genesis Flood*, points out, "Expressions involving universally of the flood and its effects occur more than 30 times in Genesis 6-9. The wording of the entire record, both here and throughout Genesis 6-9 could not be improved upon. If the writer's intention was to describe a universal flood, as a description of a river overflowing it is completely misleading and exaggerated."

Think about what the Bible says about the nature of this flood. The rain and rising waters continued 40 days. The mountains were covered by a depth of 20 feet, or 15 cubits.

That's a stretch for a lot of people. This past week I spent some time on the web reading anti-flood sites to see what their arguments were. The idea of the great mountain ranges of the world being covered seems is a major sticking point, and that's understandable. But the truth is, we have no idea what the earth's surface looked like at this time.

### **Turn to Psalm 104 Page 587 Read verses 5-9**

Verse 9 lets us know that this isn't talking about the original creation here, but the flood. The waters of the original creation did return to cover the earth in the flood.

Verse 8 gives us a clue to the geological changes that took place during this time.

The NKJV we're reading from translated this to mean that the water went up over the mountains and down into the valleys. But the Hebrew just says, "the mountains go up and the valleys go down."

That's why the NASB translates this, "the mountains rose, and the valleys sank down." My NKJV study Bible even has a note in the margin that says, "Or the mountains rose, the valleys sank."

According to the Bible there were immense geological changes. God supernaturally lowered the ocean basins and pushed up great mountain ranges. It's obvious to every geologist that these things happened. The only point of disagreement is when they happened and what caused them.

There had to be a tremendous amount of water on the earth and it couldn't all come from the clouds. If all the water was rained out of the clouds today you would only get a few inches of water if it was evenly distributed over the whole earth. Well, back in **Genesis 7** we get a solution to that problem.

### **Read Verse 11**

God opened up immense subterranean sources of water, He raised the ocean basins, and then He broke down the water vapor canopy that had surrounded the earth since creation.

There was so much water in this flood that by the time the rains stopped it was 110 more days until the ark finally touched land.

In all, slightly over a year passed from the beginning of the flood until the waters had dried up.

A flood of that duration is not a local flood. No local flood could last that long. John Whitcomb observed, "How a flood of such depth and duration could have covered only a limited portion of the earth's surface has never been satisfactorily explained."

In his commentary on Genesis, Henry Morris lists 26 reasons why the Bible is describing a world-wide flood. Let me just mention a few.

1. The ark would be totally unnecessary for a local flood.

The size of the ark was tremendous. There was enough room for thousands of animals. Noah worked for 120 years on that thing. If the flood was only local God could have merely told Noah to get to higher ground and saved him an awful lot of trouble.

2. After the flood God promised never to destroy the earth with a flood again. 9:11-13

There have been thousands of local floods in human history. Millions of people have died in floods. We still have towns that are flooded in the US. Some will never be rebuilt. If God's promises refer to a local flood then He sure has broken his promise.

3. Later in Genesis we are told that all the people of the earth descended from Noah's 3 sons and their wives.

4. The New Testament says it was a universal flood.

Scientific opinions and theories change but the word of God is forever settled in heaven. That means that there are times when science is going to conflict with the Bible.

Actually it doesn't shake my faith any if Sam Harris and Richard Dawkins want to teach a uniformitarian evolutionist view of the world. It doesn't surprise me that many scientists and even liberal theologians testify against teaching intelligent design in our schools.

It's not that I've buried my head in the sand and ignored the facts. It's that all of the facts haven't been presented.

Something happened on our globe that was a catastrophe of enormous proportions. The evidence is everywhere you look and science doesn't have all the explanations.

For one thing those gigantic mountain ranges we mentioned are really an enigma to geologists. No one seems to know where they came from.

This is a quote from Dr. A. J. Eardley's article "The Cause of Mountain Building, an Enigma" from American Scientist.

He says, "The internal structure of mountains is finally well understood, and the erosion processes that fashion the details of their outward appearance are no longer mysteries, yet the cause of the deformities of the earth's outer layer and the consequent building of mountains still effectively evades an explanation."

For an explanation of where mountains came from God tells us they came about through creation and then were augmented through the geological processes accompanying the flood.

During the flood great changes occurred all over the globe and the evidence is everywhere.

Probably one of the most obvious evidences is found in fossils. There are billions of animals found in fossils today. Where did they come from? When fish die in the ocean today do they become fossils? No. They're eaten up and destroyed.

2000 years ago there were lions and bears in Palestine. Do we find any fossils of lions, there today? No we don't.

In contrast to what is going on in the world today there are fossil beds all over the planet containing billions of fossils. In the western US almost perfect fossils of fish, turtles, mammals, even an alligators have been found together with huge palm leaves.

Polystrate fossil logs (tree trunks in vertical position running through several sedimentary layers) are common in the fossil layers and are clear evidence of rapid burial.

There are fossils of rhinoceros, camel, giant boar and all kinds of other animals, mixed together and laid in a stratum running horizontally through hills.

The Quarry at Dinosaur National Monument is filled with thousands of dinosaur fossils and bones embedded in rock.

There are Sicilian hippopotamus beds. Mammal beds in the Rockies. Scottish Devonian fish beds. And the list goes on and on.

Where did they all come from? Judging from what went on in Genesis Chapter 6 it would be very reasonable to attribute them to the flood. What about Grand Canyon?

The prevailing theory is a little water over a very long time etched out the canyon. A whole lot of water over a short period of time makes more sense to me.

Another startling illustration that a great catastrophe once struck this planet is the woolly mammoths and other large animals destroyed in the north polar regions. Some were frozen instantly and preserved whole and undamaged. In some cases they have been found standing upright.

Listen to a Russian zoologist who studied one of the mammoths brought from Siberia to the Leningrad Museum. This is what he said.

"1st - the mammoth was upright. 2nd none of its 2 foot shaggy fur was rubbed or broken off. 3rd it was fresh, the stomach contents had not begun to decompose. Finally there were buttercups on it's tongue."

Animals as large as mammoths would require hundred pounds of food daily just to survive and there were millions of them in a region of the world where very little vegetation grows today.

Nikolai Vereshchagin, has spent nearly a half century of research on the mammoths. In one estimate he made for one region of Siberia he suggests five million mammoths are buried.

John Whitcomb in his book "The Word that Perished" said "In order to freeze animals of this size in such a way that large crystals would not form within their body cells, temperatures of 150 below zero would have to descend upon them instantly."

Any thinking person, any scientific person, any person who dealt in facts and not preconceived opinions, would have to say, whenever that event happened, cataclysmic happened.



If that description in Genesis of the waters above the earth meant that there was a vapor canopy surrounding the world then this earth was originally like a giant green house.

This would explain why we find mammoths in Siberia and palm leaves and crocodiles in Wyoming. We read in Genesis 7:11 *all the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened.*

God is being very careful in Genesis 7 to tell us that something happened instantly, violently, dramatically, powerfully. The under ground storehouses opened up and water turbulently and violently flooded the land. This great vapor barrier was broken and water literally poured down upon the earth.

The temperature at the poles changed suddenly. Super powerful tides and currents stronger than anything we can imagine buried millions of animals and tons of plant life.

The evidence is around us. From coal deposits in Antarctica, to sea shells on Mt. Everest. God has caused a mighty destruction of this world in the form of a universal flood. So the question comes down to who are you going to believe?

God says in I Peter, *the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.*

The evidence for the great flood is overwhelming. From the testimony of geology, to the clear statements of the Bible, and even, the flood traditions held in virtually every culture and nation on the globe.

And yet in spite of that evidence, humanity seems to have forgotten the flood of God's judgment. Maybe it's myth, a fairy tale, a children's story, but certainly not an event of history.

Why is this? In the face of so much evidence why do people reject the idea of the flood? Some do it out of ignorance. They just haven't examined the evidence. But for others there's only one explanation. It's not because there's any shortage of evidence.

The Apostle Peter said this, *they willfully forget.* They close their minds to the facts because to face up to them means that they are accountable to a God who judges sin and ungodliness.

That disturbs people, it makes them uncomfortable. But as James Boice has written, "It is better to be disturbed now in the day of God's grace, than later in the day of His wrath."

The Bible says, God is *not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance* II Peter 3:9 That's why God so patiently waits. He wants all to come to repentance.

God made a way of salvation in Genesis. The door was open and anyone who believed could come on in and find safety.

*I. God Promises Judgment*

*II. God Always Makes A Way Of Salvation*

*III. God seals the Fate Of Those Who Reject His Deliverance*

## **Read Genesis 7:13-16**

I hope you caught that last verse. Noah spent years building the ark and preaching God's judgment to the people. Everyone had an open invitation to come on the ark and avoid God's judgment.

The only people who chose to listen were Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives.

When it was time, God didn't tell Noah to shut the door. I believe that was because Noah would have never done it. That's just my personal opinion, but remember Noah's sons' wives' parents were outside the ark.

In fact there were hundreds, if not thousands of people outside the ark. They had laughed at Noah as a builder and preacher. They probably gathered around the ark when Noah and his family went in and laughed.

They had never seen a flood, let alone one that covered the Earth. The idea that God would judge was a joke to them. So God shut the door.

When the rains came and the waters rose, I can't imagine how hard it must have been for Noah and his family. His daughters in law had to listen to the screams of their own parents. But there was nothing they could do.

God shut the door. And He wouldn't open it till everything He planned was accomplished.

You might say, "I don't like that. It disturbs me. It conflicts with my view of a loving God."

Let me tell you, I'm right here with you. It disturbs me to no end.

But more than that, it compels me. It compels me to implore you, to beg you, listen to God.

He's amazingly patient, but even God's patients have an end point. God shut the door. No one on the inside or outside was going to open it.

Judgment is not a subject that I enjoy, but we'd be fools to ignore it.

God's judgment is real. God's judgment is certain. But God's judgment is absolutely avoidable.

All you had to do was walk through the door of the ark. It seems so simple. It only took one thing: faith.

So let me ask you. Where do you stand with the holy and righteous God this morning?

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16*

Have you stepped through that door by faith? One day God's going to shut that door. I don't know when it will be for you.

But here's my prayer: that you would bow your heart before the living God and say, "Lord I don't understand the whole Bible. But, I understand you're a God of judgment, but also a God of salvation. Today, the best I know how, I want to walk through that open door. I want to place my faith in the Ark of safety Jesus Christ."