

Genesis Chapter 6 Continued

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."

While the ark was not designed for beauty or speed, these dimensions provided extraordinary stability in the tumultuous floodwaters. A cubit was about 18 inches long, making the ark 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. A gigantic box of that size would be very stable in the water, impossible to capsize.

The volume of space in the ark was 1.4 million cubic feet, equal to the capacity of 522 standard railroad box cars, which could carry 125,000 sheep. It had 3 stories, each 15 feet high; each deck was equipped with various rooms (literally "nests").

This ark was to be made by specific directions of God so that it could hold up to the terrible strain of the high water. This boat was to house approximately 45,000 animals, which would cover several of all the species known on the earth today.

God also had specific places for Noah to place the animals, the foodstuff, and for the family of Noah. Noah had to follow every detail of instruction for this ark to be functional for the use God had intended it. The exact number of animals is just an estimate. No one knows for sure how many were aboard.

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."

"A window" may have actually been a low wall around the flat roof to catch water for all on the ark.

This window was cut all the way around the ark under the roofline for light and ventilation. The "door" allowed an entrance for embarkation and debarkation. The three "stories" were to separate animals for safety and cooperation during the voyage.

This was a very precise and complicated ship to build. I assume that this window went the full length of the ship, and was 18 to 21 inches tall. This would give light and air to all inside. This door had to be a tall one to let in animals like giraffes.

The three stories were to separate the different types of animals, and for Noah's family to have separate quarters, as well.

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."

“Flood of waters”: Other notable Scriptures on the worldwide flood brought by God include (Job 12:15; 22:16; Psalm 29:10; Isa. 54:9; Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27; Hebrews 11:7 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:5-6).

God was very specific that this judgment was from Him. This was not something Satan did. It is terrible to fall under Satan's attacks, but we can withstand him with the blood of Jesus. The worst is to fall under the judgment of God. There is no hiding or protection from this.

This judgment was on all except Noah's family, and the few animals chosen to reproduce on the earth. God was angry and would, without repentance, bring judgment.

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."

“But with thee will I establish my covenant”: In contrast with the rest of the created order which God was to destroy, Noah and his family were not only to be preserved, but they were to enjoy the provision and protection of a covenant relationship with God.

This is the first mention of “covenant” in Scripture. This pledged covenant is actually made and explained (in 9:9-17; see notes there).

God not only saves Noah because of his fellowship with God, but saves his family as well. God establishes His agreement (covenant), with Noah and his family, they alone would be saved. “Eight” means new beginnings, God would begin with Noah’s family.

God invites us today to come into His ark of safety. Jesus Christ is the door we enter in by. Again, God was angry with a perverse generation. The Day of Judgment was here. God would not tolerate open and perverted sin.

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."

There are less than 18,000 species living on earth today. This number may have been doubled to allow for now extinct creatures. With two of each, a total of 72,000 creatures is reasonable as indicated in the note of 6:15-16; the cubic space could hold 125,000 sheep, and since the average size of land animals is less than a sheep, perhaps less than 60 percent of the space was used.

The very large animals were surely represented by young.

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."

There was ample room also for the one million species of insects, as well as food for a year for everyone (verse 21).

God planned to repopulate the whole earth with these couples. The birds would not even have a place to rest, so even they had to be repopulated. There was no specific mention of fish. They would not die in the flood.

If you will notice in the Scriptures above, Noah did not go out to find these pairs of animals. The animals came to Noah ("shall come unto thee"). This was the only way to stay alive.

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."

The one thing that stands out so clearly in all of this is that God did not put the food in the ark for Noah. God told Noah to put it in the ark. Noah had to do the work himself. Truly he was directed by God, but Noah had to prepare.

It reminds me very much of the famine in Egypt in Joseph's time. God revealed the disaster to Joseph, and Joseph had to do the legwork to prepare for the famine. God never changes. He will reveal a problem to us before it happens so we can prepare for it. God will help us, but He will not do it for us.

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

Noah recognized the instructions of God. Noah not only said yes sir, but he did something about it. Noah had to be a man of extra-ordinary faith. All this time, it had never rained upon the earth. People had to be laughing at Noah. He never once stopped working on the ark. He never once stopped warning of the impending doom.

The Bible is not very explanatory whether the sons worked to help Noah, or not.

As a quick over-all look again at chapter 6, let us remember that sin covered the earth. God judged everyone lost except Noah's family. Noah's moral life and great faith in God won God's favor, and God showed Noah a way out. Jesus Christ is our ark of safety (our way out). In Chapter 7, we will go into more detail about the flood and Noah's preparation for it.

Genesis Chapter 6 Continued Questions

1. What was the gopher wood probably?
2. How many cubits long was the ark?
3. How many cubits wide was the ark?
4. How many cubits high was the ark?
5. How many stories high was the ark?

6. What is it safe to assume about the windows?
7. What two things would the window furnish?
8. Why were there three stories?
9. Who brought the flood?
10. What was the purpose of the flood?
11. What is worse than an attack from Satan?
12. Who would God establish His covenant with?
13. How many people were saved?
14. What does that number mean?
15. What, or who, is our entrance to our ark of safety?
16. Why were male and female of each put in the ark?
17. Name three types brought into the ark?
18. Why was there no specific mention of fish?
19. Did Noah have to go out and catch the animals?
20. Did God provide food?
21. Who did the work?
22. What, in Joseph's time, reminds us of this?
23. Why does God reveal problems ahead to Christians?
24. Give two words describing Noah's faith.
25. How old was Noah when the flood waters were on the earth?
26. What two things must we remember in this Bible study?
27. In our quick look back at chapter 6, what covered the earth?
28. What two things saved Noah?
29. Who is our way out?