

# WORKING FOR THE WEEK'S END

GENESIS 7:1-24    SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

'What would you do if you only had one week left to live' has been the premise of daydreams, movies, and plenty of second-rate jokes. But here is a different question: What would you do if *everyone else* had only one week to live? That was the reality that Noah found himself in in Genesis 7. After perhaps 100 years of building, the time had come when God would do what he had said so many years before. The moment of destruction and deliverance was upon the world.

**Genesis 7:1 - Then the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen *that you are righteous before Me in this generation.*"**

Noah was not just a *religious* man, he had a *relationship* with God. He "walked with God." We don't know how much direct communication he had with the Lord during this ark-building project. God had spoken, but it's altogether possible that Noah had not heard from God for many years. Even so, Noah had *acted* on the Word that he *had* received.

When does God speak to us? Some of these Bible characters went decades between interactions with the Lord. We are not subject to that kind of drought. We have the completed, inspired, reliable Word of God available to us any time, day or night. Christians have the Holy Spirit living in our hearts. We have a spiritual family that we're to be connected to - the local church - by whom we're encouraged, supported and sharpened as we walk with the Lord. If we haven't heard from the Lord in awhile, it isn't because the supply is depleted, it is because we have not visited the storehouses of God's provision. After all, the Bible says that He gives to all "generously and ungrudgingly."<sup>1</sup>

God said, "It's time for your family to be delivered from the coming wrath against sin." We've seen it before but it's worth repeating: Noah wasn't saved because he *earned* a place on the ark. He didn't win a contest. No, Hebrews states *emphatically* that he was made righteous by God because he had faith. That's the same work that God does in a life today when a person believes in Him.

Noah was the *only* righteous person in the entire world. Maybe you are the only Christian in your school or at your job or in your family. Take courage! God is still true. God is still working and He delights in using *you* to make an eternal difference right where you are.

Now, all this time, Noah had not been given a *date* for when the flood would come. It must've been a strange thing, knowing that the ark *must* be completed, but, at the same time, we know a huge project like that always has more you could do. Another coat of pitch on the hull. Another calculation for the water and grain. Noah's efforts would have to be *urgent* but *continual*. The same is true for us. There is a judgment coming. We've been enlisted to be a part of the rescue work. Our efforts should be urgent and continual, all the more as we see the day approaching.

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<sup>1</sup> James 1:5

**Genesis 7:2-3** - <sup>2</sup> **You are to take with you seven pairs, a male and its female, of all the clean animals, and two of the animals that are not clean, a male and its female,** <sup>3</sup> **and seven pairs, male and female, of the birds of the sky—in order to keep offspring alive throughout the earth.**

Bible scholars disagree over whether it was seven of certain animals or seven *pairs*. It seems that pairs is more fitting, as it says “male and female,” which would require an even number.

It’s taken for granted that Noah knew the difference between clean and unclean animals. These early believers had more information, given by God, than the text records for us.

This clean/unclean thing gives us a good reminder: God is the One Who establishes truth. *He* decided this list for Noah. That doesn’t mean we can’t eat pork, the New Testament deals with that. But we find ourselves in a time when everyone wants to debate every truth, every definition, every category and meaning. But *absolute truth* is found in the Word of God and it does not change.

Let’s take a moment to realize the awesome responsibility God was giving Noah. “Take these animals...in order to keep offspring alive throughout the earth.” If the Lord had given me that task, I might answer back with, “Sure thing...but maybe could we have like 20 pairs instead of one? I don’t like these odds! I need some wiggle room!”

This restriction reminds us that God is able to do a very lot with a very little. Whether it’s two little piglets or a widow’s two mites or mustard seed faith. But here’s the question: Do we *trust* the Lord when it seems like His way isn’t enough? For example: Do we trust God enough to give Him some of our finances like He asks us to or do we answer back, “Lord, I need *more* before I do that?” Do we trust God enough to stand against the pressure of the culture, even when everyone around us is going along? Do we trust God enough to be the Director of where we live, who we marry, how we live, and what we do? He has plans and methods and commands and they can be trusted.

**Genesis 7:4** - <sup>4</sup> **Seven days from now I will make it rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing I have made I will wipe off the face of the earth.”**

Noah was, literally, in the last days of his world. It must have been a very full week. Most of you, when going on a long trip, go through a lot of details while packing and preparing. I’m sure Noah was very busy. In fact, we know he was.

**Genesis 7:5** - <sup>5</sup> **And Noah did everything that the Lord commanded him.**

Noah is a walking illustration of saving faith. Saving faith is *obedient*.

**John 14:15** - [Jesus said] <sup>15</sup> **“If you love me, you will keep my commands.**

**Hebrews 5:9** - [Jesus is] **...the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him**

We see these polls about how many people “believe in God.” Gallup has put the number as high as 87% of Americans.<sup>2</sup> But it’s obvious that 87% of Americans are not obeying God’s Word.

You’ve probably heard someone called a RINO. It stands for “Republican in name only.” It’s been an especially popular slur in the last few years, but it dates back to the 1920’s.<sup>3</sup> It’s meant to describe someone who takes a label but doesn’t adhere to certain positions. We should be more worried about being *disciples* in name only. Do we *obey*? Obedience has real world consequences.

**Genesis 7:6 - <sup>6</sup>Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came and water covered the earth.**

Noah was two thirds of the way through life. God uses people of all ages, in all places for His glory.

**Genesis 7:7-10 - <sup>7</sup>So Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives entered the ark because of the floodwaters. <sup>8</sup>From the animals that are clean, and from the animals that are not clean, and from the birds and every creature that crawls on the ground, <sup>9</sup>two of each, male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, just as God had commanded him. <sup>10</sup>Seven days later the floodwaters came on the earth.**

In total, they would be on the ark for 377 days.<sup>4</sup> In verse 13 it will seem like they entered the ark on the day the waters came. Why? There would be a lot of in and out that final week - loading animals, supplies, and personal effects. But also, Noah was a real person like you and me. You have unsaved family and friends, right? If you *knew* they were going to die next Tuesday, wouldn’t you find a moment to visit them just one more time and try to convince them that they could be saved?

Some commentators make much of the idea that the ark was proportioned like a huge coffin. I think that is taking a little too much license, but it does give us an analogy to think about. We know Noah was a preacher. I’m sure that he was preaching right up to the moment he was closed into this big wooden box. As believers, we want our lives to be preaching to the very end. I don’t only mean the end of our mortal lives. There are times when you’re going to make an exit - when you move to a different place or leave your job. Find ways to proclaim the Gospel in those last days.

A few weeks ago we hosted the retirement ceremony for a lady who comes to the church who had served for twenty years in the Navy. It was a great event. It was particularly great because this faithful sister used the chance to proclaim the Gospel to a group of people she may not see again.

This seven day countdown also proves to us God’s compassion. He gave the people of earth 120 years to repent. And now, He provides a final grace period before the end. He’ll do so again before the whole world is once more judged. Only in the future it won’t be 7 short days, it will be 7 years.

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.gallup.com/poll/268205/americans-believe-god.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican\\_In\\_Name\\_Only](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_In_Name_Only)

<sup>4</sup> *Bible Knowledge Commentary*

**Genesis 7:11-12** - <sup>11</sup> In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the sources of the vast watery depths burst open, the floodgates of the sky were opened, <sup>12</sup> and the rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.

There are a variety explanations for the mechanics of the flood. In the end, we can't be sure. There's the vapor canopy model, the hydroplate model, the catastrophic plate tectonics model.<sup>5</sup> It might have been a mixture of various occurrences. The hydroplate model has compelling evidence, though it doesn't solve every question. No theory does. I'd encourage you to visit sites like *Answers In Genesis* and the *Institute For Creation Research* and take a look at their fascinating articles.

But, if the hydroplate theory is correct, the bursting of water and pressure would've been the equivalent of 30 trillion hydrogen bombs exploding on the earth.<sup>6</sup> This wasn't just a bunch of rain. This was a disaster the likes of which we've never seen. Along with torrents of water, magma and rock would've been falling from the sky. Commentators point out that the proportions of the ark are nautically ideal - that because of the way it was laid out, it could be brought *almost* to a 90 degree angle and *still* not capsize.<sup>7</sup> But it wasn't just a really good design. God would've had to protect the ark from falling dangers, like He would later in the book of Exodus during the plague of hail which fell on the Egyptians but not in the land of Goshen. God will, once again, provide miraculous protection for His 144,000 witnesses during the Great Tribulation.

**Genesis 7:13-16** - <sup>13</sup> On that same day Noah along with his sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, entered the ark, along with Noah's wife and his three sons' wives. <sup>14</sup> They entered it with all the wildlife according to their kinds, all livestock according to their kinds, all the creatures that crawl on the earth according to their kinds, every flying creature—all the birds and every winged creature—according to their kinds. <sup>15</sup> Two of every creature that has the breath of life in it came to Noah and entered the ark. <sup>16</sup> Those that entered, male and female of every creature, entered just as God had commanded him. Then the Lord shut him in.

Why is this account so repetitive? God obviously wants us to understand this was a true and literal event. It is also the end of one era and the beginning of a *new* era - a new era with a whole new world, whose geology demands understanding. But, on a devotional level, this text is solemn. We should read it and realize how serious God is about sin. It's not a joke to Him. It's not a small thing. At the same time, He is also serious about saving. He will not fail to save. He always makes a way.

We're told that "The Lord shut [Noah] in." Adrian Rogers points out that God did not tell Noah to make a little peg on the side of the ark and then say, "Ok, Noah - as long as you hold onto that peg, you'll be safe."<sup>8</sup> No, God shut them in securely. You don't work to get your salvation and you don't work to maintain it. *God* is the Author and Finisher of your faith. He holds you in His hand.

<sup>5</sup> <https://answersingenesis.org/the-flood/flood-models-the-need-for-an-integrated-approach/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sD9ZGt9UA-U>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5UBqI88GPM>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCzwmIVyS9s>

In that moment, when the Lord closed the door, I imagine Noah might've said, "Lord, can't you come in here with us?" I'd rather have the Angel of the Lord in the boat with me, wouldn't you? But it's clear that God was with Noah. He watched Noah and looked deep into his heart. He spoke to Noah and helped him obey. God knew Noah's family and cared for them. God is with you in every storm, in every hurt, in every struggle, in every valley. He will never leave you or forsake you.

**Genesis 7:17-20** - <sup>17</sup>The flood continued for forty days on the earth; the water increased and lifted up the ark so that it rose above the earth. <sup>18</sup>The water surged and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. <sup>19</sup>Then the water surged even higher on the earth, and all the high mountains under the whole sky were covered. <sup>20</sup>The mountains were covered as the water surged above them more than twenty feet.

Everything about earth's geography changed after the flood. Some scientists suggest the highest mountains were five or six thousand feet. But even the volume of water shows God's tender care for his people. The ark was 45 feet high, meaning that, as it floated, half of it would be submerged in water, which means if water wasn't at least 20 feet or so higher than the highest peak, the ark might run aground. In wrath God remembers mercy. He is thoughtful of His people at all times.

**Genesis 7:21-24** - <sup>21</sup>Every creature perished—those that crawl on the earth, birds, livestock, wildlife, and those that swarm on the earth, as well as all mankind. <sup>22</sup>Everything with the breath of the spirit of life in its nostrils—everything on dry land died. <sup>23</sup>He wiped out every living thing that was on the face of the earth, from mankind to livestock, to creatures that crawl, to the birds of the sky, and they were wiped off the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark. <sup>24</sup>And the water surged on the earth 150 days.

Only those 8 believers were saved. There was no second boat. Tubal-Cain didn't secretly sneak onto the ark like in that ridiculous Russell Crowe movie. In the coming wrath, only those who believe on Jesus Christ will be saved. There is no other way out.

The dramatic action of God in Noah's day and in the yet future Tribulation prove that you are not an accident. You were created by God for a purpose. That purpose is to be loved by Him. To be cleansed of your sin so that you might *walk* with Him and be in communion with Him. The way out of death and into this incredible life has always been the same in every age: Believe God, believe His word, turn from the ruin of sin and instead embrace Him. Walk with Him now so that, one day, you will arrive at your eternal home, where righteousness dwells.

How many weeks do we have left to live before we are delivered through the *storm* of death onto the shores of eternity? We don't know. But we can wait with urgency and continual faithfulness, based on God's reliable promise, knowing He's ready to use us, even till the last minute.