

The Grace of God in This Present Age

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being fully committed to our faith, being righteous in God's eyes, and being saved through the blood of Jesus, as exemplified in the story of Noah and the ark.

Duration: 1:19:15

Scripture: Genesis 6:8, Matthew 24:37

Topics: "Grace Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Noah and the flood as described in the Bible. He emphasizes that the flood was a judgment from God on the sinful world. The preacher highlights Noah's righteousness and obedience to God, contrasting it with the mockery and disbelief of the people around him. He also mentions that Jesus compared his return to the days of Noah, warning that judgment can come suddenly and urging people to be righteous and pleasing to God. The sermon concludes with a mention of God's promise to never destroy the world with water again, but with fire instead.

Transcript

Shall we pray? We thank you Lord for this opportunity we receive. We ask you to be with us from the very beginning. Let your word Lord be alive and bring life and vitality in the depths of our hearts.

We ask you to be with us now. Amen. These days I've been saying there shouldn't be one lukewarm Christian in this world.

I've been telling some of the people here at home recently that Islamists plan to take over the whole of Africa. And you see how in every town and even villages there are mosques shooting up. But we Christians don't build churches anymore.

You will have noticed in the news, if you listen to it, in Kenya, Nigeria and other places where Islamists are taking over, and especially in North Africa, you will see that the price for clinging to your Christian faith and refusing to convert in some of these Islamist lands is death. You heard also about the kidnapping of all those girls and the many who died in that action. I'm not even mentioning Europe.

Mr Gaddafi, before he died, said we do not need bombs and weapons in Europe. We will just increase so that we take over. In the white nations, they don't believe in having children anymore, but they say we will win and convert Europe simply through having big families.

We don't need to fight. They shouldn't be a single Christian who is not burning for the Lord, for the Lord Jesus. You're welcome to tell the Muslims what I say, that they want to kill me too.

There are those who are unwise and who say, we'll just listen to radio, listen to Stig and preaching. No, that is not a healthy thing. It won't be good for our churches.

We speak well of other churches. We want you to attend. What I've said about Islamists is no new thing.

It's already been said before and it's recorded in books that they want to take over Africa, what Gaddafi said, and that they want it to be Islamic Africa. It is a great pity when Christians are found asleep at this time. The theme for today is the grace of God in this present age.

We'll speak about grace and about this present age, for this present age is a different one. We find our text in Titus chapter 2 verse 11. For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people.

Training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ who gave himself for us. So let me highlight the grace of God today.

Secondly, this present age, we Christians, especially we preachers, should be reviving each other so that the gospel would go forth. As Gaddafi has said, we will take Europe. Like Gaddafi has said, we will take Europe.

Africa is to be Islamic, not to be Christian. We Christians should stop betraying each other like Judas Iscariot handing over the Lord. Let's remember who the enemy is, who Satan really is.

For you find Christians, instead of fighting Satan, they are fighting each other. But grace, Lord willing, we will have other opportunities to speak at length about this word grace. But this word grace, we find it first being used in the time of Noah.

In Genesis 6 verse 8, Noah found grace or favor in the eyes of the Lord. There we find the first hint of grace. Starting way back then, Noah finding grace.

So there in Genesis 6 verse 8 is the first mention of grace. Now pay careful attention for usually at the beginning of each service during the youth conference we ask questions and those who have listened carefully get rewarded. We want to see whether you have really listened or whether you are simply asleep.

Grace, the subject which we are going to highlight in this present age. Jesus said in the last days it will be a time like the age of Noah. And then he mentions what was happening in that age.

There was flirting around, there was sexual immorality between sexes. Now look how it is today. Do you find? Can you find real virgins, girls, boys who are virgin? Few and far between.

Like the time of Noah. There was a very big ship, it reminds me of that big ship Titanic which was built in Britain. After the construction of that ship which was at that time the greatest and best ship ever built, one of the builders was heard to say even God can't sink it.

Many wealthy people booked for the maiden voyage. They didn't go that far. They happened to be icebergs in that area, they are as hard as rock.

And a slice was cut into the Titanic and it sank. Many did not survive, most died. The Titanic, when this happened, at that moment there was a party going on, the bands were playing.

But when the news was sounded about what had happened, they changed the music to Nearer My God To Thee. It was totally unexpected and so too in the time of Noah. They were busy with their parties, they were giving in marriage and doing their things.

Peter speaks about that. It even speaks, there is a reference to the marriage with angels or the sons of God getting married to them. Even though the Bible does say that angels do not get married.

But it could be rather a reference to getting married to those who are not believers in the Lord. Like with Cain's offspring, getting married to people who are not believers. There is a version called the Living Bible which puts it quite well.

That young men simply chose the ones they wanted to get married to. They did it themselves, there was no desiring God's will. Today it is exactly the same thing.

Only Noah and his family were true believers in the whole world. Even though Noah's generation prior to that had great men of God like Methuselah and Lamech. But after that, it seems like that faith was cast aside.

How terrible when people can forget God so quickly. In the whole world there was only Noah and his family and their children. The Lord willing we will get to speak about that again.

But Noah found grace even when others were living in their sins and in their life of drugs and whatever. But Noah was found to be righteous. Noah was perfect.

He was whole. He walked with God. Without anybody having to instruct Noah, do this, don't do that.

But in the eyes of God he was found to be perfect. In Hebrews 11 we read about the heroes of faith. And one of them was Noah.

Amazing. Today you find people instead boasting about how many girls they have bedded or how many boyfriends they have had or how much they are able to drink. But where are those who can boast in the Lord? And then it was that God said, enter in at the right time, enter in with your family into the ark.

And the Bible says Noah obeyed the instructions exactly from God. Although there was a river nearby where Noah built the ark, but there were no boats, anything like what he was building. He built the ark on dry land.

The Bible says, fearing the Lord, he built the ark. Recently we were in the very area where Noah's ark rested on those mountains. We couldn't climb up to it.

That ark was found in 1945. And there were various sightings before that as well. Some Russian pilots during the Bolshevik era even reported seeing a huge wooden boat on the mountains of Ararat.

The Russian regime forced total silence that nobody in the world would hear about. And the area was cordoned off that nobody should be able to climb there. We were just these weeks there in Armenia and we were on the 13th floor.

We could look out of our window and see the mountains of Ararat of Noah. He said, France, although it was shrouded in mist, it is so high, about 17,000 feet, higher than other mountains in Europe. Then God spoke to Noah and said, I have spoken to you, and I have spoken to you, and I have had enough.

I'm going to destroy this world. Their sin is going to cause me to destroy them. Only you will be saved, and your family.

Three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their wives, and his wife. You eight, you're the only ones who will be rescued. I've been reading up on that whole era, and it was mentioned that the civilization before then was very advanced.

They found cities. We don't have time, but there are names of cities that were there. Only one of them hasn't been found yet.

Archaeologists, archaeologists, archaeologists, are still discovering these places that have been long since buried under the mud of the flood. They found chariots that used to be pulled by horses at that time. They found pots and beautiful vases that were painted at that time.

As well as the makeup that was used by girls at the time. Black under their ears and the eyebrows, black. Under the eyelids and eyebrows.

So women were using makeup at that time already, girls and ladies. So look at this picture. This is a picture of the city of Jerusalem.

Look at this present age. You'll hardly find a woman, even Christian women, who are not using it. Some more, some less.

Jesus said, as in the days of Noah, so it will be when the Son of Man comes. They were doing their thing. They were partying, flirting around.

Nobody sought God's will. God said, Noah, I'm going to destroy the whole world, except for you and your family. What type of man must Noah have been for his sons to have been protected from? There were two floods, the flood of sin and then the flood of water.

Then they got married. And that those wives were believers, having the same faith of their husbands and father-in-law. This boat was no small thing.

And it wasn't just him and his sons building the boat because it was huge. It had three floors, three stories high. It was built with wood.

Not just any wood. Similar to the wood that we've got in the auditorium here. That is hard wood laminated on each other so that that wood in the ark was hard.

And it took thousands to help build it. The chopping down of forests, then the sawing into planks, then the putting of it together to be a very strong construction. So the report by those Russian pilots was that we saw a boat on top of the mountain.

Think how many thousands of years. Thousands of years and yet there's still that remnant on the mountain. I brought a poster here a while back of the mountains of Ararat.

Babylonians claim to have a document from Noah stating exactly what the ark was like. Archaeologists are still uncovering various utensils and pottery and even ceramic which would have been cooked or baked in hot ovens and different types of crockery. They say it was an advanced civilization already.

And so thousands of people had to be involved in constructing all of this and to be so many stories high. And this ark though had only one entrance. And the people and the animals who entered in only through that door, they were the ones who were rescued from the flood.

It is a type of Jesus, for Jesus is the door. There is no other door whereby we can enter in. It had many rooms, huge places in this, you could say like a little town in this small part.

And over 7,000 animals could enter in. Think of cows, elephants, camels, pigs, a variety of animals. All could enter in.

And there were seven of those that were declared unclean and they would be there. But then seven of those that were clean, ritually clean. So, it also records that when the ark settled, then Noah built an altar and he made sacrifices of animals.

We don't know whether that continued in the ark prior to that or not. The length of it, 450 feet long. 450 feet long, although you work in meters now, but it was, yeah, that length.

450 feet long, 70 feet wide, 75. No 45 feet, and 45 feet the height, which is like a three-story building. They must have then used many to construct it.

He was the one who also paid them, and he paid the laborers. The Bible also refers to Noah as being a king or a chieftain of that city or that area. And God said, Noah, build it exactly as I say.

God revealed the precise details. God wants our lives to be precisely in accordance with his perfect will, not more or less. And he built the ark, it was near to the river Euphrates, about 17 miles from the Garden of Eden.

So Noah constructed according to the exact plan of God. God was the architect of that boat, told them the length, the breadth, and the height. Even modern boats are built with the same ratio of height and breadth as Noah's was.

Except that today's ships have a different shape and are more sharp in the front. They are built for speed. Noah's ark was not built for speed.

It was built to float and that no water would penetrate. It had to be exactly covered in coal tar as God instructed. One has the danger also if everything of the animals moved to the side, that vehicle even today can tip over, but his ark was built to be stable.

Just think of those 100 plus years where that ark was built. People were mocking Noah. They said, how can you be building a boat on dry land? Would that you would rather go then to the river.

But all those years, Noah and his family refused to be influenced by the mockery of those people. Today's mockery is well-deserved for a person who makes a decision to and just a few months later, he's gone back to the old life of sin. Noah stood firm and solid through all those years.

The God of Methuselah, 969 years, he had lived. You could say he was an ancestor of Noah, a grandfather of Noah's. So even if people mock, and even those who are working for him, Noah must have preached to them, but they refused to listen until God said, Noah, I am going to destroy them.

And he finished the ark, entered in. And all the types of animals entered in too. Animals were better than human beings in being with God.

And Noah had to even make food in preparation for the journey and for the time. Remained Remained in that closed ark then for seven days. How much mockery must there have been when nothing happened? Satan may have whispered to Noah, you see, nothing's happening.

You're in this ark, seven days, nothing's happening. But after seven days, the clouds began to cover the sky. It grew black.

The sun wasn't seen anymore. And for 40 days, it poured. Water from above, water from below.

Even the Mediterranean Black Sea were covered. God said the whole earth was flooded. And so the mockery came to an end.

The people must have climbed higher and higher and shouted out to Noah in the ark, please open for us. But he couldn't. God had locked the door.

And so it flooded and it was locked because God knew of the possibility. If the relatives of Noah would start crying out, please forgive us. We were wrong.

We confess our sins now. It was too late. God knew.

And so he locked it. And the water came up till the highest mountains were covered. The ark floating on top.

That have got some documents, whether they true or not, we don't know. But where they say Noah wrote that the bodies were floating on the water like dots everywhere. And so Noah was in that ark for a year and 10 days.

Some say it was 17 days. A whole year he was in the ark. Until the waters subsided.

They couldn't see. He went to a window. Took a crow to release it.

Because he could feel that it was going down. And the crow flew and flew, but never returned. Known as an unclean creature.

It must have settled upon the carcasses of humans and animals and had a fist. A week later, he took a dove and released it. And he came and after that time, it came and settled in his hand.

He released it a week later again. And then when it settled in his hand, it had in its beak some green leaves, which told Noah that the plants were beginning to grow again. We don't have time to mention all the details.

All the different details about it. Finally, when Noah and them could go out the ark, the first thing was he built an altar of sacrifice, thanking God for his salvation. I have some paintings depicting what it might have been like for Noah to descend down the mountain then.

So he was rescued. And God then put a rainbow in the sky. There hadn't been one before.

God said, I make an oath. I will never destroy the world through water. But we'll destroy it in fire.

I don't know whether we'll get a chance to describe what that fire will be like. You who are comfortable in your sins, rejoicing in the delights of evil, what it will be like for you. What time has gone on? We don't have time now to describe what happened after that.

The various nations of those three sons and where they settled and what happened. Jesus said that his return will be like in the days of Noah. Where they remained in their sins until the sudden event of judgment.

But Noah, a man righteous in the sight of God. Not righteous in the eyes of men, in the eyes of people. For they are like the grass that is there one day and the next.

It has gone. Be righteous and pleasing to God. A righteous man, complete, whole and perfect.

He walked with God. You, will you escape God's anger to come, because that can happen at any moment. And woe if that day of judgment comes, his anger, and you are not yet saved.

We are saved through the blood of the Lord Jesus. He who is the ark, he who saves us. I've often been speaking about the blood of Jesus these days.

As we are bought not with silver or gold. But we've been redeemed by the blood from the futile ways of our forefathers. Through the precious blood of Jesus.

The precious blood of Christ. We take it so lightly. That blood, not human blood.

The Bible says, Jesus being the son of man and the son of God. The newborn baby takes its blood from the father. But other genetic characteristics from the mother.

Jesus is known as the son of man. From, because of being born of Mary. But because the Holy Spirit came upon her.

He was born of God too. That's why his blood is known as the wonderful blood of Jesus. The divine blood.

We should never trample his blood underfoot. No, my sailor. Let the one who is redeemed.

Whether it's from prostitution, drugs, whatever type of life. Recognize that it is the precious blood of Jesus. His precious blood which redeems us.

We are to treat his blood as the divine blood. And not remain in our sins. Not like the people of that day who refused to listen and be redeemed.

If you're not yet washed, come quickly to him. That he would cleanse you in his precious blood. From your sins through his divine blood.

Each one. And say, I cannot hurt my body anymore. This temple.

Maybe he wants to come and be prayed for. Afterwards, you can come. And be prayed for.

Thing is, he heard me saying, come quickly to the blood of Jesus. He'd taken it literally and come quickly. Who's not yet washed in his blood? You're still living and swimming in the sins of this world.

You should say, I don't want animals to be better than me. Those redeemed in the ark. I want to come to the Lord Jesus himself.

That he would save me. Lord, we've heard that your return will be like in the days of Noah. Where they didn't know until.

The thunder and lightning and it was dark. And the flood covered the whole world. Thank you.

For this opportunity. Lord, one thinks of those on that Titanic. Partying until suddenly it began to sink.

Okay. Thank you, Lord, that we can come to you as sinners to be washed in the wonderful, precious blood of Jesus. Lord, you have bought us with the highest price.

That which is far more precious than gold or silver. Lord, those who come to you. Grant, Lord, that they would receive your mercy.

Before the door is closed. Amen.

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