

GENESIS

Chapter 7

Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. 2 Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate, 3 and seven pairs of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth. 4 For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.” 5 And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him. 6 Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. 7 And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. 8 Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, 9 two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. 10 And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth. 11 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 fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. 12 And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. 13 On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, 14 they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. 15 They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. 16 And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in. 17 The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. 18 The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. 19 And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. 20 The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. 21 And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. 22 Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. 23 He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. 24 And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

7:1 *go into the ark* – The beginning of God’s final word to Noah before the flood. God’s first word to Noah after the flood begins similarly: “Come out of the ark” (8:16). (CSB)

righteous – As a “preacher of righteousness” (2Pe 2:5), Noah warned his contemporaries of coming judgment and testified to the vitality of his own faith (see Heb 11:7). (CSB)

This generation – Noah’s righteousness was exceptional in his generation. There were no others left, though Noah did warn his contemporaries of the coming judgment. (TLSB)

7:2 *seven pairs of all kind of clean animals* – “seven” could be “seven pairs” (also in v. 3), and the animals entered by pairs (vv. 8–9). The ceremonially unclean animals would only have to reproduce themselves after the flood, but ceremonially clean animals would be needed also for the burnt offerings that Noah would sacrifice (see 8:20) and for food (see 9:3). (CSB)

Animals likely to be used for sacrifice, an exception to the general rule regarding pairs (6:19). (TLSB)

The law distinguishing between clean and unclean animals would be clearly established at Mt. Sinai, but the difference was known long before, also by Noah. (TLSB)

Remember that Moses wrote Genesis for the people who had been at Mt. Sinai. They knew the difference between clean and unclean animals and Noah did too. (PBC)

7:3 *seven pairs of the birds of heaven* – Clean birds. (TLSB)

7:4 *forty days and forty nights* – A length of time often characterizing a critical period in redemptive history (see v. 12; Dt 9:11; Mt 4:1–11). (CSB)

Significance of the number 40 elsewhere in Scripture begins here (e.g., Ex. 24:18; Num. 14:33; Mt. 4:2; Acts 1:3). It is often a length of time characterizing a critical period in redemptive history or testing (cf v. 12; Deut. 9:11; Mt. 4:1-11). (TLSB)

It can also mean “a time of testing” like the 40 years in the wilderness and Jesus temptation. EWB

7:5 *Noah did all* – This is repeated (cf. 6:22) as the most important detail. Luther: “The [particular praise of Noah’s faith is that he stays on the royal road; he adds nothing, changes nothing, and takes nothing away from God’s directive” (AE 2:77) (TLSB)

7:6 Many Bible students today treat Genesis 1-11 as symbolic, as a sort of parable. But as you read the flood narrative, you recognize at once that this does not read like a parable. The precise dating of events by year, month and day of Noah’s life, for example, convinces us that this is historical narrative. If I am free to call the flood narrative a parable, what is to stop me from calling the teaching of Christ’s virgin birth a parable, and the account of Christ’ bodily resurrection, and the prophecy of his second coming? (PBC)

Despite Noah’s advanced age, he lived nearly a third of his life after the flood. (TLSB)

7:7 *Noah...sons...wife...wives* – Noah and his family did not participate in the polygamy of the Cainites. (TLSB)

went into the ark – Noah and his family were saved, but life as usual continued for everyone else until it was too late (see Mt 24:37–39). (CSB)

Literally, “from the face of the waters,” suggesting a fearsome moment as the waters began to burst forth (v. 11). (TLSB)

7:8 *clean and unclean* – Noah executed the divine instructions he had received. (TLSB)

7:9 *went into the ark* – The animals continued to cooperate; divine impulse effected their timely and orderly boarding of the huge vessel. (TLSB)

7:10 The seven days mentioned in v. 4 had now elapsed. (TLSB)

7:11 *seventeenth day of the month* – A day fixed in the annals of time and one that the survivors would never forget. (TLSB)

fountains of great deep were opened – Currents caused by upheavals of the earth created onslaughts of water and waves. (TLSB)

The Creator had originally set boundaries for the waters could go (Gen. 1:9-10). (PBC)

Violent, torrential rains burst from the clouds. (TLSB)

7:13 *Noah and his sons ... together with his wife and the wives of his three sons* – “Only a few people, eight in all” (1Pe 3:20; see 2Pe 2:5), survived the flood. (CSB)

Noah and his family did not participate in the polygamy of the Cainites. (TLSB)

entered the ark – Luther: “God could indeed have preserved (Noah) by countless other methods... But in this way the faith and obedience of Noah are praised” (AE 2:90). (TLSB)

7:14 *every beast...all the livestock ... every creeping thing... every bird*. Four of the five categories of animate life mentioned in 1:21–25. The fifth category—sea creatures—could remain alive outside the ark. (CSB)

Repeated (cf. 6:20). Luther: “The Holy Spirit is not wordy without purpose... By this procedure Moses wanted to thrust a goad, as it were, into the minds of his readers, to keep them from thinking that his message dealt with some unimportant matter” (AE 2:9). (TLSB)

7:15 *breath of life* – Used earlier to refer to the objects of God’s wrath (6:17); here it refers to those who were the objects of His grace. (TLSB)

7:16 *The LORD shut him in*. God kept his promise to Noah and his family “to keep them alive” (6:19) by making them secure against the raging disaster. When he locks the door to danger, no power in heaven or earth can break it down in order to touch those who have entered the “ark” of his protection (Dt 33:27; Ps 23:4; 34:7; 37:28; 46:1; 91:9–10; Pr 3:23–25; Na 1:7; Lk 12:7; 1Pe 5:7). (CSB)

Act of mercy to protect Noah and his family from assault and to protect them from any inclination to show mercy to last minute penitents. No power in heaven or on earth will break the door down in order to touch those whom God is protecting. (TLSB)

As a special act of love to safeguard his children, and to bar entrance to anyone else, the Lord, the Savior-God, closed the door of the ark. (PBC)

Remembering the story of 10 Virgins (Mt. 25:1-13) at this point is worthwhile. EWB

7:17 We conclude that the waters reached their maximum height after 40 days, and that intermittent rains maintained the level of the waters at flood stage for another 110 days. (PBC)

7:18 The waters that destroyed the earth also bore up the ark and saved Noah and his family. Peter used this image to speak of Baptism (1 Pt. 3:20-21). (TLSB)

The account of the flood occupies a prominent place also on the pages of the NT. Christ uses it as a type of end of the world (Mt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26, 27). The days leading up to Judgment Day will be deceptively normal, and God’s great judgment will come unexpectedly, just as did the judgment of the flood. Christ’s apostles describe the flood also as a type of baptism (1 Petr 3:20-21; Romans 6:4). (PBC)

7:19 *waters prevailed* – Nothing stands in the way of turbulent floodwaters and tidal waves. Vast geological changes were certain to take place. (Consider the kind of geological erosion exhibited in the Washington State Scablands.) (TLSB)

7:20 *above the mountains...fifteen cubitst.* The ark was 45 feet high (6:15), so the water was deep enough to keep it from running aground. (CSB)

Seems to be a detail only God would know, rather than a measurement taken by Noah. (TLSB)

7:21 *all flesh died* – God’s words of 6:17 are fulfilled. It is the climax of death. (TLSB)

7:22 *breath of life.* God’s gift at creation (see 1:30; 2:7) was taken away because of sin. (CSB)

7:23 *He blotted out everything* – No natural catastrophe; this was God’s wrath. (TLSB)

7:24 The waters are now clam after the storm; the flood has crested. (TLSB)

6:9–7:24 Faithful Noah and his family experience the greatest horror this earth has known, but the ark carries them up and away from the destruction and total devastation of the great flood. Although dwarfed by Noah’s experience, all Christians experience turbulence in their lives that can lead them to the brink of despair. But through Noah, God has demonstrated that He will lift up and save His faithful people whom He has cleansed in Holy Baptism. • Lord, give to Your people today the confidence in Your salvation that Noah demonstrated when he willingly placed himself and the welfare of his family into Your gracious care. Amen. (TLSB)