

# Noah and the Pig Pen

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## An End Time Parallel

Most Christians already know there is an end time parallel between Noah's day and the end of the world.

Remember, Jesus said, "**As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.**" (Matthew 24:36-38)

These words are a bit of a mystery. What did Jesus mean when He said, "**and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away**"? Peter says Noah was a *preacher* of righteousness. (2 Peter 2:5) If Noah was a preacher of righteousness, then it seems fair to conclude that the antediluvians were warned for 120 years. How could the antediluvians not have known about what Noah did and said? Think about it! Noah built the most unusual object of his time: a huge boat!

Even more incredible, God mysteriously marched the animals into the ark just days before it rained. It seems inconceivable that the antediluvians did not know anything about what would happen after seeing all of this.

How could they have missed the warning message and basically ignored the physical evidence that a flood was coming? I have a possible answer, but I will withhold it for a moment. Let there be no mistake. God did not put the story of Noah in the Bible to entertain us. Jesus warned that Noah's experience will be paralleled at the end of the world.

The events of Noah's day had dreadful consequences and so will ours.

## The Days of Noah

"Now the Earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the Earth had become, for *all* the people on Earth had corrupted their ways. . . . The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the Earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the Earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the Lord said, 'I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the Earth – men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air – for I am grieved that I have made them.' But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord." (Genesis 6:11,12,5-8, italics mine)

According to the Bible, there are 1,656 years between the time when Adam and Eve were created and when the Earth was destroyed by a flood. This may sound like a long time, but do not forget, men lived much longer then. Today, it is hard to imagine that the lives of *two* men, Adam and his sixth generation grandson Methuselah, extended through most of this period. In fact, Grandpa Adam lived 243 years *after* Methuselah was born, so he was very well acquainted with Methuselah.

Methuselah died on or about the year of the flood. The horrible state of degeneracy achieved by the antediluvians in 1,656 years demonstrates a very interesting point about fallen man. If God had not dramatically reduced the life span of the human race after the flood, He would have had to destroy the world *several times* during the past 4,500 years. Reducing the length of life has dramatically reduced the amount of evil one generation can perpetuate.

When you ponder God's long suffering, compassion and love and all that He gave to redeem humanity at Calvary, considering that God *justifiably* destroyed the world in Noah's day is an awesome thing. God's deliberate destruction of Earth proves three things.

First, God *closely* observes this planet and its inhabitants. Second, when sin exceeds the threshold of God's wisdom and patience, there is *no* recovery. Third, man's degenerate behavior *always* matures to a point where total destruction is the best solution. These three facts also explain the rise and fall of 21 civilizations on Earth. God raises a nation of people, and when their behavior reaches the threshold of God's patience, they are destroyed. Wake up America (and every other nation)!

It is amazing that many people, even Christians, deny that God was responsible for the flood in Noah's day. They cannot believe that a God of love would deliberately drown men, women and children and wipe the Earth clean of life!

Calvary and other events recorded in the Bible prove that God is love, but His love is poorly understood. God's wisdom is infinite and allows Him to see far into the future. He destroys corrupt and evil nations for the benefit of nations that are yet to come! What would this world be like today if God had not destroyed the antediluvians some 4,500 years ago? The claim, "God does not kill," is a rebellious distortion of God's justice and mercy.

Consider His testimony: "**So the Lord said, 'I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the Earth – men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air – for I am grieved that I have made them.'**" Also, notice this statement: ". . . **I am the Lord, and there is no other. I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the Lord, do all these things.**" (Isaiah 45:6,7)

When people claim that God does not destroy people, we have a perfect example of the same inebriated theology that existed before the flood. God has not changed. He is the same eternal God yesterday, today, and tomorrow. God has always been merciful and just.

He is patient and longsuffering. He generously extends mercy to sinners *until* extended mercy fails to produce a redemptive effect. When it becomes impossible to redeem sinners, God's

wrath against sin is unrestrained and He cauterizes the malignancy of sin by destroying those who refuse to love righteousness. Look at the sordid history of Israel in the Old Testament. God's actions with Israel are a mirror of how He has dealt with all nations from the beginning of time.

## Moral Novocaine

God's actions in Noah's day proves that sin is a one-way street to destruction. Our world is becoming like Noah's day once again because sin works like a shot of Novocaine. It deadens our thinking, clouds and distorts our feelings, and colors our understanding of right and wrong.

When sin stupefies the reasoning powers of a person, base passions become dominate. When base passions rule, people commit horrible deeds to satisfy uncontrollable lust or obsession. Day after day, newspapers confirm that we live in an age when carnal passions rule, and it seems that many people are unable to reason. Sin, like its twin sister, the grave, is relentless in its quest – steadily tightening its control over the nations and, ultimately, the world.

Although the first six chapters of the Bible do not give us many details about Noah's situation, we can consider the sinful world today and compare it with what behavior must have been like in Noah's day. *It is an end time parallel in reverse:* Jesus said, **"Now the Earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. . . . for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. . . . people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark. . . ."**

These verses are full of meaning when viewed in the backdrop of Noah's day. Remember that Noah preached his heart out for 120 years and the antediluvians **"knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away."** We have to wonder, "How can this be?"

The answer is moral Novocaine. At first, Noah's preaching was a spectacle, an oddity, a news item, a folly. It did not take long before Noah's peers regarded him as a kook, a doomsayer, a pest, a cult leader and a nuisance. After a few years of sounding like a broken record, no one listened to Noah because the antediluvians had become intoxicated with sin. They became consumed with debasing entertainment, debauchery, sexual immorality, gluttony, greed and the pursuit of every sensual pleasure.

They lived without concern for tomorrow – eating and drinking, giving parties (marriage feasts), etc. The antediluvians lived for hundreds of years and they would not believe Noah's message: Time was limited, and the time for the age of the antediluvians was about to end! Centuries passed and they were lulled into believing there was an endless supply of time.

I do not want to sound like I am saying that life for everyone was pleasant in Noah's day. Corruption brings violence, murder, physical and emotional abuse for children, cheating, lying, stealing, sexual immorality, hatred and strife. Sin has two faces (two-faced). One side may be comedy, but the other is tragedy. In fact, it is the tragic side of sin that motivates sinners toward

comedy.

The truth is that there is no genuine happiness in sin and there is no peace and satisfaction in wrong doing. There may be shallow moments of laughter and hilarity, because sin offers pleasure for a short season. However, sin's comedy and its pleasures are as fleeting as darkness at sunrise. When a person commits a sin, God sends the gift of guilt so that repentance and reformation can occur. Unfortunately, moral Novocaine numbs this gift of guilt. The antediluvians never realized how offensive they were in God's sight.

Jesus said, "**They knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away**" because Jesus Himself was present during the flood. Jesus walked and talked with Noah and commanded him to build the ark. Jesus, the Creator of Earth, sent the flood! As Jesus looked forward to our day, He gave us the warning parallel "**as it was in the days of Noah. . . .**"

## Odd-ball Noah

The Bible says, "**But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.**" (Genesis 6:8) Why did Jesus look favorably on Noah? Why did Jesus select Noah to build an ark? "**This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God.**" (Genesis 6:9) Noah was a genius. We know this because Noah feared the Lord and the Bible says "the fear the Lord" is the first thing a smart person discovers! (Psalm 111:10)

I believe that Noah was considered an odd-ball in his community because he walked with God. Noah did not participate in the decadent and indulgent behavior of his time. I am sure he was not popular or well liked because God's people are always out of step with the ways of the world. Jesus told His disciples: "**If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.**" (John 15:19) Light and darkness can never walk together and be compatible.

In my mind's eye, I see Noah and the Lord walking together constantly. In one of these walks, the Lord told Noah that He was going to destroy the Earth. Jesus explained to Noah that He had no option but to cauterize the malignant growth of sin by cleansing the world with a great flood of water. (The next cleansing will be with fire.) The Lord explained to Noah that the survival of animal, plant and human life depended on Noah building a great boat.

I assume that Noah was wealthy, for he must have borne the costs of building the ark. No doubt, Noah was a very knowledgeable man in areas such as engineering, biology, personnel and project management, animal husbandry, botany, nutrition and other sciences.

Even so, given the daunting size of the task, Noah must have been overwhelmed. Although Noah was in the prime of life at 480 years of age when the Lord commanded him to cut the first tree, some of the issues that he may have had to address were:

1. Noah had to methodically exchange or convert his possessions to currency, in order to meet payroll and material purchases.
2. To save as many people as possible, Noah had to give frequent seminars warning the people about the coming flood and the end of life as they knew it. After a while, fewer and fewer people attended, until eventually, no one showed up.
3. I can imagine that Noah hired people to collect and preserve thousands of various kinds of seeds. These would have to be gathered, sorted and cataloged for regeneration after the flood. Containers and food for thousands of insects had to be constructed and arranged. Noah was responsible for gathering samples of every living thing and placing them aboard the ark so that they might survive the flood.
4. Noah hired hundreds of people to cut and transport trees. At the building site, Noah's employees shaped and assembled the trees according to the plans which the Lord had given him. Noah spent many years working with the employees making sure the great boat was built according to divine specifications.

Building the ark was hard work. There was much to do, much to learn and no time to waste. Think about it. All the life that God had created (minus the fish) were reduced to a few thousand samples stored in a wooden boat for about a year. God made the world in six days, but it took Noah and his employees 120 years to gather the sufficient varieties necessary to replenish the world after the flood.

## Noah's Family

Noah had a very supportive family. Without a doubt, disposing personal property and cherished possessions was painful. However, this had to be done, because every square inch of the ark was designed for sustaining life and had very little space for personal belongings. It would be fair to say that Noah probably sold everything he owned to pay for the ark. Can you imagine how Noah's wife must have felt when their remaining possessions were sold to cover their last expenses? The good news is that the process of building the ark did not cost Noah his family.

Noah's three sons were married, but none of them had children at the time of the flood. Can you imagine what it must have been like for Noah's daughters-in-law to go to their parents and plead with them to come into the ark for the last time? I can only imagine their heart-felt anguish when their parents and siblings refused to go. Can you imagine Noah's grief when none of his employees would enter the very ark they had helped to build?

If we were to switch places with Noah within the context of our lives today, not very many people would be willing to do what Noah did. Few people in today's world have that kind of faith, character, courage and stamina to deal with the ridicule, threats, sacrifice and toil. Almost no one is up to such a challenge. What does Noah's actions say about his faith in God? As I have considered Noah, I have concluded that even if there had been no flood, Noah would have been willing to build the ark because Noah was willing to do anything that God wanted. *This was Noah's faith.*

## A Closer Look At These End Time Parallels

Three things about Noah's life and experience stand out. First, **"Noah did everything just as God commanded him. The Lord then said to Noah, 'Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation.'**" (Genesis 6:22, 7:1)

Noah's faith produced obedience, and when the last day arrived, a compassionate God declared Noah righteous and directed him into *the ark of safety*.

The end time parallel is this: During the Great Tribulation, worshiping God as He commanded, including the fourth commandment, will be a difficult test of faith. True faith in God produces obedience *at any cost*. Remember why Nebuchadnezzar threw Daniel's three friends into the fiery furnace?

They were put in the furnace because they refused to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's image. (Daniel 3) During the Great Tribulation, everyone who refuses to worship the image of the beast will be threatened with death. (Revelation 13:15) The good news is that everyone who passes the worship test of faith will be declared righteous and sealed with the righteousness of Christ. This sealing will be *the ark of safety* for our day.

Second, the Bible says, **"By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith."** (Hebrews 7:11) The Bible says that Noah condemned *the world* by obeying God. This means that during the Great Tribulation, some people will submit to the authority of God, and by doing this, they will prove that it can be done!

If it is possible for one faith-filled person to obey God's commandments, then people who refuse to obey them will be condemned because they, too, could have obeyed. This is how Noah condemned the world. God, through Noah, invited everyone to get on the ark, but no one accepted His invitation except Noah and his family.

God drowned every other living person on Earth. The same situation will exist during the Great Tribulation. Through His 144,000 servants, God will invite everyone on Earth to submit to the authority of Jesus Christ by worshiping Him. Many people will submit because of their faith in God, but the rest of humanity will be destroyed.

The last element about Noah's story that stands out concerns the seven days of waiting. **"The Lord then said to Noah, 'Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation. . . . Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made.'** And Noah did all that the Lord commanded him." (Genesis 7:1,4,5)

For seven days, the ark sat strangely silent on the hilltop where it had rested during its construction. The townspeople did not concern themselves with the silence. The local "newspaper" mocked Noah saying that he and his family were trapped in the ark with hundreds of animals. An unseen hand closed the giant door to the ark, which no man could move.

I see the gathering of the animals into the ark as very ironic. God wanted to gather people into the ark, but they would not come, so He gathered up the animals. If the antediluvians had not

been so numb with sin, this extraordinary event would have caused sober reflection.

Instead, it became a point of laughter and ridicule. I can hear them taunt, "So, Noah has built a zoo!" As the hours and days passed, the revelers forgot Noah and the ark as they focused on their daily routines. I believe at midnight on the seventh day, a huge bolt of lightning tore the sky from East to West and peals of deafening thunder echoed the end of mercy. Droplets of water from Heaven became torrents driven by powerful winds and the floodgates of the deep were opened producing gigantic geysers.

Suddenly, water was rising rapidly everywhere. How long do you think it took for the numbness of the Novocaine of sin to wear off? Panic and fear filled every house. Noah's testimony was true! Their recognition of truth came too late – forever too late. God had sealed the giant door of the ark and even Noah could not open it to receive desperate passengers.

God had spoken for 120 years and He had nothing more to say. The time had come. All the wicked people must die. God could have motivated every antediluvian into the ark through fear. If He had left a door open, they would have gotten on board. However, in God's economy, a person is not saved by fear. A person is saved by faith or not at all.

The end time parallel is identical. When the events of the seventh trumpet begin, every person alive will have made a choice – to receive the seal of God or the mark of the beast. It is at this moment that God will close the great door of mercy in Heaven. God will terminate His generous offer of salvation.

The wicked cannot harm people who have God's seal. A bolt of lightning will tear the sky from East to West and peals of deafening thunder will signal "salvation is finished." Burning hailstones will rain down from the sky and the a global earthquake will rip the Earth into pieces. (Revelation 11:15-19) Within minutes, a great sign will appear in Heaven. Everyone on Earth will look up and see the Ark of the Covenant displayed in the heavens. *That ark* contains God's holy law. God will show the Ark of the Covenant to the world for the same reason He showed rain to the antediluvians.

Because they refused to believe there was a holy law, the wicked will be condemned. Now that their rebellion has been exposed, the wicked will need to be destroyed. The seven last plagues will fall on them and the wicked will all be destroyed by the time the seventh plague is finished. Once again, unbelievers must perish. God has decreed it.

## **An Antidote for the Novocaine of Sin**

If we do not make a determined effort to pray and search God's Word for greater truth *each* day, it is inevitable that we will become desensitized by sin. I remember the first time we drove through Nebraska. Shirley and I were returning from Seattle and we did not know about the big hog farms located in that state. I was driving along enjoying the open road when suddenly we encountered a overwhelming stench that took our breath away. I looked around expecting to see some big carcass beside the road. I grabbed a tissue to cover my nose.

The smell was overpowering. I had been driving about 70 mph, but I sped up, hoping to escape the odor. I remember thinking to myself, "Man, I don't know what was killed, but it must have been huge to stink this much." The faster we went, the worse the smell became. After a few miles, I saw some signs and I realized the overpowering stench was not from a dead animal, but from living animals – thousands of pigs!

I was surprised their pungent odor permeated so many square miles. I remember thinking to myself, "This must be how this Earth smells to God." No wonder God required the priest to use incense in the earthly temple. I was amazed that local people did not notice the odor! I have since learned that people who live in or near the pig farms do not notice the smell of their pigs unless an unusually strong breeze puts it in their face. Sin has the same effect. The foul odor of sin often goes unnoticed by the people of this world. We have grown accustomed to it.

It is the way of life in every culture. A few months after the smelly incident in Nebraska, I was conducting a seminar in Colorado and mentioned this experience to the audience. During a break in the seminar, a man came up to me and said, "I owned a large pig farm for 30 years and the odor did not bother me until we sold the farm and moved into town. I never understood why people became so aggravated by the smell of my pigs until we moved away and my own nose was cleaned out!"

When the farmer moved away from his pigs, his nose began to work! When we distance ourselves from Sodom and Gomorrah, we see how wicked sin is! Sin, like Novocaine, deadens our senses. The antediluvians did not take Noah's message seriously because they were spiritually numb.

They could not comprehend their offensiveness in God's sight. The same problem exists today. The carnal mind does not realize the strength of its rebellion against God until it is directly confronted with God's will. God confronted Pharaoh with His commands and Pharaoh refused ten times! The antediluvians were confronted with God's plans for 120 years and they refused to enter the ark. During the Great Tribulation, God will confront every man, woman and child with His authority expressed in the Ten Commandments and a majority of the world will rebel. There is an antidote for the Novocaine of sin! We have a Savior from sin and He has sent the Holy Spirit to everyone – offering freedom from sin.

There is a law that says, "By beholding, we become changed." Lot's family became desensitized to Sodom's sinful ways by living in that pig pen for a few years. Unless we fill our minds with God's Word and pray for spiritual discernment each day, the stench of sin will gradually disappear and sin will become tolerable. The antidote for the Novocaine of sin is walking with God. Noah, Enoch, and Abraham walked with God! These men knew that every act of sin gives birth to sorrow, heartache and ultimately death. Sin *can be* so tempting.

Sin may look like a "piece of cake" or in Eve's case, "a beautiful piece of fruit," but sin is an illusion. The devil markets sin with all the glitter and glamour the carnal mind can create, but when sin reaches maturity it is very painful to see. Who feels euphoric after visiting a ward of AIDS victims? Who gets a rush of joy after looking at a rape or murder victim? Who feels great after learning that his or her house has been broken into and the valuables stolen? It is ironic



that sinners dislike the consequences of sin.

We know that sin is powerful because the word "forbidden" means nothing when the passion for sin is roused. If our minds are not renewed by God's Word and ennobled by God's Spirit, sin will captivate us, numb us, deceive us and ultimately destroy us. This is why God hates sin.

When Jesus sailed across the Sea of Galilee to the region of the Gaderenes, two demoniacs who were living in or near a pig pen met Him. (Matthew 8:28-32) Jesus could see these tortured men desired to be set free, but He also saw they were powerless against the mighty demons that had conquered them.

Jesus used this occasion to create a wonderful object lesson. *Freedom from the dominion of sin is only possible through Christ.* Because He loved them, Jesus set the helpless men free. He commanded the demons to leave the men and enter a large herd of pigs that were nearby. Immediately the men became joyful and sane, but the pigs became wild and disoriented and they ran into the lake and drowned themselves. An old adage goes like this: "If people do not resist the devil, they become a dwelling for the devil."

Evidently, these two men had not resisted the influence of demons and many demons possessed them. Likewise, demons possessed the antediluvians and ironically, they suffered the same fate as the herd of pigs. There is a sobering end time parallel surrounding Noah and the flood: **"As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man."**