

Genesis 6:1-3,5-14,17-22

God's Judgment Saves His People

Genesis 6:17,18

Everything on earth will perish. But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

If you listen to the news on TV or read the latest top story on your smart phone, it doesn't take long before you hear news about bad storms and bad people that result in damaged homes and destroyed lives. It's hard to hear of it. It hurts our hearts.

In Noah's time, the world was no different. People didn't care about God. They did not live as God wanted them to live. Instead, they did what they wanted, married who they desired and disrespected everything God asked them to do. When God saw that the people were very bad and were always thinking only evil in their hearts, it hurt his heart.

So the LORD said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them."

As we read this, we do not need to look at our phone or watch the news to see the same disrespect. Go look in a mirror. The answer is staring right at us. Each one of us has, at times, cared more about what we wanted instead of God.

The weeks before Christmas (called the Advent season) are no different; we are more concerned about stuff than we are our sins. God should say, "I will wipe you from the face of the earth." But he doesn't. Listen: "I will establish my covenant (a mutual agreement) with you, and you will enter the ark." God directed Noah to build an ark that would save him and his family. That ark would also keep safe God's promise to send a Savior.

This same Jesus saves you and me. Jesus was "wiped out" on the cross, not you. As the waters lifted Noah and his family in the ark, the waters of baptism assure us that we are saved. We are God's favorites! Now there's some good news that brings joy to our hearts!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for Younger Children

- What did God tell Noah to build to save him, his family, and two of every living thing?
- Who did God send to save you and your family?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Admit an evil thought in your heart that proves we are no different than the people of Noah's day.
- Why is God's promise to save Noah and his family in the ark so important for us to know our badness is 100% forgiven?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- How did God use the destruction of the flood to save the world?
- Read 1 Peter 3:18-20. Then compare the waters of the flood and the waters of your Baptism.

Closing Prayer:

Use your power, Lord, and come to help us! Protect us by your strength and save us from the threatening dangers of our sins. Amen.

Hymn: CW 6:1 – Come, O Long-Expected Jesus

Come, O long-expected Jesus,
Born to set your people free;
From our sins and fears release us
By your death on Calvary.
Israel's Strength and Consolation,
Hope to all the earth impart,
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation,
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.