GENESIS

Chapter 7

**The Lord then said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation. 2 Take with you seven of every kind of clean animal, a male and its mate, and two of every kind of unclean animal, a male and its mate, 3 and also seven of every kind of bird, male and female, to keep their various kinds alive throughout the earth. 4 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.” 5 And Noah did all that the Lord commanded him. 6 Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. 7 And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood. 8 Pairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground, 9 male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, as God had commanded Noah. 10 And after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth. 11 In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, on the seventeenth day of the second month—on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. 12 And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. 13 On that very day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark. 14 They had with them every wild animal according to its kind, all livestock according to their kinds, every creature that moves along the ground according to its kind and every bird according to its kind, everything with wings. 15 Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life in them came to Noah and entered the ark. 16 The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as God had commanded Noah. Then the Lord shut him in. 17 For forty days the flood kept coming on the earth, and as the waters increased they lifted the ark high above the earth. 18 The waters rose and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. 19 They rose greatly on the earth, and all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered. 20 The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than twenty feet. 21 Every living thing that moved on the earth perished—birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. 22 Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died. 23 Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; men and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds of the air were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark. 24 The waters flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty 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.* See note on 6:8–9. 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 of every kind of clean animal … two of every kind of unclean animal.* See NIV text note: “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 BRIDS – ESV – 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 means “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)

*entered the ark to escape the waters.* 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** ENTERED 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 SECOND MONTH – A day fixed in the annals of time and one that the survivors would never forget. (TLSB)

SPRINGS OF THE DEEP BURST FORTH – 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)

HEAVENS WERE OPENED – 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)

SONS AND HIS WIFE – 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 wild animal … all livestock … every creature that moves along the ground … 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** THEY ROSE GREATLY– ESV HAS “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** *covered the mountains to a depth of more than twenty feet.* 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** EVERY LIVING THING…PERISHED – 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** WAS WIPED OUT – ESV has “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)