

G Jones Bible Survey 3 of 4

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 30 January 2018

Preacher: Gethin Jones

[0 : 00] Thanks, Chris. Yes, as Chris mentioned, our journey through the Bible in 80 minutes has had a 60 minute extension.

! So I was asked to do the three talks after our series of four, and I thought, well, let's just stretch this to seven weeks. So we're doing the Bible in seven weeks. And yet it's probably surprising that if we're doing the whole Bible in seven weeks, that we're still in Genesis.

We will still be in Genesis next week, actually, because it is worth spending time on the roots of what grows out of Genesis, because you kind of get more of a sketch of what will happen over all the history. And then we'll just see that working out over time.

And today we're looking at Noah. Four chapters, so I've sort of given you the highlights on the sheet there, just so you can refer to it. Obviously, we could say so much about it. Well, you can find all kinds of amazing things on the Internet, can't you?

One of the things that lots of people have been doing, as the technology of cameras has developed, is to make slow motion videos of all kinds of things happening.

[1 : 15] And a really common one to find on the Internet is people making slow motion videos of someone popping a water balloon. And you'll see the pin go in, and then you'll see a rip form around the circumference of the balloon.

And then slowly it just kind of peels away from that rip. And then you've got just a big ball of water. And then slowly it just disintegrates and collapses. Last week, the passage we saw last week is a bit like seeing the pin go in.

And what has happened between that point, where mankind fell, where mankind rejected God and was cursed, as they turned against their maker, that is like seeing the pin go in.

If you're wondering why has everything gone wrong, that is the point at which the pin went in. And what has happened between that point and Genesis 6, where the story of Noah begins, is you see the disintegration.

You see it all start to collapse. God has put a curse on mankind, a curse of frustration in their work, and pain in childbearing, and ultimately death.

[2 : 29] But this curse is tinged with God's mercy as well. Because though they were given lives of pain and frustration, it is still life. Whereas they could have been wiped out immediately.

And it is a curse that comes with a promise of mercy. We saw at the end last week that he promises an ultimate defeat of the serpent, who led them to sin against God.

A defeat by someone called the seed of the woman, or the offspring of the woman. And also God said that he would act in people's hearts to set them at enmity with the serpent and his offspring.

He would reclaim their allegiance by working in them. And in chapters 4 and 5 we see the collapse. The tragic fallout from God's rejection, a man's rejection of God.

It only takes one generation to get the first murderer. Cain killing his brother Abel. It seemed that Abel was a good man and he thought, well maybe this would be the seed of the woman.

[3 : 30] But it's not Abel because he's murdered. And so it's Seth. You follow the two lines of Cain and Seth. They're two very different family patterns. In the line of Cain you see lots of great cultural activity.

And yet they're also increasingly wicked at the same time. And so by the seventh generation of Cain you find a proud polygamous murderer called Lamech.

As you follow the line of Seth it's much more likely that you'll find the seed of the woman there. The people who want to follow God and live with him. So much so that by the seventh generation of that line you'll find a man called Enoch.

Who lives in such close friendship with God that he escapes death altogether. He just says and he was not. For God took him. So he has spared even the curse of death.

But the overall pattern of the curse has been clear from chapter 3. And over and over in chapter 5. If you want to read it later. It says so and so lived many years and maybe did a few of these things.

[4 : 35] And he had these children. And he died. And he died. And he died. That is the overall pattern. And actually that is how chapter 9 ends. Because Noah dies as well.

And so there's that continuing of the curse in a sense. And we get to the point in chapter 6 verse 5. If you look at the top there. Chapter 6 verse 5.

Where every intention of the thoughts of man's heart. Is only evil. Continually. Now that is really underlining as much as you possibly could.

To say man is evil. Every intention. Every intention. Only evil. Continually. And there's lots we could say. You could spend several weeks just on the story of Noah.

But as we look at it in the context of the wider story of the whole Bible. There's just three things to notice. To see what we can learn about this in the whole story.

[5 : 35] We're going to see a preview. A deja vu. And a prophecy. There's the three things that Noah gives us. A preview. A deja vu. And a prophecy. So first of all we see a preview.

Last week I mentioned briefly at the end. That reading the Bible is like watching a plant grow. From seed to the full tree. Flowers and everything.

And so a seed obviously looks very different from a tree covered in flowers. And so it progresses.

And looks different at different stages. And yet the DNA is the same the whole way through.

And so we'll find a lot of the DNA that you'll find all through the Bible. Right here in Genesis. You've seen some of that already. And we'll see some of the earlier DNA working out here.

As we get to the deja vu later. But what this story gives us. As a preview. It's a really broad sketch. Of the story of the world. As it would play out.

[6 : 34] This is world history. Predefined for us. Even as early as Genesis 6. The whole world. Was in the grip of evil.

As I pointed out in verse 5. And God being just. He will not allow it to go further. Evil must be punished.

And judged. And stopped. Which means. Evil people must be wiped out. And the serpent must be destroyed. Together with his offspring. And yet in mercy.

He sets a time of patience. He sets the countdown. So in verse 3 of chapter 6. His days shall be 120 years. That is a period of patience that God sets in place.

I'm going to wait this long. And then judgment will come. And he also provides a way out. He commissions Noah. To build an ark. It would be a way through the storm.

[7 : 34] Into the next world. And bit by bit. As the ark goes up. The people ask him. What on earth are you doing? Why are you building a boat?

And he explains. Well judgment is coming. God has set a date. And judgment is coming. Our time is limited. And this will.

This boat will be the only way out. For anyone. And this is how bad and rebellious people were. At this time. Only eight people believed.

Only eight people. Got into the ark. There's a film called Noah. That was released a few years ago. I don't know if you saw it. Parts of it are quite helpful. Just to see parts of it dramatized.

But a lot of it. Probably the majority of it. Is absolute nonsense. Notably. There's a scene. Where the rain starts to fall. And Noah.

[8 : 31] I think he's gone off to try and find one of his family members. To get him on the boat. And so. And so. Ham has managed to run ahead of him. Noah is running towards the ark. But also. So are the evil people. In their armor.

With their weapons. Also trying to storm the ark. And there are these. You know. Big rock giant monster things. That. I have no idea what they are supposed to be. But they are defending the ark. As people are trying to crowd onto the ark. They're knocking people back. And just letting Noah and his family through. Just to make sure that. Only these eight people get in. First of all.

That there were no weird rock monster things. Whatever they are. But more importantly. No one was fought off. No one was prevented from getting on the ark.

No one else was trying to get on the ark. No one believed Noah. Only Noah. His wife. His children. His three sons.

[9 : 27] And three daughters-in-law. Bothered to get on the ark. No one heeded the warning. No one believed. Noah's message. And so they are in the ark.

And everyone else is outside. Awaiting their just judgment. And so we see the world in a sense destroyed. Destroyed by water.

It's as if it's recreated. And in Genesis chapter 1. You might remember that. God created the world by separating the water from the dry land. and here we're seeing the void chaos coming back no distinction of water and dry land here and so only these eight people in the ark are spared this destruction of the world and then on the other side it's as if there is a new world with a new humanity and a new period of patience is set that is what the rainbow signifies as we saw in chapter 9 the rainbow represents renewed patience on God's part towards us as people wait for another ark to be built into which God's people can go in to be saved thousands of years later the apostle Peter would write this it's in 2 Peter chapter 3 from verse 4 and he's talking about people at the time who don't believe that Jesus will come back who don't believe that Jesus will bring a final end don't believe that God will bring judgment and this is what Peter said they will say where is the promise of his coming for ever since the fathers fell asleep things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation for they deliberately overlook this fact this is what the people who deny that judgment is coming are overlooking in verse 5 of 2 Peter 3 that the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God and that by means of these the world that then existed that is the world before the flood was deluged with water and perished that world perished but by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist the heavens and earth after the deluge are stored up for fire being kept until the judgment and destruction of the ungodly there is another judgment to come not a water judgment this time but a fire judgment and if you think that sounds unlikely it sounds as unlikely as a water judgment sounded back in Noah's day when I was little growing up in church we used to sing a little song when you see a rainbow remember God is love and that's true that's helpful it's good to remember that when we see a rainbow but here's what the rainbow represents more precisely for the time being

God is being unbelievably patient with extremely rebellious people that is what rainbows mean God is being unbelievably patient with extremely rebellious people that word bow we think immediately rainbow but the word he's using is bow as in the weapon like a bow and arrow and God is saying that this bow is something I should be pointing at you you deserve to have this bow in your face ready to get you and he's saying I've hung up my bow on the wall for the time being when you see that you should see he's dropped his weapon for the time being that is what rainbows should make you think of and this is a preview of the story of the world a coming judgment but with a time of patience a patience period during which he waits for people to get on board after which destruction will come there will be this decreation and with a recreation on the other side that is the broad sketch of world history it's very broad there's lots of details still to come there's another 65 books of detail to come and thousands of years of detail but very broadly what is the story of the world God being extremely patient with the world giving a way out and then judgment coming with recreation at the end so that's the preview that this story gives us then briefly we have a deja vu as I pointed out earlier chapter 8 has this deja vu of chapter 1 as the wind or the spirit it's the same word that blows over the waters to separate it from the dry land it's just like we saw in chapter 1 and so there is this kind of new creation coming this old world perished and a new world comes and then chapter 9 we have more deja vu and it's a much sadder affair Noah is working the ground ever since Adam's rebellion that is what man is destined to do work the ground instead of keeping a garden and just as Adam abused the fruit of the garden taking what he should not have taken [15 : 07] Noah abuses the fruit of the ground by getting drunk on the wine he produces so just as we saw sin relating to fruit back then here again we see sin relating to fruit here in Noah he gets drunk and just as Adam's sin ended up in his nakedness being a thing of shame for him Noah in his sin ends up shamefully naked it's a tragic replay of Genesis 3 that shows us that nobody is immune from the infection of sin Victor Hugo once said that revolution and surely this deluge was quite the revolution that revolution can change anything except the human heart and yet Noah is still God's servant and God's prophet when he speaks to his sons so in chapter 3 God spoke to Adam and Eve directly and here

Noah acts as God's mouthpiece God's prophet as he speaks to his son because what's important here is not just what Noah did but how his sons reacted to his sin so first he speaks to Ham Ham's

focus was on exposing and belittling and mocking his father's sin making fun of it almost finding delight in the sin of his father going and telling his brothers what their father had done and so he showed himself to be more like the serpent delighting in the sin of God's people Ham shows himself while being the son of Noah to be of the seed of the serpent in his actions whereas Shem and Japheth are completely different they are more like what God did in Eden here's another deja vu what did God do to Adam and Eve in their shameful nakedness he made coverings for them he gave them animal skins to clothe them and Shem and Japheth as well their instinct is to cover over Noah's shame so there's a clear distinction between these two sons and the one son and so we come to a prophecy having seen this deja vu we come to a prophecy that Noah gives and the first thing we see in chapter 9 verse 25 we see that Canaan is cursed not just Ham but Ham and his offspring Ham and everything he represents just as the curse was on the serpent and his offspring so here the curse is on Ham and his offspring by cursing Canaan Canaan of course being the father of the Canaanites who would go much further in their evil and who would ultimately have to be wiped out by the Israelites a few centuries later so there's a curse on Canaan and there's a blessings blessings on

Shem and on Japheth first of all he talks about Shem so in verse 26 blessed be the Lord the God of Shem and let Canaan be his servant he blesses God for what Shem has done and so that is where the blessing goes first and then verse 27 may God enlarge Japheth and let him dwell in the tents of Shem and let Canaan be his servant and so Japheth is blessed and is prophesying that Japheth would grow and would come to live in the tents of Shem and this prophecy it sounds a bit strange we might not immediately understand what is meant by this but it comes to shape much of what would happen in the rest of human history it gives us just a bit more detail into the sketch that we've already seen so as you go through the Bible you'll see a long time there'll be a focus on Shem and his people the Shemites or nowadays we just call them the Semites they are the Semitic people the Jewish people and Shem doesn't have an ark but tents so the focus is on Shem and his tents and so that will basically be the Old

Testament you'll see a long period of time where there is a focus on Shem and God's dealings with the people of Shem as for the Japhethites they would spread all over the world they will multiply they will cover the earth they would be called the coastland people they'll be called the people who are far off in various points throughout the Bible but at one point the Japhethites will come in the Japhethites will come to live in the tents of Shem verse 27 there will be a point when there will be an offer of refuge in this sort of metaphorical tent and this offer of refuge will be extended not only to the people of Shem but also to the people of Japheth Japheth what Paul in the book of Romans would say to the Jews first and also to Greeks or to Gentiles Japheth sort of represent the Gentile people the rest of the world and that is the period of time in which we now live it is the time when this offer is extended to the people of

[20 : 53] Japheth to us so as you go through the Bible you will see the Shemites get their tents and especially one tent that is actually remarkably similar to the ark the ark in the instructions that God gives it's got three clear layers and the tent of Shem would be called the tabernacle has three clear layers this tent would develop into a building called the temple and the prophets would then cry out as they look to a coming age and say stretch out the tent it's time to make room we need to make room because the gentiles the nations will come in one day so that is one of the things the prophets keep calling out stretch out the tent make way make room until we get to a point where there is a man who claims that he is the temple he is the ark as it were in whom rescue comes he is the one in whom people can be carried safely through through the destruction into a new world that is the key prophecy

Jesus comes and claims I'm the one you need to get into to be safe on the other side you think well that all works out quite nicely but so what it might be what you're thinking well why should I care about the prophecy because this offer of salvation in Jesus is being made to you right now right here that is why that matters that you are being offered this way as I'm speaking to you you're being offered this way in Jesus to be saved from the judgment that you do deserve the judgment I deserve the judgment we all deserve what do we learn from this from the deja vu we saw what Noah did we see there how deeply sin infects our world and infects our hearts and infects the best of people we see how desperately we need for God to step in to change us and save us it shows you that

Noah isn't the seed that we're ultimately looking for we started the search last week didn't we for the seed of the woman Noah is part of that line but he's not ultimately the one we need we need to keep looking and so his story does give us this broad sketch of what's to come and we need to keep looking for what will come and why should I care about that preview of this of world history because it warns you that while this idea of a final judgment might seem strange it is coming it seems unlikely but it is truly coming rainbows are still appearing for now aren't they but that means that God is being very patient with you and with us with me he's being patient for now and that is what you should tell yourself when you see a rainbow God is being very patient with me he is waiting but it means that there is an end date and we don't know what that is if you meet anyone who tells you that they know what it is they're wrong we don't know what that date is the Bible says now is the time of salvation when you see a rainbow that's what you should think he's being patient for now and I need to come now you can't afford to waste time but you are invited to put your trust in Jesus and to delay that is dangerous because you don't know when that judgement will come so let me urge you are you in Jesus if you don't really understand what that means do keep coming and do ask questions afterwards we encourage you to come to our church services as well we can give you details but it's a key question you must ask this is the sketch of world history that Genesis gives you and you must know where you stand let's just pray briefly