

A Watery Preview of a Fiery End

- Happy NY, not new cal year, but church year. Today 1st Sun of Adv, means beg of ch yr. While rest world is: (Xm) decs, cookies, gifts, cards, singing "Have H/Jolly Xm" (nothing wrong with that), we in ch are thinking not so much re Xm, but re Adv, when we focus on Christ's coming: yes Xm, but also, maybe more so at end of world. On this 1st Sun Adv, today thinking re end of world. I don't want be preachers on busy street corner in big city with sign up in air, "End coming." But Jesus says, "End coming." Today in Gospel, "**Keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back**" (Mk 13:35). That's Jesus, coming back at end of world. So end is coming!
- Today, preview of end; that preview is global flood, rec in Gen, that destroyed whole world, except for Noah, family, animals in ark. That floodwater is preview (foreshadows, prefigures) fire that will destroy world on J-Day. So two are related: flood, end of world; Jesus himself makes comp between two: "**As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man**" (Mt 24:37). So, since the flood is WPFE, today's sermon is big comp between flood & end of world. I want you pay close attention to 10 comps we make today between flood & end of world.
- 1st: wickedness. "**The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time**" (Gen 6:5). What horrible commentary on human sinful nature; it's a violent evil without shred of goodness. Was that way was before flood. Any diff today? Any less wicked today? Actually says, "**The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled**" (Gen 6:6). We could lament wickedness around us. But what about wickedness within us? We have tendency to forget that we contribute to deeply troubled heart of Lord. Just look within your own heart: shameful thoughts, disgraceful ideas that linger there. Flood should humble us all to repentance. Great wickedness before flood; great wickedness right now, before the end of world.
- 2nd: God's plan to destroy that wickedness. This was his plan: "**I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created... I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish**" (Gen 6:7a, 17). That was old plan; here's new plan: "**The present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly**" (2 Pt 3:7). WPFE. That's an inescapable reality that none of us as Christians should carelessly underappreciate. God plans to destroy this world someday, just like he did in flood.
- 3rd: God also plans to save. Before flood, God intended to save faithful people. Sad thing, only 8 to save: Noah, Mrs., 3 sons, 3 wives – that's it! But Lord to Noah: "**I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark**" (Gen 6:8). God had plan to save Noah: in 2 phases. Here's what mean: first, when got on ark (and God shut door so no one else get in) – saved, phase 1; phase 2, when got off ark (landed on mnt, released dove, olive branch, finally off, rainbow – again, saved. So salvation comes in 2 phases: on boat, off boat. Well, God has plan to save us, as well, in 2 phases. First: when get on boat. Christians have always seen ark as symbol of Church. So when get on boat, get in Church, when bap into Christ, when come to faith in JC, crucified risen Savior from sin, saved – phase 1. Phase 2: when get off boat, when ark of Church lands safely on God's mnt in heaven, there, finally, saved. 2 phases of God's plan to save.
- 4th: God's patience. God patiently, graciously delayed sending flood. Gen 6:3 tells God waited 120 yrs to actually send floodwater. Why wait? Because giving people time to repent. Wanted more people to trust in him for forgiveness, so more people on boat. Patient. In 1st Pt, "**God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built**" (3:20). Same true today! Why hasn't Jesus returned yet, after 2k yrs since asc into heaven? Because giving people time to repent; wants more people to trust in him for forgiveness, so more people can go heaven! 2nd Pt, "**[God] is patient**

with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Pt 3:9b). That’s reason for the delay before flood, and now. God’s patience – 4th comp.

- Closely related: 5th, what I’ll call God’s unspoken sermon. In days leading up to flood, God spoke an unspoken sermon. What was it? 500 ft boat, 2/3 size of Titanic; distance from plygrnd to Westridge. Big boat! Think about how many times: “No water around here! What doing?” Sure Noah ridiculed. Nevertheless, the ark served as unspoken sermon re God’s salv from coming jdgmt. Know what unspoken sermon is preached today re God’s salv from coming jdgmt? Church, ark of Ch. Everyone in world recognizes cross on top steeple as symbol of Christian church. Whether they mock, ridicule that symbol, as Noah’s contemps did the ark, or they flee to it for safety, the Church is an unspoken sermon (many spoken sermons preached inside) re salv from coming jdgmt.
- Now for 6th: destruction was sudden and catastrophic. Sudden: **“In the 600th year of Noah’s life, on the 17th day of the 2nd month – on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened” (Gen 7:11).** God knew specific day; no one else did; so suddenly. And catastrophic: **“Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; people and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds: were wiped from the earth” (Gen 7:23).** I never fully appreciated catastrophe of flood until visited Ark Encounter museum in KY, saw paintings of: drowning parents desperately pushing babies to mnt peaks; people pounding hull of ark, begging for entrance; millions dead bodies floating face down on water’s surface. Sudden & catastrophic. That’s how end of world will be, as well. **“The day of the Lord will come like a thief” (2 Pt 3:10a).** God knows specific day; no one else does; so suddenly. And, **“The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare... That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat” (2 Pt 3:10b, 12b).** Catastrophic. WPFE.
- But, 7th: you’re safe in ark. Noah’s family safe in ark. And in ark of Church, you’re safe, too. Throughout our lives that ark is tossed back/forth by winds/waves. Sometimes get seasick of sin and its effects; sometimes even tempted to abandon ship. But: in middle of storm, better to be on boat than off boat; better to be safe in ark of Church than outside the Church, because...
- 8th: ...because ark always lands safely on God’s mnt. **“On the 17th day of the 7th month the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat” (Gen 8:4).** And when Noah’s family finally came out of that dark, loud, smelly zoo-boat and stepped foot onto dry land: imagine their joy! Someday, when Church lands safely on God’s mnt, and we step foot onto dry land of heaven: imagine our joy!
- 9th: after destruction, everything is made new. When Noah stepped off ark, the entire world (mnts, valleys, oceans, rivers, continents) – everything was brand new. In same way, after the fiery destruction of J-Day, God will make everything new. **“In keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells” (2 Pt 3:13).** Our eternal home: perfect, sinless, pure, new – like Eden before Fall, but never again susceptible to sin. After destruction, everything made new.
- Can you see now how flood is WPFE. Two have a lot in common. I think God intended it that way. He wants people like you/me to learn a lesson from flood. So, (here’s the 10th, final comp): we need to be prepared! Noah was prepared; rest of world was not. We need to be prepared. We need to **Mk 13:35**. But he will come back; end is coming. So believe in LJC as Savior from sin; and you will be prepared for the end.