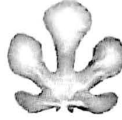


Martyn Lloyd-Jones

The Gospel in Genesis

Chapter 7

GOD MUST PUNISH SIN



And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

G E N E S I S 6 : 7 - 8

It is my intention to deal with this great and important incident, the account of which, in part, is found in the sixth chapter of the book of Genesis. I want to look at the incident as a whole in order that we may learn the vitally important message that it has to teach us. It deals with two fundamental questions. The first is, what is the cause of the trouble in the world? The second question is, what can be done about it?

Now men and women are very concerned about the problems in the world—at least, those who think at all are. And it seems to me that the majority do think, but unfortunately they keep their eyes at a certain level only and refuse to consider the message of the Bible. As we have been seeing, the Bible speaks to us about life itself, and it is because people fail to realize this that they are not interested in this book. They regard religion merely as a subject for academic study, a matter of interest only to those who are drawn in that direction. I remember once attending a conference at which I had been asked to be the chaplain for the week. I found that in the almost endless list of subjects that would be dealt with at that conference,

THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS

religion was number 16. People had come there to study literature and music and art, but only a few wanted to study religion.

Many hold the view that religion is a theoretical matter to be taken up as a hobby. People have all sorts of hobbies, and this is one of them. And, further, it is thought that the number who are interested in the study of religion is becoming smaller year by year. There are still a few, but for the vast majority religion is outdated, outmoded; it has nothing to say and is completely irrelevant.

But we are starting from the basis that not only is this book relevant but that it alone is relevant. We have spent several chapters on the third chapter of the book of Genesis, and our whole object has been to show that we really do not even begin to understand the nature of the problem of the modern world until we accept the message of that chapter, for there and there alone is the real explanation. Try all the other explanations if you like, but you will find every one of them to be inadequate. Here alone is an explanation that fits the facts. Here we see that people are as they are and the world is as it is because of man's rebellion against God, because man has set himself up as the authority and has spurned the divine voice.

Now we have been seeing that Adam and Eve's rebellion immediately led to some terrible consequences, which are still with us. In Genesis 3 we are given an accurate description of life today. Man brought his misery upon himself. He deliberately, voluntarily, put himself under the dominion of his archenemy, the archenemy of God; he put himself into the power of the Devil, Satan, the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air. And he has remained in that bondage ever since, unable to do anything about it. He has tried throughout the centuries to break free, but he has never succeeded. He never will.

But thank God, as we have seen, it is just there that the message of the gospel comes in. The Bible tells us that in spite of all this, God is still concerned and still cares. The God who looked at Adam and Eve after they had sinned and fallen and who came down into the garden to speak to them is still the same God. That is the message

of this book. He came down, you remember. He pronounced judgment upon Adam and Eve and their sin, he showed them the consequences that had to follow, but he did not stop at that. He showed them a way out. He was going to introduce a way of salvation. He was going to set enmity, he said, between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). It would be a mighty warfare in which the serpent's head would be bruised and the seed of the woman would receive a wound in his heel.

That is the message of the Christian gospel, and we find it way back in the third chapter of the book of Genesis. But that is only the beginning. The Bible does not end at the third chapter of Genesis. It goes on, and we have this mighty volume. What is it all about? It is further history. It is the account of the outworking of this plan of God. It is the subsequent record of what God has continued to do with men and women.

And we come, in this sixth chapter of Genesis, to another remarkable incident. After the events that we have been considering, there seems to have been an interval in which God appeared to be doing very little. God seemed to have left humanity to itself. He allowed men and women to go on living in their own way. For many years there was not very much direct intervention. But then suddenly this incident came. God was intervening again; he was doing something again. The God who came down into the garden was again addressing men and women.

That has been the pattern of God's dealing with humanity ever since the Fall. It is vital, it seems to me, that we should be clear about this because, as I am suggesting, it is the only way to understand history. The Bible, I repeat, is a book of history. That is what makes it so practical. It records the actual history of individual men and women and nations. It shows everything in detail in the light of God's overruling in it all and bringing things to pass. In other words, we cannot really understand the history of the world unless we accept the teaching of this book, and not only the world in Bible times. We cannot understand history since the end of the New

THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS

Testament canon until now unless we accept the great principles that are laid down here. God has a method of dealing with humanity, and it is always the same method.

On Armistice Sunday⁷ we think about wars. We have had two in this [twentieth] century. We have gone through a terrible and a trying period. The whole situation is still problematical and uncertain, and the questions we are all asking are: Why are things like this? Why must they be like this? What is the matter? What can be done about it?

You are familiar with the world's answers. They are put before us in the newspapers and in the journals day by day, week by week, and month by month. But I ask you, are you satisfied with what they are saying? Do these seem to be sufficient answers? Do they hold out any hope for you?

So I am asking you now to consider this message from God. It is not my message or my theory. I am not giving you the result of my deliberations and cogitations. No, no. I am trying simply to expound this book, this message. It is my only authority. Ultimately I know nothing about God apart from what the Bible tells me. I believe that I can deduce God from nature and creation—I happen to believe these proofs of the being and the existence of God—but they are not enough for me. I cannot arrive at any knowledge of the character of God from creation. I can, as Paul reminds the Romans, discover something about his eternal power and creatorship (1:20), but I will never get to know him that way. That brings me to an unknown God. If I am to understand history and myself and to have any hope, I must come to know God. And I have no knowledge of God apart from that which I find in this book where God has been pleased to reveal himself—his character, his person, his purposes, his ideas, his activities.

Here, then, we come across a pattern. God seems to leave the world to itself for long periods, and then he makes himself manifest. He does something. He intervenes. He speaks. We have one example of that in this sixth chapter of the book of Genesis. And the message, I say again, is that God is still the same, that though he may appear

to be silent, he is still there, and his purpose is still absolutely certain. The critical periods are there to call attention to that fact. They are the signposts that God himself sets up. And he does it in his love and in his compassion. We are all so dull, and so ready to forget, that God has to remind us in a forcible manner. He has to indicate and point the way. So we have tremendous incidents such as the Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, the captivity of Babylon—certain climactic events. They stand out in this record, in this history. They are all, in a sense, exactly the same. They all have the same message. And nothing is more important for us than that we should learn the lesson that they bring to us.

So, then, what is the lesson of the Flood? I am not going to detain you with a discussion about whether or not the Flood actually happened. I believe it did, and I can give you my reasons. I am familiar with everything that has been said against it and have considered the arguments. Nevertheless, I assert that this is history. Let me give you just one reason—and I would accept it for this one fact alone—the Lord Jesus Christ himself said that the Flood took place, and I shall remind you of his teaching. So if you reject this as history, then you are left with the problem of the veracity of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You cannot play fast and loose with these early chapters of Genesis. It is not quite as simple as some people seem to think. They say, "Of course, we no longer believe that. Science has proved this and that." But science, of course, has proved nothing of the kind. What people really mean is that certain scientists have stated their opinions, which is very different. Their opinions are pure theory and supposition. They cannot prove anything at all with regard to whether or not this is history. What they do not realize is that if you reject the historicity of the Flood, you cannot hold on to Jesus Christ and the gospel because he believed that this was literal history.

It is not immaterial, therefore, to ask whether this or any of the other illustrations are historical. It is as material as it is to know that Jesus of Nazareth was born of a virgin, that he worked miracles,

THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS

that he died and was buried but literally rose again in the body. The facts are absolutely essential. I have no gospel apart from these facts, and the Bible makes a great deal of them. It warns us against the scoffers who laugh at them and say such things as, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Peter 3:4).

Let us go on, then, and see what this account of the Flood has to teach us. Fortunately, there are several references to the Flood in the New Testament, so we are not left to ourselves in this matter. Take, for instance, the account in Luke 17, where our Lord says:

And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. (vv. 26-27)

There is also a reference to this in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In that great gallery of the saints of the Old Testament we read:

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. (v. 7)

Another reference to the Flood is found in the first epistle of Peter, where we are told that the Lord Jesus Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient . . . in the days of Noah" (3:18-20). And the apostle goes on to compare Christian salvation to the ark that saved Noah and his family.

There is a final reference in the second epistle of Peter, where the apostle takes up the whole question of the scoffers who were saying, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (3:4). "You've preached to us," they said in effect, "and you've told us that the Lord Jesus

Christ is coming back to judge the world. Well, where is he? Years are passing, and he doesn't come. You can't frighten us. We don't believe that kind of teaching. Where is the promise?"

"Ah," says Peter, "wait a minute. People were like that in the days of the Flood. When Noah preached to them, they ridiculed him. They scorned him. But the Flood came." And then he goes on to say that judgment is coming. It will not be a flood the next time. God promised that he would never drown the world again. He gave a sign of that promise in the rainbow in the heavens. But though he will never drown the earth, he will deal with sin. There will be a judgment. The elements will burn and melt with fervent heat in that final cataclysm that is still to come.

So in the light of all these comments in the New Testament, we can go back to this ancient history and consider its message. What is it? I would divide it like this: there is a general message and a particular message. I shall not dwell on the first point, but I must note it in passing.

The general message is that all calamities are due to sin. God made the world perfect. He placed the man and woman in paradise. And if they had obeyed, it would have continued like that. There would never have been any wars. There would never have been anything to disturb the even tenor of their days and their enjoyment of life and of God. Are we all clear about that, I wonder? Why are there wars? Is there anything more idiotic, more insane, more futile, more harmful to the lot of man? A war is a calamity and always leads to endless trouble in every respect. Where does it come from? The Bible tells us that it has come from sin. It was as a result of the entry of sin that Cain became jealous of his brother Abel and decided to murder him. There it is, and it is still with us, in all the relationships of life. All calamity is the result of sin and would never have come but for sin.

A second principle that seems to me to be equally clear is that God sometimes brings calamity as a punishment for sin. That is the whole message of this incident of the Flood. It was God himself who decided to do this. He said, "And behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters

THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS

upon the earth" (Genesis 6:17). God deliberately decided to do that because of the conditions that prevailed. Now God does not always do that. As I have said, there are long epochs and periods, sometimes apparently lasting for a millennium and more, when God seems to tolerate things. He allows them to take their course and does not seem to do anything about them, so that scoffers say, "Where is your God? Can your God do anything? If he can, why doesn't he? You say he's almighty. But we've forgotten him. We've ignored him. We live our own lives, and nothing happens to us. Everything's going well."

As the psalmist put it, "Thou thoughtest that I [God] was altogether such an one as thyself" (Psalm 50:21). We do not understand his ways. Isaiah says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD" (Isaiah 55:8). His thoughts and ways are as far above us as the heavens are above the earth, higher than our understanding. But God gives us teaching, and it seems to be this: God allows things to go on until they reach a certain climax, and when they do, he acts. And that is what he did in the Flood.

Later on in this same book of Genesis, we read that God said he would not do anything yet, "for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Genesis 15:16). Then he would act. You remember God's patience with the city of Nineveh, to which he sent the prophet Jonah. He had waited. He had postponed and appealed. But they did nothing. He allowed the time to pass. But then in his own time he acted. And, of course, that is the great lesson of the Old Testament about the children of Israel. God gave them his laws, and he told them that if they obeyed him, he would bless them, but that if they disobeyed him, he would punish them. Then they began to sin and to disobey God. And they thought something was going to happen at once, but it did not.

"Ah," they said, "everything is all right." And on they went in sin. God sent a messenger to warn them. They paid no attention but continued in sin. Another messenger came; still they paid no attention. And at last they said, "Let's be at ease in Zion. Nothing will ever go wrong for us." Then suddenly God acted.

That is the message. It is the whole history of the Old Testament. And it came to a terrifying climax in A.D. 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem and the casting out of the nation of Israel and its people among the nations of the world. There is the principle. God does not always act at once: he will act, but in *his* own time.

The third general principle is this: every one of these individual calamities in history is nothing but a picture of the final calamity. Every one of them points forward. This is not my theory. It is the teaching of the Bible itself. What is proclaimed is that God will punish sin. I am sorry, my friends, but I say again that I am not trying to tell you what I like or what I think. The whole message of the Bible is that God is just and holy and righteous and pure. I do not hesitate, with reverence, to put it like this: God must punish sin. He cannot deny himself. He cannot go back on his own nature and on his own character. God and sin are eternal incompatibilities. So God pronounces that he must punish sin, and punish it he will. He will punish it in the individual. He will punish it in groups. He will punish the whole world in sin. That is the general message.

Now let me say something about this in particular. Why does God punish sin? The answer is that it is because of what sin leads to, what it produces. God pronounced here that he would destroy that ancient world. Why? Here is the answer in the fifth verse: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). That is why God acted as he did. He saw that the wickedness of the earth was great. That is what always produces God's punishment.

Do not misunderstand me. I am not suggesting to you that the sixth chapter of Genesis is an exact description of the world today, though it may be. God knows, the world is much too much like that at this present moment. But I am not saying that the end of the world is at hand. Again, it may be. I cannot say it is not; I cannot say it is. I am not claiming to understand the times and the seasons. All I know is that there will be an end, and I find this principle in the Scripture: God tolerates iniquity until it reaches a certain climax.

THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS

And then he acts. I simply ask you to face the evidence seriously and soberly. It was when God saw that wickedness was great on the earth that he sent the Flood.

God saw also that "every imagination of the thoughts of his [man's] heart was only evil continually" (v. 5). This means that men and women not only did things that were wrong, they delighted in them. They boasted of them. Evil was not merely present in practice but was in the heart, in the imagination, in the mind. There are times in the history of the world when men and women have been evil in practice, but they do not seem to have been devilish in their minds to the extent that they have been at other times. But at this time of the Flood, as someone once put it, the world had reached a new low in iniquity. People's very minds were fiendish. They perverted all their powers and faculties simply to revel in sin.

There is always sin in the world. There was a great deal of sin in the world a hundred years ago. In the Victorian period people committed sinful acts. There was drunkenness. There was immorality. Yes, but I think you will all agree that there is a striking difference between the world then and the world now. When you look into the realm of the mind and the imagination, do you not see the difference? Have you noticed, for instance, the striking difference between Victorian novels and the novels of today? In those days, there was not all this filth. Something new has come in. The imagination, the mind, the thinking, the heart are going down. Music is debased. It is becoming primitive and suggestive. It is no longer as clean as it was. Everything is perverted and twisted. It is happening in literature. It is happening in art. Compare the art of a hundred years ago with that of today. What is this new thing that has come in? Is it not because the imagination and the mind and the heart are becoming evil continually? That is the sort of thing that happened at the time of the Flood. Iniquity and evil and wickedness and vice were rampant.

Then we are told in the eleventh verse, "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." "Corrupt." Polluted. Foul and tarnished. It does not take much

imagination to see what that means, does it? You find a description of the same thing in the second half of Paul's first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. There have been other times when the world was like that. Sodom and Gomorrah were corrupt, low, and full of violence. This verse refers not only to murder and theft and robbery with violence, but to innocent people being attacked, to violence in the manifestation of thoughts such as lust and passion. And again, is this not far too much in evidence in this modern world? The world is much more violent than it was fifty years ago. There has always been violence, but not in this widespread sense. The whole way of life is becoming loud and harsh and cruel and angry. There is a violence about man. He does not fight the way he used to. He has mighty bombs now that will kill thousands, perhaps millions, at a time. Violence! It is here now, and it was there then.

But the trouble with all this is that it is seen by God: "The earth also was corrupt *before God*, and the earth was filled with violence." This is the essence of sin. It was all happening before God, but the world ignored him. It said, "There is no God. And if there is a God, well, it doesn't matter. He can't do anything. He's quite helpless. He doesn't have any power at all." And the people went on living like that under the very eye of God, with God looking down upon them, though they did not believe that. Those are the conditions in which God acts. Those are the kind of conditions that lead to calamities. It is when the world is in such a state that everything goes wrong and men and women are alarmed and terrified and begin to ask, "What's going to happen next?"

But let us not forget that when our Lord spoke about the time before the Flood, he said, "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage . . . and knew not until the flood came" (Matthew 24:38-39). Do you see what he is describing? It is a purely materialistic outlook. Eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage—this is the only life, this is the only world. So let's get the most out of it. Let's live for it entirely. Don't talk about God. Don't talk about eternity. Don't talk about death. Don't talk about judg-

ment. Just live for the present, for enjoyment, for happiness. That was the picture, and it is the order of the day now. They were like that before the Flood, says our Lord, and that was why God visited them in judgment. They were living purely on the earthly level. They only thought of themselves, and they lived for themselves. That was what they wanted—plenty to eat, plenty to drink. “Let’s get more money so we can enjoy ourselves. It doesn’t matter what happens. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Let’s eat, drink, and be merry.”

I am not applying this to the age in which we live. I am leaving that to you. But I cannot help noting the terrible and terrifying parallel, the apparent utter unconcern of men and women in spite of what they have already experienced. Would you not have thought that two world wars would have sobered everyone? That they would have been forced to stop and to say, “We can’t go on like this. There must be something wrong somewhere. What is it?” But are they doing that? Do the radio and television programs suggest that they are? It is just over ten years since the last world war ended with a horrifying atomic bomb. And yet men and women today are thinking about everything else, about eating and drinking and having their supposedly good time and laughing at the jokes of the comedians. “How funny it all is! Things are going well. Let’s enjoy ourselves. The money’s coming in. People are warning us, but why listen to that? Why be a spoilsport? Let’s carry on as we are.” It is precisely the same mentality as in Genesis 6.

Now those were the conditions that led God to act. Having seen all this, he gave his warning. Listen to what he said: “My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years” (Genesis 6:3). What does that mean? Well, that is God’s warning to men and women in this condition. God is saying, “Look here, I am not going to restrain you much longer. I am not going to tolerate this much longer. I will give you another 120 years, and then, unless you have repented, I will act.”

The narrative puts it as an anthropomorphism, which means that God speaks to us in a way that we can understand. He says, “For it repenteth me” (v. 7). God does not repent. God does not

change his mind. Why, then, does he use this term? He wants us to understand. This is his way of pronouncing judgment. He expresses his opinion on men and women. He expresses abhorrence and detestation at their way of living.

So God warns sinners. God always warns. He warns us individually, and he warns the whole world. You have within you what is called the conscience, and every time you are confronted by temptation, it speaks, it warns. You have never sinned without being warned; never. You were told of the consequences, and yet you did it. God always warns before he strikes. The Bible is nothing but a great book of warning. It warns that this righteous God will judge us one by one and that he will “judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained” (Acts 17:31)—his own Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Beloved friend, have you heard the word of warning? Are you happy to go on living as you are and to ignore this message? Armistice Day reminds us of our mortality; it reminds us of death and of the brief span of our existence in this world. You are going out of this world someday. Where are you going? To what are you going? God, I say, warns you. He warns you in the record of the Flood. He warns you in the whole teaching of the Bible. You must stand before him, and he will judge you in righteousness.

God warned the people of that day. And in warning them, he called them to repentance. He told Noah to build the ark. It was a tremendous enterprise, and it took Noah about 120 years to build it. When he began, people said, “What are you doing, man?” And Noah replied in effect, “God is going to judge the world unless we all repent. He’s going to drown the world, and he told me to build an ark to save myself and my family.”

The people thought it was the funniest joke they had ever heard. How awful! And they came back to him in ten years’ time and said, “Do you still believe that, Noah? Ten years have gone by, and nothing’s happened.” On they went—twenty, thirty, forty, one hundred, one hundred and ten, one hundred and nineteen years. “It’s really very amusing, isn’t it?” they mocked.

THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS

Noah preached to them by building the ark, and he preached to them in words. He is described in 2 Peter 2:5 as “a preacher of righteousness.” I have already quoted Peter’s words in 1 Peter 3:18–20, where Peter says that Christ himself in the spirit was preaching through Noah to those people before the Flood. Noah warned them. He said that God had spoken to him, that God would destroy the world unless they repented. He told them to repent, to believe. He repented himself. He believed. He built the ark. He carried out God’s instructions in detail: “Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he” (Genesis 6:22).

Nevertheless, these people paid no attention. They went on eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, “and knew not” what they were doing, said Jesus (Matthew 24:39). They just went on as if nothing was happening. They could not see the signs. They did not believe Noah. They took no notice of the ark. As I have already reminded you, it alarms and terrifies my soul to observe that even the two horrible wars that we have endured [World War I and World War II] have not sobered people. They seem to have made no difference at all. The world is giving itself to pleasure more than ever. Never has this country been so self-satisfied. It is folding its arms. It is having a marvelous boom. We are in a time of great prosperity. We must have our pleasures, whether we can afford them or not. We will buy them on a credit system, though we cannot afford to do so. Eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage—all the warnings are ignored, the voice of God is spurned. But God is carrying out his judgment. They “knew not,” says the Son of God himself, “until the flood came, and took them all away.”

The fact that you and I may ignore the warnings of God will make no difference to God’s plan.

*Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small.*

Friedrich von Logau;
translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

“One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Peter 3:8). God seems to be asleep. Vast epochs pass, and he does nothing, and the world says that he cannot do anything. But the Flood came. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. The children of Israel were conquered by their enemies and were carried away captive; eventually their city was destroyed, and they were thrown out among the nations. God, I say, is warning us in all these events.

And I believe that God is warning us in this century by the state of the world, by the calamity of wars. He has allowed all this for us to see. He is reminding us of the final judgment that cannot be evaded, which no one will be able to avoid. The coming of Christ to judge the world in righteousness is as certain as the Flood, as certain as the birth of Christ as a babe in Bethlehem, as certain as the resurrection of Jesus. It is coming; it must come. God has pledged his word.

And there is only one way of escape. We see it is in Genesis 6:7–8.

And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Noah was not overwhelmed in the calamity but was delivered and was made safe. He “found grace.” Why?

The answer is given in the ninth verse where we read, “Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.” That is the secret. The one thing that marked this man out from all the rest was simply that he believed the word of God—nothing else. God came to him and spoke to him, and Noah believed him. That is why he is described as a preacher of righteousness. That is why the eleventh chapter of Hebrews says that he “became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” (v. 7). It was not even his character that saved him. It was that he walked with God. This means that he allowed God to lead him, that he went where God

THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS

went, that he listened to God and said yes to God. God spoke, and Noah said, "I believe." That is what saved him.

The apostle Peter tells us that as that ark saved Noah from the waters of the Flood, even so belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and being in him will save us from the wrath to come at the final day of judgment of the whole world (1 Peter 3:21). Christ is the ark. Christ is the Savior. Christ is the refuge. God has built his own ark for us, and we only have to enter in by faith. We shall be safe when the world is burning and melting and all that is opposed to God is destroyed everlastingly out of his sight.

It all comes to this: we must believe God. If you believe God now, the grace of God will deliver and save you. And what God says is just this—our sinfulness deserves the very selfsame punishment that he meted out to those people in the Flood and will mete out at the end of the world. He pronounces judgment upon sin in every shape and form, and we are all sinners before him. There is just one way of escape—to believe that, to acknowledge it, to stop defending yourself, to stop trying to argue against it with your science or your knowledge or anything else. It is to believe the simple word of God, as Noah did, the word about yourself, that you are a sinner, to confess it and acknowledge it, to repent before God. Then believe him further when he tells you that he has prepared the ark, that he sent his only begotten Son to bear your sins and their punishment. If you believe that and enter into him, your sins will be all blotted out, and you will be safe in life and safe in death and safe through all eternity.

"But Noah" (Genesis 6:8)—is that you? Do you belong to Noah and his family? Are you a child of faith? Do you believe God? If you do, the "but" applies to you, and the grace of God will redeem you and rescue you. Then when the world is dissolving in the last calamity, you will be safe in the arms of Jesus, and you will enter a glory that shall never end. May God open our eyes to the message of the Flood.