

AS IT WAS IN
THE DAYS OF
NOAH

JEFF KINLEY



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*To my four “listeners” who, like Noah,
acted on God’s promptings.
Your faith inspires me.*

Acknowledgments

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Contents

Introduction	7
1. The Days of Noah	11
2. The Last (Righteous) Man on Earth	25
3. Deluge	41
4. Carpenter Prophet	55
5. A Godless World	67
6. A History of Violence	81
7. 50 Shades of Immorality	93
8. Difficult Days	109
9. Coming with the Clouds	125
10. The Open Door	137
Notes	149

Introduction

Perhaps no ancient story in human history captivates our attention as much as Noah and the Great Flood. The tale of the Ark is as old as time itself, with some 270 versions of it having been passed down through the ages by cultures around the world. From Assyria-Babylonia to ancient Egypt, China, and even Hawaii, each flood account bears striking similarities to the biblical narrative. Particularly amazing is that the majority of them describe a wicked population, a lone righteous man, and a universal destruction by water and an ark.¹

Skeptics point to these “flood myths” as proof that the Bible has no exclusive right to this often-told prehistoric allegory. They claim Moses (or “whoever actually wrote Genesis”) probably borrowed the common myth, adapting it to fit his Jewish culture and concept of God. They allege that the story of a man building a giant cargo ship to protect his family from a wrathful deity who will destroy mankind is nothing more than a fossilized fable. A fairy tale. Of course, the alternative explanation is troublesome—that the biblical account is 100 percent accurate down to the most minute detail, and that the Creator embedded the story in virtually every ancient culture as a testimony to its veracity. But God went a step further, taking care to document the event in a book for us.

Jesus Christ believed in Noah. And the Flood. And the Ark. In fact, nowhere in Scripture is there even the slightest hint that the man Noah, his story, or the worldwide Flood event is a metaphor, mythological tale, morality parable, or fictional tale. On the contrary, the reality of the Flood event is firmly established.² But of course you would expect this from the Bible, right? Even more amazing, however, is that Jesus

links the historicity of Noah and his Ark to the certainty of coming prophetic events and His physical return to this planet.³

Further, Jesus prefaced His statements about Noah by claiming His words are so true they will outlast heaven and earth.⁴ Or to put it another way, “Everything I say will come true,” He asserted, “and you can bank on this truth.”

To dismiss or deny the reality of Noah and the Great Flood, you need only to refute the person of Jesus Christ and His claims to deity, something no mortal has successfully accomplished in the past 2000 years. The historical reliability of Scripture (and thus the Flood event) is inseparably linked to the character and identity of God Himself. And while it’s possible to have an accurate historical record without God’s help, you can’t have prophecy or the supernatural without Him. Undoubtedly, Noah’s is the quintessential story of prophecy, divine intervention, and judgment.

With chilling accuracy, the Bible recounts this epic event that took billions to a watery grave.⁵ What we find in Scripture is way beyond a Hollywood blockbuster. No computer-generated imagery, 3-D, or special effects here. And no fantasy flick slamming your senses with larger-than-life images and sounds depicting the horror of a global aquatic apocalypse.

Instead, it’s something much worse.

As It Was in the Days of Noah will transport you back to a world you will hardly recognize. The sights and sounds of pre-Flood earth may disturb you. This story will adjust your perspective on humanity and even challenge your perception of God Himself. But it’s also my hope you’ll use the Flood narrative as a lens through which to view today’s world, allowing you a glimpse through God’s viewfinder. For it’s through studying this past event that we can more clearly understand the present and more effectively prepare for the future.

As you read along, I encourage you to search the Scriptures for yourself. This Noah guy is way more than some ancient character in a book, and his R-rated story is definitely not for children. The following pages contain the uncut version, a chapter in humankind’s history so unsettling that you may secretly wonder if it really happened the

way the Bible describes. This book unveils the heart of man and the holiness of God. Therefore, we set sail in reverence. With that said, the seas may get a bit rough, so if you're ready, then climb aboard, grab a life jacket, and hold on.

You're about to discover how an old Sunday school story leaps forward in time, shedding light on today's generation and linking itself to yet another coming global judgment. But as you dive into Noah's story, you'll also find a reservoir of hope.

And a God who waits at an open door.

Jeff Kinley
Little Rock, Arkansas

The Days of Noah

I am sorry that I have made them.

GENESIS 6:7

A flood is coming. God is going to destroy this earth, including *you*, unless you repent.

This was the core of Noah's message. Simple. To the point. No beating around the bush. This preacher's sermon was plain, straightforward, and even uses an object lesson to illustrate the message's main point—the building of a very big boat. Noah's audiovisual sermon lasted 120 years.

And then the Flood came and destroyed them all.

Just like that.

But there's a bit more to this story. While describing the Flood drama, what is often lacking amid tales of the old man and the Ark, its animal kingdom occupants, and the terrible water judgment, is how *God* felt about the whole affair. We know in the end He brought judgment, but we fail to mention that the catastrophic event which annihilated mankind initially flowed not from a furious fist, but from a broken heart. God's Spirit was grieved. He actually experienced sorrow, an unusual concept to contemplate, particularly in the context of judgment. But there are facets of God's relationship with humanity that emotionally affect Him, bringing lament and regret to His Spirit.¹ That's because God isn't some stoic, emotionless, distant deity, but rather a Father who feels. He's not a crotchety old man with furrowed brow, yelling at the neighborhood kids for making too much noise. He's not sitting somewhere in the cosmos watching us and looking for some way to punish us for every wrong we commit.

To the contrary, His is a heart more tender than mortal words can describe. More affectionate than human thoughts can imagine. Remarkably, He is simultaneously compassionate and holy, gracious and righteous, merciful and just, forgiving and wrathful. And no contradiction or inconsistency exists between these attributes. His infinite qualities harmoniously complement one another in a manner and on a level far above our human understanding. This is the mystery of deity. He is God—transcendent, yet personal. Invisible, yet intimate. Everlasting, yet ever present with us. The God who floods also forgives. Regularly upstaged by animals and an Ark, the main character in this ancient drama turns out to be Yahweh Himself. He is the principal player and director, as the story begins and ends with Him. His presence is the backdrop to every scene.

In the Flood narrative, the action pauses as if in slow motion or freeze-frame. The story seems to stand still, and in these parenthetical moments we catch a glimpse of who God really is. We get to peer into His heart, seeing His character with refreshing, high-definition clarity. As with many epic episodes portrayed in Scripture, God provides us with a multi-angled perspective focused on a single incident. Through these verbal vantage points recorded for us, we see what He sees. In the story of Noah, we are granted access to those camera angles. Through this field of vision, we encounter among other things, a grieving God, heart torn in two over His creation's descent into decadence and moral madness.² We see how sin brings sorrow to Him, and in this case, how that sorrow set into motion a prophecy of judgment. In an ironic twist, we discover the only way God could save humanity was to destroy it and begin again.

This is how it happened.

After successfully leading a few million of his fellow Jews out of Egyptian slavery, Moses (a former shepherd turned deliverer) snaps a 400-year losing streak for God's people. The next 40 or so years Moses spends wandering around with them in an uninhabited no-man's land, better known as the Sinai Desert.

Sitting in his tent, Israel's deliverer takes a reed pen and papyrus sheet and begins to write the story of God and man—the *official*

account. He describes the wonder of creation, the heavens, the earth, the stars, even the concept of light itself. He chronicles the creation of the seas, vegetation, creatures of the water, land and skies, concluding with His most creative work—making a human being in His own image and breathing the breath of life into his nostrils. This would be His greatest accomplishment. His magnum opus. His masterpiece.³

But it wasn't long before history's first humans, endowed with choice by their Creator, used their freedom to pursue self-gratification over God. This is the point in the story where the ink in Moses' pen takes on a decidedly darker tone. The celebrative chorus of creation now transitions to a regretful refrain as it traces mankind's downward spiral into sin and ruin. The Maker of Life would have preferred a different story line, one where Adam and Eve choose obedience over believing a lie. But it was not to be. And as ongoing evidence of this, all Moses has to do is lift his tent flap and observe millions who had made the same choice in the desert—abandoning faith in a good God to follow their own desires and designs.

And so, perhaps with heavy heart, Moses describes in detail the condition of planet earth more than 4000 years ago. Thanks to him, Genesis 6 is our backstage pass to the past—a private, behind-the-scenes tour of an age some deny existed while others try hard to forget. It's a chapter in human history even some Christians find hard to believe. But it's there, like a permanent stain on our record. Humanity's "rap sheet," chronicling our past crimes, offenses, and failures. An embarrassing episode in our family story. It's the relative that we prefer not to talk about. The ex-con uncle. The no-class cousin. The kinsman you don't "claim." The black sheep of the family. But there's no escaping it. And as our human family continued expanding, each successive generation grew worse and worse. Before long, we reached the point of no return.

Sex, Demons, and Depravity

Back in the Garden of Eden, God commanded Adam and Eve to "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth."⁴ This was one mandate they and their offspring would have no problem obeying. Sex was good,

and procreation plentiful. In our world of perversion and pornography, we may forget that it was *God* who thought up the idea of sex. We're pressured to think the sexual experience is some primal urge birthed through evolutionary development or a timed chemical release from the brain. Hormones and nothing more. Or worse, that it's some evil, satanic idea. But that's not true. Sex is a beautiful gift straight from the heart of God. He created it. It's *His* invention. He gets the credit. He also designed our bodies, minds, and emotions to actually *enjoy* the experience, even becoming exhilarated by it. He made sexuality desirable, a natural and very good thing.⁵

After previously acknowledging this, Moses then summarizes approximately 1500 years of life on earth, writing that "men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them."⁶ Considering the average male life span then was several hundred years, Adam and Eve's descendants had plenty of time to procreate. Apparently they were pretty good at it too, causing an explosive increase in earth's population as mankind grew at an exponential rate.

Since the aging process was much more gradual and people were living longer, there were a lot of babies being born. But is it also possible that, before the long-term effects of sin completely ravaged the human mind and body, sex was even more pleasurable than it is today? Did Adam and Eve's fall into sin rob us from a greater experience in physical intimacy? Whatever the case, a result of all this sexual activity was natural and prolific procreation with no thought to limiting the size of the family. So by the time Noah arrived on the scene, earth's pre-Flood population could have easily been between 7-10 billion people.⁷ But it wasn't this population explosion that displeased God. After all, He had commanded His creation to get busy with the task.⁸ Instead, something else was grieving the Creator's heart. Genesis 6:5 states, "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Wait, did you read that correctly? Did Moses really mean to write that? Did he actually say that *every* thought of *every* person was *only evil*? *Continually*? As in all the time? Is that even possible? Apparently so, and here's why:

We typically compare ourselves to others when it comes to morality. Stand yourself up next to Hitler, a terrorist, or some sex offender, and all of a sudden you're a saint by comparison. But when matched up beside God's pristine holiness and standards, you and I come up very short.⁹ In fact, throughout the Bible, God repeatedly declares the human heart is full of sin, even going so far as to say that it is "deceitful above all things," and "desperately wicked."¹⁰ Wow, God—tell us what You really think! So it stands to reason that if the well (heart) is poisoned, what comes up in the bucket (our actions) will be also.

Theologians call this truth "total depravity." But this doesn't necessarily mean every person on the planet today acts as sinful or as evil as he or she *could* at all times. It's not like we all max out and reach our ultimate "sin potential" every day. Rather, it means the deadly sin virus extends to every corner and component of our being—body, mind, and soul. In other words, like the law of gravity, the law of sin holds us down, dictating and influencing certain things about us. It drags down our thoughts, emotions, and desires. This self-centered narcissism informs and impacts our decisions, relationships, families, communities, and ultimately our nation and world. Put several billion people on this sin-drug, and the side effects are devastating. Genesis 6:5 effectively asserts that we were a planet of hopeless addicts. Total depravity on parade. Long before God's judgment came upon these people, they were already busy filling the earth with their sin and evil. They actually *were* as bad as they could be—all the time.

What's more, Genesis 6 pinpoints a specific area of life that was influenced by this sin stimulant. Perhaps no other area of desire (outside of breathing and living) is so powerful and intoxicating as sex. And as we've seen, it is a good thing from God. However, sexual appetite is also a natural narcotic, and when laced with evil, it becomes a potent and deadly drug. In a pre-Flood world already gone mad overdosing on sinful cravings, it's easy to envision a global, sexual free-for-all. If the Bible is correct in stating that earth's entire population was thinking only about evil 24/7, certainly those evil thoughts would have included sexual promiscuity, adultery, and perversion, as well as rape, prostitution, homosexuality and lesbianism, and pedophilia. Does that

sound extreme or far-fetched? Considering that most of these aberrations and perversions have been prevalent among us *since* Noah's day, it's not a stretch to imagine how prominent they would have been in a world without *any* moral compass or restraint. Perhaps even worse than our wildest imagination. There were no gentlemen in those days, only "Gentlemen's Clubs." No honorable men, only selfish beasts. The pre-Flood world sported a level of sexual debauchery that would make even a present-day pervert blush. Moses waits 12 more chapters in Genesis before specifically describing how God felt about a society that practiced blatantly open homosexuality.¹¹

The plot of a recent movie portrayed a futuristic society where, for 12 hours once a year, any and all behavior, including crime, is allowed.¹² Think of what our present world would be like if there were zero restrictions whatsoever on sexuality. If you want it, you go for it. If you desire it, do it. No one can tell you no. What would life be like in such a world? What would sex and sexuality look like if mankind's worst and most vile imaginations were permitted, even *encouraged*?¹³ Now imagine no moral conscience issues, no marital boundaries, and no age restrictions. You get the picture. Noah's earth was one giant orgy. Every night a bachelor party. Every morning a hangover. Billions of people, young and old, threw off the tattered rags of Eden's ideals, indulging themselves in every kind of sexual experience, experiment, and perversion.

Yes, they really were *that* bad.

If you believe Scripture, you eventually arrive at a mental scene stretching the boundaries of human civility and decency. "*Every* thought. *Only* evil. *Continually*."

But there's evidence of a second tier to this moral anarchy. It's an underbelly of sexual perversion inconceivable even to a sinful human mind. Moses records, "The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose."¹⁴

There is conversation among theologians and Bible scholars as to exactly who these "sons of God" were. Some suggest the phrase refers to Seth's descendants, described as God-seeking men.¹⁵ Seth was Adam's

son, a direct ancestor of Noah, and also included in the genealogy of Jesus.¹⁶ So some read Genesis 6:2 and simply see a lot of marriage going on among Seth's godly clan. But there's another interpretation as well. Immediately after this statement, God says,

My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years. The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.¹⁷

It doesn't make sense for God to withdraw His Spirit from mankind simply because godly men married beautiful women.¹⁸ What, then, would motivate Him to remove His Spirit and start a 120-year countdown to judgment? The implication, aside from the rampant, global evil mentioned later in verse 5, is that this particular marital union somehow contributed to earth's unbridled moral decline, leading to God's eventual retribution.

So who are these "sons of God"? This title (Hebrew, *bene Elohim*) is used elsewhere to describe supernatural beings, or *angels*, leading many to conclude these "sons of God" were angelic beings, or more specifically, demonic entities.¹⁹ Therefore, Moses was saying that demons were having sex with mortal women. Now that's a bizarre, foreign thought any way you look at it. However, the New Testament appears to support this view, indicating the punishment for this unnatural act was to cast these demons into "pits of darkness, reserved for judgment [in hell]." ²⁰ Jude 6 also mentions demonic angels "who did not keep their own domain [spiritual world], but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day." A portion of the angels had been expelled from heaven because they had allied themselves with Lucifer in his rebellion.²¹ Because of this, the demonic host are now beyond redemption.²² And evil itself originates in their spirits.

Given their corrupt nature, there is no higher demonic delight than to pervert God's design for His beloved humanity. Through their

deviant sexual unions, these demons attempted to mimic what God Himself had done—to create a being in their own image.²³ They would try and duplicate what His creation (humans and animals) could do—reproduce after their own kind. This was a second attempt to make themselves “like the Most High.”²⁴

Had Satan, the master sin-strategist, succeeded in corrupting the entire human race through demonic infusion, he could have theoretically prevented the coming of the Messiah through the “seed” of the human woman (Genesis 3:15).²⁵ That would have been an ingenious and shrewd plan indeed had it come to reality.

But of course we know demons are spirit beings and do not have physical bodies. Further, Jesus said that angels do not “marry.”²⁶ However, according to Scripture, they are still capable of inhabiting, possessing, and taking the form of human bodies.²⁷ In fact, angels did assume human form and were able to walk, eat, and even have physical contact with mortal men.²⁸ And from the perspective of Sodom’s male citizens, these angel-inhabited bodies were fully capable of sexual activity.²⁹ So it is very possible that these vile, God-hating, demonic creatures either assumed human form *or* fully possessed existing males in order to have (perhaps forced) sexual relations with women. Either way, it further illustrates the depth of human corruption and wickedness in Noah’s day. Can you see the devolution of man?

Sex in marriage.

Sex outside of marriage.

Unrestrained sex.

Perverted sex.

Abusive sex.

Depraved sex.

Demonic sex.

It doesn’t get any more wicked than that.

What must the spiritual environment in Noah’s day have been like if demons were having sex with women? Or what level of depravity existed if men were dominated by demonic spirits in this way? And, assuming it wasn’t forced upon them, what kind of women would welcome or desire such unions?

Moses follows this up by mentioning that the Nephilim lived on the earth. This word is used only one other place in the Bible, referring to a race of giants who lived in the Promised Land.³⁰ The mere reported sighting of these Nephilim created such fear throughout Israel's camp that it discouraged them from entering their promised home. Instead, they consigned themselves to wandering like desert nomads for 40 years.

Were the Nephilim (root word meaning "to fall") of Genesis 6 an antediluvian race of giants resulting from a union between demons (or demon-inhabited men) and mortal women? Or were they unrelated to the demonic union, simply "mighty men," cruel tyrants who overpowered and dominated others? Whatever the case, it all still points to the existence of rampant, pandemic immorality filling the earth. There was virtually no place where sin had not penetrated and perverted mankind.

Are you starting to see it?

Planet Terror

But Moses isn't done just yet, as he records for us yet another degrading and damnable characteristic of humanity during the days of Noah: "Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. . . *all* flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth."³¹

Billions of people, having long since jettisoned the Creator from their consciences, became violent in their dealings with one another. There is no discernible rule of law or order of government. And into this void of leadership and societal structure pours an angry spirit of chaotic violence. All over the world, man solves his problems and disputes by forceful aggression. Hostility. Fighting. Brutality and cruelty. Bloodshed rules. Savagery is the standard. God says the world was "filled" with this kind of violence, meaning it extended to every part of it. Every community. Every tribe. Anywhere there were people, there was violence and human terrorism. No home was safe, perhaps even from its own family members. It is not difficult to imagine widespread domestic violence in such a savage society. Given the fact that it would take thousands of years for the status of women to be elevated, imagine

how men must have treated the opposite sex in this universal culture of chauvinism and sin. Verbal, emotional, and physical abuse. Violent domination of women. Violent beatings. Violent rape. Violent murder.

But the rising tide of sin didn't stop at the gender border. Women were not innocent parties in Noah's day, but were equally enslaved to evil in all its various female varieties.³² They were just as complicit in wickedness, wantonness, and disregard for decency. There was no shortage of she-devils walking about God's relatively new world. Proverbs 29:16 states, "When the wicked increase, sin increases; but the righteous will see their downfall."³³ Simply put, the more sinners there are, the more sin there is. That was the case in Noah's day. People hurt each other. A lot. They fought. They wounded. They murdered. And it was violent. Every homicide was considered justifiable simply because of the mere *desire* to commit the act. "What's yours is mine, and I will kill you to get it," was their murderous mantra. People killed in revenge, for pure pleasure, curiosity, or even sport. Random killings. Senseless slayings. Spur-of-the-moment murders. Savage slaughters. Massacres of entire families or perhaps even whole people groups.

Sounds hard to believe, doesn't it? Like some primitive sci-fi apocalypse. How could we have been this *bad*? How could human beings lose all traces of dignity and decency and act like this? Wouldn't a common-sense survival instinct kick in at some point and bring relative order to such a world? Apparently it didn't. But why? The answer is found, in part, by understanding something about sin itself.

From Seed to Forest

It didn't take long in mankind's story for his jealousy and aggression to get the best of him, as the very first human born into this world became a cold-blooded murderer. Adam and Eve's firstborn, Cain, rose up against his baby brother and took his life from him. But how? And why? Did he strangle him in the field? Stab him with a sharpened stick? Crush his skull with a fist-sized rock?

Scripture doesn't reveal exactly *how* Cain committed earth's inaugural act of violence and murder, but we do have a clue as to his *motive*. The Bible tells us the two brothers each brought an offering to God—a

sacrificial, ritual act of worship no doubt passed on to them by their parents. After Adam and Eve's sin excursion in the Garden, God provided animal skins for earth's first couple, covering the symbol of their sin and shame—their nakedness.³⁴ An animal (perhaps a lamb) was slain by God to make this possible. The point? A blood sacrifice is necessary to take away sin, an innocent life dying to symbolically cover sin and restore fellowship with God. And this ritual became God's prescribed pattern until the ultimate sacrifice was made on the cross.³⁵

Abel was a “keeper of flocks,” while Cain was a “tiller of the ground.”³⁶ Two necessary occupations in a primitive agrarian world. So when the time came for offerings to be made to the Lord, each son brought what he had—Abel, a choice lamb, and Cain, a portion of his crop. But God accepted Abel's offering while rejecting Cain's. Scripture says Abel's lamb was “better” than Cain's crop, and that it was offered in *faith*.³⁷

The nature of their offerings (animal vs. grain) wasn't as significant as the fact that one was offered in faith and the other more out of duty or self-effort. Abel's lamb was the “firstling,” or best of the bunch, while Cain's grain was simply some of his crop.³⁸

But it was Cain's *response* to God's rejection of his offering that planted the seeds of murder. He became “very angry,” and his “countenance fell.”³⁹ In other words, he was jealous, furious, and dejected. And right here is where God's grace reaches out to Cain. God knows where this is headed, so He gives Cain an “out.” And some hope. The Lord tells him he has no real reason to be angry, but to simply change his heart (toward God) and his attitude (toward his offering). If Cain would, by faith, give God his best sacrifice, instead of keeping it for himself, he would experience happiness and not dejection.

“But,” God obligingly warned him, “if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door, and its desire is for you, but you must master it.”⁴⁰

Compacted within this one statement is a potent dose of practical theology. God tells Cain (and us) that sin is a “living” principle, a powerful force for evil, and that it lies in wait for him like a ferocious lion in tall grass. The Lord adds, “[Sin's] *desire* is for you.” This Hebrew word

teshuqah (tesh-oo-kaw) signifies a very strong desire to dominate.⁴¹ In the context of this conversation, God spells it out for Cain.

“You can’t let sin rule you, Cain. On the contrary, *you* must master *it*.”

History’s first son is now at a critical fork in the road with a very important choice to make. He can let his anger and disappointment fester and spread within him, or he can take charge of his emotions and master the sin that is waiting to devour him.⁴² Yet sadly, even God Himself couldn’t talk Cain out of his sin, so deep had his self-addiction become. Meeting his younger brother in the field (maybe even crouching in secret like sin had done to him), he satisfied his anger by brutally murdering his brother.

And violence was born.

Behind the scenes, the covert co-conspirator in this first-ever murder was Satan himself. The apostle John later wrote that Cain was “*of the evil one*.”⁴³ Satan, Jesus said, “was a murderer *from the beginning*.”⁴⁴ He is the silent partner in violence, the invisible instigator to brutality and bloodshed.

And so anger, jealousy, and murder were birthed at the very dawn of civilization, soon becoming prevalent throughout the whole earth and eventually prevailing over all humankind. It may sometimes appear that envy, jealousy, or anger are relatively harmless emotions. Normal. Expected. Tolerated. Even enjoyed. But when allowed to take root in our hearts, the results are usually disastrous. Jesus later compared anger to murder itself.⁴⁵ Sparking in humanity from its beginning, this violent spirit soon spread like a West Texas brush fire, ultimately engulfing the entire planet.

The violence of Noah’s day illustrates the frightening *power* of sin itself. Imagine going to your doctor, and following a routine X-ray, you’re told there’s a baseball-sized mass growing in your abdomen. That would probably get your attention, right? That’s because you have proof in a physical X-ray, something you can see with your own eyes. You also have a trained medical professional informing you about your condition. You’d be a fool for simply ignoring his words, dismissing

the X-ray as a forgery or fabrication created by some doctor to scare you. In reality, you'd most likely take *him* at his word, and take your *condition* very seriously. The problem with sin, though, is that we don't think it's *that* bad. The things God calls sin we often ignore, wink at, or even keep as playful pets.

Today we lack a healthy respect for the danger, power, and influence of sin—both that found in the world and that which resides within our own sin nature. Like a deceived drug addict, we think we can keep it “under control.” After all, we're not murderers or perpetrators of violent crime, right? So all things considered (and *especially* in comparison to Noah's world), as a human race we're doing pretty well. Or so it would seem. But what we fail to realize is that God has placed some restraints in the world that are currently holding back sin's floodwaters. These moral levees weren't present in Noah's day. More about that later.

In a pre-Flood humanity, sin became a lethal virus, a plague spreading from parent to child and person to person. It was “heirborn” in their DNA. And it was manifest through sexual perversion, wickedness, hatred, aggression, and violent behavior. And Noah's contemporaries were eaten up with it. It consumed them—man and woman, boy and girl. No one was immune. It respected no geographical boundaries. It was equally in women as it was in men. It flowed like a river through every town and village like their only source of water. They drank it during the day and binge-drank it in the evenings.

Theirs was not a pleasant world in which to live. Evil was king. People hated one another, and the whole planet hated its Creator. It was Mardi Gras on steroids. Every day was a riotous, rebellious rejection of the One who made them. Insanity and lawlessness reigned. Human rights didn't exist—only human *wrongs*. In the absence of righteousness, sensuality, violence, and demonic activity filled the void. The image-bearers Yahweh made had transformed themselves into a global mass of moral chaos and wickedness. God's magnificent creation of man had become a story gone horribly wrong.

This, then, is the strength, scope, and potential reality of life without God.