

# Light On My Path



*Messages by Pastor Paul Aasman on the  
book of Genesis at the Streetlight Mission Church  
in the 11:00 a.m. services of June 2007*

## Table of Contents

June 3, 2007

*Pastor Paul Aasman*

Text	Title	Speaker	Page #
Genesis 7:16	<b><i>Then the Lord Shut Him In</i></b>	P. Aasman	4
Genesis 9:12-17	<b><i>The Rainbow</i></b>	P. Aasman	8
Genesis 11:6	<b><i>The Tower of Babel</i></b>	P. Aasman	14
Genesis 12: 2-3	<b><i>Abraham's Time and Calling</i></b>	P. Aasman	19

**Genesis 7:16** “The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD shut him in.”

### ***Then the Lord Shut Him In***

Reading: Genesis 7:11-24

Message: Genesis 7:16

In the book of Revelation, we read, “He holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.”(3:7) The Apostle John wrote this about Jesus Christ. In Genesis 7, God opens and God closes, and nobody can undo what God has done. When God says, “You shall not pass!” shall nobody pass.

Let us think about that first statement: What God opens, no one shall close. We read in verse 11 that on a particular day in the life of Noah, all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of heavens were opened. This was not just a violent storm, the kind that we experience from time to time. This was different. Every heart was gripped by fear when this storm began. It was like no other. It did not fit the pattern of anything that had ever happened before.

First, the springs of the great deep burst forth. The earth itself groaned and shuttered. It began with fearful earthquakes.

There is a theory that at the time of the flood, Pangaea was torn apart to form the five great continents that we have today, and that the waters that now fill the oceans was at that time in the atmosphere and stored in massive polar ice fields. It is a theory that may well be true. It certainly would help to see what happened in our chapter.

The earthquakes themselves would have done incredible damage everywhere - many of the forests would have been flattened, probably few houses would have remained standing. Many people were already dead, killed in the rubble of collapsed buildings. But none thought to tend to the wounded. New terrors sprung all around for the springs of the great deep were bursting forth. It seems that global conditions were different - a great reservoir of water deep under the earth's crust, much greater than any we have experienced, had come under enormous pressure. Perhaps ice caps hundreds of miles thick were squeezing the rest of the globe with their weight until the earth's crust could contain the pressure no longer. Suddenly, with explosive force like that of nuclear bombs, the springs of the great deep burst forth. Water shot up from the ground.

And then the heavens were no longer the beautiful expanse of blue. Instead it became menacing, dark, rolling with thick clouds that blocked the sun's light. It were as though dams holding back a gigantic lake in the sky, broke open, for we read the

floodgates of heaven were opened. It rained with unnatural force. This was not rain to renew the face of the ground. It was rain that beat down the ground with pounding force - yes the water would overcome the soil.

Even before the flood began to rise, there are many dead; ruin and destruction is everywhere. There is terrifying forces pounding from above and pulsing from below. God's wrath burst forth against those who thought they could ignore his warnings and defy his glory. What God opens, shall none shut. He had opened the floodgates of heaven and the springs of the deep. He had begun to show his wrath. It will stop only when his justice has been satisfied, when sinners have been punished with the judgement they deserve.

For 120 years, Noah has been like John the Baptist, preaching a message of repentance. Noah was very serious about his message. He spent the whole time building this enormous ship, an ark. God is angry with the world. Believe it. Repent from it. Turn and seek the Lord while he may be found. But understand that God will not be mocked. His patience will end. He is long suffering but will not suffer our sins forever.

If my enemy strikes me in the cheek, I must turn the other. I will try to do that. If he spits me in the eye, I will wipe the spittle away but not spit back. But if he speaks ill of my father, that is a different matter. I will defend him. If he speaks ill of my God, I

will cry out to God for vengeance. None may mock God. They may humiliate you and me, but not our God!

For if God can be insulted, ignored and despised, and nobody pays, human life is meaningless. If God's honour is taken away, then there can be no honour, and our highest good is thrown down, and our most glorious hopes are dashed.

God's glory shall stand. God will not be mocked. Those who dare speak ill of him, those who look with contempt on the message we bring, shall pay for their sin.

In Genesis 7, God's glory is defended, Hallelujah! None shall shut the gates of judgment when God throws them open. His judgement shall be unleashed. Do not think that too much time has passed. It will come.

But, and this is the second part of our message, what God shuts, none shall open. This is good news. Think back to the days before the flood began: Everything was calm, though something was afoot. The animal world was moving to a strange tune. Every species of animal, a couple at a time, passed near the town where Noah lived: Elephants, giraffes, buffalo, tigers, hippos, and rhinos. What's going on? But mothers stilled their little ones as they tuck them in bed: *Shush, it's okay. The moon has risen. Father is in the kitchen. Bread is in the cupboard. Everything is fine. Sleep my little one.* Words of motherly tenderness, but words of defiance against God nonetheless.

So everyone sleeps peacefully in their sinful rebellion against God. But the next day, no more animals were moving. What a relief that was to everyone! Noah and his family quietly walk up the ramp into the ark for the last time and without anyone present, the Lord himself shuts the door. Nobody thought anything of it. Little did they realize that when God shuts, nobody can open.

June 10, 2007  
*Pastor Paul Aasman*

**Genesis 9:12-17** “And God said, ‘This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.’ So God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.’”

***The Rainbow***

Reading: Genesis 8:15-9:17  
Text: Genesis 9:12-17

My mother was diagnosed with colon cancer 10 years ago. Surgeons bravely tried to remove the cancer with knives, and then medicine doctors tried to destroy it with harsh drugs via chemotherapy - a drug that is like acid that burns and kills many

things in the body. Three years later, the Lord took her home.

Many of you have gone through (or are going through) the same thing. Now I ask you, when a surgeon cuts away parts of the body, or when doctors administer toxic drugs that burn the flesh, are they trying to torture us? Or are they trying to heal us?

The flood was terribly destructive. It brought much death. Was it the angry act of a hate-filled God? Was he just trying to inflict pain and suffering? Or was it an act of healing?

The Apostle Peter says that God saved Noah through the flood, and that is what the flood was. It was the way for God to save the world from a people bent on destroying his creation. Don't be afraid of global warming or nuclear holocaust. It won't happen. Be afraid, rather, to be found to be against God.

In Genesis 9, the deed has been done. Like a surgeon cuts away cancerous tissue, God had cut away sinful, unbelieving humanity. Only the believers were left, and a remnant of the animals. They were saved in the ark. Thus did God save the earth. God saved the earth because he loved the human race, as indeed he loved all his creatures, but humanity above all because they were created to be his image, created with special care and love, with special hope. When Adam and Eve had sinned in paradise, then God immediately promised that he would send a redeemer to crush the serpent and to save us from our sins. God was committed to

that plan. He could not allow the human race to ruin the earth. If he did, there would be nothing left to save when the Saviour came!

So he sent the flood. It had come. Floodwaters rose higher and higher. It covered the streets, it covered the fields, it covered the houses, the trees, hills and even the mountains. It rose 20 feet over the highest mountain and every living thing that drew breath into its lungs, died. But as the waters rose, and the storms tossed the now vast sea, God never took his eye from the Ark Noah had built. God watched over it as a mother watches her only child, for the ark is the womb of life for all the earth. From it will come forth all living things that now populate the earth.

By stages, the floodwaters receded. It took a whole year for the flood to subside. Then we read in Genesis 8:13-17 *“By the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry. By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry. Then God said to Noah, ‘Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you—the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground—so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number upon it.’”* The first thing Noah wanted to do was to offer sacrifice to God. It was like saying, *O God, life is from you and life must be lived for you.*

*May this new humanity, born out of the ark, turn their hearts to you and love, worship and obey you. Give us your blessing God, that we may live in your love.*

But cancer is a difficult thing to get rid of. It seems to just keep coming back. Sin is also very difficult to get rid of. The flood had destroyed sinners, but sin survived. God himself says in 8:21 *“every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood.”* In other words, Noah, his sons and their wives were sinful too. Not just a little but very sinful.

Whoa! Now what? How long will it take before God unleashes his fury again to save the world from the sin of mankind with the next flood? Every time that rain clouds form on the horizon, instead of being glad that soon the earth will be refreshed with pleasant rains, they will be afraid that God’s wrath would be unleashed again. In fact, on this very day, when they left the ark and the sacrifice was being offered, clouds began to gather on the horizon - they were rain clouds. Was this God’s response to their sacrifice? Would life with God be a life of constant fear and uncertainty?

No. God says to Noah that never again will he destroy all living creatures as he had: *“As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.”* (8:22) In Genesis 9:9-11 God said the same thing even more emphatically: *“I now establish my covenant with you*

*and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”* God will not destroy the earth even though we sin against him and don’t deserve his love. He will keep providing for mankind. Season will follow season. The sun will rise and warm the earth. Oceans will stay within their shores. God will not curse the earth again.

And as God spoke these words, the clouds dropped their rain, but there was something spectacular in this rain. The sky glowed with a heavenly light, beautiful display of colours, arching across the sky. A rainbow. And God said, whenever you see the rainbow, remember that I have promised not to curse the earth again. That is God’s covenant with us. The earth will not be cursed, even though it deserves to be cursed because of our sins. It will not be cursed because the curse would be brought down upon Jesus Christ. The punishment we deserved was put on him and he suffered the judgment of God. Jesus Christ endured all the wrath and destruction of the flood as he hung on the cross under the curse of God.

Praise God for his mercy in Jesus Christ. We may breathe the air, enjoy the sunshine, wonder at the star-studded night sky,

and do our work from day to day because of God's covenant, the covenant that is brought to us through the grace and love of Jesus Christ. We have received our lives from God. Let us use our lives to worship, obey and love him.

After the doors of destruction are opened and people realize that these are doors that will never shut, some tried to save themselves: climbing high trees, fleeing to nearby hills, some could even flee to a mountain, and still others got on rafts and larger boats. But some did not waste time doing such things; they ran instead to the Ark and banged on the sides, crying and screaming to be let in. For the ark was the only hope for salvation. Outside the ark was death, the judgment of God. Inside was life and hope for the future, especially the friendship of God.

But the Lord had shut Noah in. What God shuts, none shall open. And God had shut the door because he is a God of mercy and love. He does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked but that they should turn from their evil ways and live. But he will not allow life to become meaningless. Those who slander and blaspheme God must repent.

An ancient interpretation of the ark is that it is a picture for the church of Jesus Christ. Those who belong to the Church during this life, God will keep safe through the judgment and bring them to his glorious future. God will keep us safe. Though he

opens the gates of judgment, he will shut his own people in the safety of his love.

To Jesus Christ is given the key to open and to close. He does not just love you and me he also loves his Father. To those who refuse to repent of their sins against his Father, he will open the gates of wrath and none shall shut. But those who seek refuge in him now, he will receive into his church to be cared for, built up in and nurtured; and when the day of judgment comes, he will first shut them into the safety of his love.

Believe in him now and he will shut you in and you will be safe.

June 17, 2007  
*Pastor Paul Aasman*

**Genesis 11:6** "The LORD said, 'If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them.'"

### *The Tower of Babel*

Reading: Genesis 11:1-9

Text: Genesis 11:6

Have you heard of the game called "King of the Mountain"? If you're pretty strong, it's not difficult to stay on top. Some people say that God acted like that in verse 6. He wanted to stay on top, so he pushed man back. God was in power not because he was stronger, but he had the better position. Now these

same people say that we are on top of the hill. We have pushed God down in the past 200 years through our science and technology. We don't need God anymore. We've become strong; we've taken control of our destiny.

If you take verse 6 all by itself, you could interpret it that way, if you hated God. It proves the saying: "A text out of context is a pretext for your own prejudice." You can make anything you want out of verse 6, but we need to see the context around the verse in order to interpret it correctly, and to learn what God has to say to the church today.

So what is the context? Well, the flood had just happened. Noah and his family were the only humans left. They feared God and wanted to worship him. We read that when Noah came out of the Ark, then he immediately offered a burnt offering on an altar to God. We read, "*The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: 'Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done.'*"(Gen 8:21)

It was Noah's descendants who built this tower. They were not completely good people. Even about Noah, God said that every inclination of his heart was evil. All his children and grandchildren were the same. The people who built the tower of Babel were not good people.

Now let us look at the text itself. We read that they had one language and a common speech – that is, they spoke the same language, and talked the same way. They wanted to stay together because unity was their strength and hope. They moved eastward and settled in the plains of Shinar, that is the land of Babylon (today, it is called Iraq). They developed new technology. People already knew that if they mixed clay with straw, shaped them into square blocks and lay them in the sun to dry, they would get pretty hard. This was the way that many built their homes. But now they discovered that if they baked the bricks in ovens, they became extremely hard - almost indestructible. That was amazing technology. They did not need stones. They could make their own! They could shape them any way they wanted. The architectural possibilities became endless!

They were excited about that, so they wanted to use their indestructible bricks to make an indestructible a city and tower. "Let us build for ourselves a city with a tower that reaches to the heavens". Ah, that desire still stirs in the human breast. We want churches with spires that reach to the sky, domes that are higher than ever imagined before. Also our downtown office towers are an expression of religious and spiritual aspiration!

But why? They wanted to build a tower for two reasons: To make a name for themselves and to prevent that they should be scattered. To make a name for themselves. Where have we heard

that before? Is that not what people were saying before the flood? Genesis 6:4 says *“The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.”* Each person was anxious to establish the reputation of his own name. And they became great not by doing good things, but by doing evil things. They crushed the helpless to become rich. They terrorized the weak to gain power and influence. The violence which they committed against their fellow man became so great that God could bear it no longer. He wiped out that whole world with the flood.

Now we come to chapter 11. The flood had come and gone. The world was growing again from the children of Noah. Had the world learned their lesson? Well, they do not seek their own name at the cost of their neighbour. They want to establish the greatness of their own name together as a community, the city-state. But it was just as wicked because people wanted their own glory apart from God.

But what is worse, they were being deliberately disobedient. God had given to Adam the mandate to increase in number, and to fill the earth, having dominion over all the earth. God did not create the world to be uninhabited! He created the world good. He wanted us to discover its riches, mine its wealth,

climb its mountains, explore its lands, tame its animals, farm its soil and find an amazing variety in what God had made.

But they turned their backs on God’s command to fill the earth. They did not trust the exciting life God called them to. They trusted their own wisdom. Their wisdom was: Unity. They looked for strength in themselves and in the work they did, even though it was in revolt against God. If these were good people, they would be doing better things. But they were corrupt people, doing worse things. If their unity of language leads them to find strength that is so independent of God, no amount of evil and open revolt against God will be impossible.

So God came down and confused their language. Suddenly, they could not understand each other. God divided them so that they might spread out on the earth, discover his creation and the Creator’s glory, and live in a trusting relationship with him. He wants us to be strong, not in ourselves but by reaching out a hand to him and by walking with him. He wants all people everywhere to celebrate him, and more, to know his grace and love.

When we discover his grace and learn to walk in his fellowship, we will not be afraid of the world. We will fill the earth; we will seek his glory in everything. We will say, like the angels in heaven, *“The whole earth is full of his glory.”*

But that will only happen when people discover God through Jesus Christ. “No one comes to the Father but by me”, Jesus said. We can only walk with God when we learn about his love through Christ. But through Christ, we not only find God, but in God, we find one another. Jesus brings about the unity of mankind that we falsely sought in Genesis 11. Jesus Christ heals the division of the nations. For in the end, gathered before his throne will be people of every nation, tribe, tongue and people. God is especially proud of this work - he will heal the nations. When we are united in Christ, there will be no end to the amount of good that we can do. Let us go forward in God’s grace and in his fellowship, for his glory.

June 24, 2007  
*Pastor Paul Aasman*

**Genesis 12: 2-3** “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

### ***Abraham’s Time and Calling***

Reading: Genesis 11:27 - 12:3  
Message: Genesis 12: 2-3

What happens when you say to someone you meet, “We should get together some time,” but don’t set a date when to meet?

Or perhaps you say to someone with whom you do casual business, “I’ll pick it up and pay you later,” only to forget later to pay for it.

Little things, you might think. But our attitude toward little things has a lot to do with our attitude about big things. Those who tell little lies are on the way to telling big lies; those who deliberately neglect small duties can easily move on to neglecting big duties. A rather new expression to me often rings true: God is in the details. It is the reason why the church has always said that we must flee all immorality, that we must never let the Devil get a foothold.

What is the most important thing that we should do, and never neglect? One Catechism says: “The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.” And that’s true: we should glorify God. If we neglect that, we have failed to do our duty as human beings.

Now, before Genesis 12, nobody in particular *had* to worship God. God called everyone in general to worship him. Before the flood, there had been those who came to be called “the sons of God” and “the daughters of men” - perhaps they were known as “the children of Seth” and “the children of Cain.” Some people worshipped and served God, and others did not.

Before the flood, the family of believers became less and less faithful. They knew that they should worship God, yet over the generations they drifted away and neglected to live for God.

In that time, there were no churches. There were no office-bearers who were called by God to encourage, warn, instruct and generally lead the people the way a shepherd leads his sheep.

Because the human race was no longer worshipping God, God sent the flood to destroy the earth. When we neglect our duty, we don't do nothing - we do evil. Mankind became so evil that God could endure it no longer. It grieved him so much to see man abuse his good creation. He destroyed all living things on the earth, and began anew with Noah and his family.

But still there was no church, no office-bearers, no special people called out from the earth to belong to God. Everyone belonged to God. He gave the human race a second chance to do the right thing - for everyone. But it didn't help. What did they do? In only a few generations, they had built the tower of Babel to spearhead a great revolt against God. So God scattered them by confusing their language.

The time had come for God to treat people differently. General plans do not work. God had promised Adam and Eve that a child would be born who would grow up to save us. It was a general promise to mankind. But twice, mankind showed themselves to be unworthy. So now in our passage God became specific: the Saviour would be born, not to mankind in general, but to the covenant people.

So in Genesis 12 God began a whole new venture - a venture that he is still busy with to this day. He chose Abram. God did not forget everyone else; rather, he chose to make Abram his special friend and partner in a covenant so that some day in the future he might reach out to the rest of the world through Abram's children. But he would begin with Abram. God wanted a very special relationship of love with this one person.

Why did he choose Abram? God called Abram just because he wanted to. It pleased God to do so, just as it pleases God to call you today to Christ. You don't deserve it, but God wants to do it. God set Abram apart by calling him away from his country. Verse 1 tells us "*The LORD had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.'*" God could not build a special relationship with Abram if he lived where he had grown up. God wanted him to be alone, without relatives or friends, so that he might learn to depend on God alone and to cherish God's friendship above all.

In this way, God would lay the foundation for a covenant people, his very own possession on earth, so that he might pour out the riches of his love on them: "*I will bless you*" is what he says to his people in verse 2. He will surround them with the power of his love: "*I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse*" (verse 3).

Believe that! The people of the covenant, that is, the church, is very special to God. If you bless the church, you will be blessed. If you curse the church, God will curse you. The church belongs to God because the people in her are his covenant people. And to show how zealous God is for this people, he blessed them with the richest of blessings imaginable: He blessed them with his own Son. He sent Jesus into the world to be our Saviour. Those bought by Christ's blood belong for Jesus' sake to God, and to them belongs all the promises.

God does not make empty promises. He does not say, "I should visit you sometime," and then fail to do it. He calls you to be a member of his church so that you might be his special people, his own possession, so that he might visit you with all his grace and pour out the gifts of his love. Be the Church. Join the church. Believe in Jesus Christ, and God will take complete care of you - indeed such fantastic care, that you will become the source of blessing to our city, to our country, to our homeland. *"All peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*