

Lesson Learned from Noah's Ark

Introduction:

- I. Paul once said, "*bad company ruins good morals.*" This biblical truth has been demonstrated over and over again through the years, but never more so than in the primary years of civilization. In the early pages of man's history, sin multiplied swiftly over the landscape of earth because of the union formed between the godly and ungodly (**Gen. 6:1-2**).

The sons of God were the descendants of Seth and they were a godly group of people who continue in faith towards God. The daughters of men were descendants of Cain and they, like Cain before them, were a rebellious people and of a worldly and ungodly persuasion. Now, it was the intermixing of these two groups that eventually lead to the earth's complete moral corruption. And notice please that the sons of God married the daughters of men simple because they were fair to look upon. So, the sons of God compromised their principles and forsook their faith all because of the lust of the flesh. They gave in to carnal, physical attraction and that lead to spiritual and moral depravity (**vers 5-7**). The moral decay of the world, then, began with unholy marriages, which lead to godless homes, which finally produced an immoral society. So then, in Gen. 6 we read of a corrupt world doomed for destruction and devastation.

- II. But God found a righteous man. Among all the people who had only wicked thoughts, Noah, a just man, found favor in the eyes of the Lord. Thus, God determined to save Noah from the destruction of the flood. Noah's salvation would come by means of a ark that God would instruct him to build. Now, there are some important lessons that can be learned from this ark under consideration. The ark is a memorial of the divine goodness of God and a testimony of the strength of human faith. It appears before us both as a symbol of divine mercy and a beacon of divine wrath. Let's take a few minutes, then, looking at some lessons we can learn from the ark.

Lesson:

- I. **The Ark Is a Type of God's Plan of Salvation.**

- A. **Like the Ark, the plan of salvation for man originated with God.**

It was impossible that any man could have conceived the idea of the ark. Before God revealed it, man did not even know that there would be a need for a ark. So, were it not for the revelation of God, Noah would have perished with the rest of mankind. And just like Noah's salvation would have been impossible were it not for God developing and revealing a plan, such was the case with our salvation. You see, in the secular sphere, man can do great things. He can solve the most difficult problems, and

overcome the most dire emergencies. Man's intellect is quite impressive from a secular standpoint. But when we enter the spiritual sphere and approach man as a sinner, we find him totally incapable of developing a plan that will save him from the wrath of God. Man, with all of his intellectual dexterity and physical power, simply cannot save himself. Man can outline a work of art to be admired throughout the ages, but apart from God he cannot outline the method of his own salvation. Man knows about the fires of earth and how to escape the danger thereof, but without God's revealed plan, he knows not how to avert the fires of hell. And so we should thank God that He has revealed a plan, and give Him credit and honor for it. Now that plan is the gospel (**Rom. 1:16**). And again it originated with God (**Gal. 1:11-12**). Now listen to me: since it is God's plan, we do not have the right to alter it one wit. Certainly Noah could not have changed God's plan to save him. Imagine if Noah would have said to God, "*I appreciate your thoughts God, and I'm glad you have revealed a plan, but I have a better idea. I don't want to disregard your plan altogether; just let me alter it a bit.*" He would have perished for sure and so shall we if we had to God's plan for our redemption (**Gal. 1:8**). As Noah had to follow God's plan precisely, so must we.

B. Like the ark, the plan of salvation is not impressive to worldly men.

We can only imagine how some of the ancient world criticized the ark. I'm sure they criticized the building of the ark, for they didn't believe the message that a flood was coming. But it is quite possible that they criticized the very nature of the plan as well.

1) Some might say the ark lacked beauty.

Many scholars will tell you that according to the biblical measurements of the ark, it must have been oddly shaped. And with God's plan of salvation, such is true too. Many think it is ugly and unattractive. They point to the painful death of Christ on the cross and ask, "*can such be accepted as a plan of beauty?*" But listen to me: the beauty of the ark was not in its timber or shape, but in its merciful design. And the beauty of God's plan of salvation is not in the pain and agony that make it possible. There is nothing at all beautiful about a man hanging, bleeding, and dying on an old rugged cross. But its beauty is in the pardon it secures, in the moral purity it renders possible, and in the heaven it provides. Thus, like the ark, the cross was unsightly to the outward eye, but to the inner vision of the believer it is bright and beautiful (**1 Cor. 1:18**). *Give illus. of mother's badly burned hand*

2) Some might say that the ark would not be sufficient.

And again, there are some that have that same kind of spirit concerning God's plan to save man today. But God's plan is sufficient. Please don't doubt the saving power of God in Christ Jesus, for if you do you are just as wrong as those who may have doubted the sufficiency of the ark (**Rom. 10:5-13; 1 Pet. 1:3-5**).

3) Some might have thought they could do better.

The artist of that day might criticize the beauty of the ark. The builder might criticize its structure. And each critic might well have thought that they could have built a better ark themselves. Over the years this has been true of many in regard to God's plan. Certainly it was true in regard to the Jews (**Rom. 9:30-10:4**). But it is still true today. Many are basically saying, "*Forget about God's way, I have a better plan. I can do it my way.*" (no baptism, faith only, etc.).

C) Like the ark, God's scheme of salvation is man's last chance.

The only chance man had in the ancient world was to take heed to Noah's message, repent, and enter the ark. They neglected to do that so they perished. Today there is still but one chance for a dying world, and that is obey God's plan. Receive Jesus as your Savior, for He is the way, the truth, and the life. You have the choice! But if you despise the plan of God, like the people of old, you shall surely perish.

II. The Ark, a Type of the Church.

A. Like the Ark, the church is durable.

The ark was made out of gopher wood because God was aware of its durability. By Noah following the instructions of God, along with God's providential care, the ark would survive the violent waves of the flood. The ark was durable and so is the church. The enemies of the church are many. All false teachers and their doctrines are enemies of the church. Those who cause division in the church, whether it be by their doctrine or attitude, are enemies of the church. Materialism and those who love the world are enemies of the church. But the church will stand even in the face of its foes, for like the ark before it, it is durable and indestructible (**Isa. 28:16** - "*Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone a precious corner stone, a sure foundation...*"; **Dan. 2:44; Heb. 12:28**).

B. Like the ark, the church only has one entrance (Gen. 6:16).

Notice that there was only one door to the ark. If you wanted to get into the ark, you entered the same door as everybody else, for there was only one entrance. So it is with the church. The door to the church is obedience to the gospel (**Mk. 16:16; 2 Pet. 3:9; Rom. 3:9, 10; Gal. 3:27**).

C. Like the ark, the church is filled with all kinds (Gen. 6:17-20).

As we just read, Noah was instructed to take onto the ark "*every living thing of all flesh.*" Hence, the ark was filled with all kinds. Likewise, the church is filled with all kinds - black and white, rich and poor, male and female, etc. (**Matt. 13:47-50**). This explains two things: First, why it is that there are so many different people with different abilities and talents in the church. It is simply because the gospel attracts all kinds. And this emphasizes why it is so important for all of us to do our part (**Rom. 12:4-8**). Second, it explains why there are problems in the church. The church is made up, not only of people of different race, color, and background, but also of different character. There are good and bad, clean and unclean in the church. Now this leads to our next point.

D. Like the ark, there are more clean than unclean in the church (Gen. 7:1, 2).

Are there sinners in the church? Yes! Are there hypocrites in the church? Yes! But by and large the church is filled with God fearing, good people. And at times I grow weary of those who are always running down the church because of the few that don't measure up. We may not see everything just alike. We may have our problems with brethren at times, for even good people have bad days. But overall it is important for us to see the goodness of our brethren. And listen to me: if you ever think about leaving the church because of a few bad brethren, consider the ark. Surely Noah never tried to abandon ship while the storm was raging because of a few unclean animals.

E. Like the ark, there is just one church.

The Lion couldn't say to the bear, "**I don't like this particular. I think I'll get on another.**" There was but one ark. Either you got on board of it, or you perishes. There was no choice. And there is no choice today about what church you need to be a part of. Jesus only built one (**Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:12ff**). Now just like all of the saved were in the ark, all of the saved are in the church that Christ built (**Acts 2:47**).

III. Other Lessons from the Ark.

A) The importance of faith (Heb. 11:7).

It was faith that caused Noah to get the job done. By faith Noah built the ark, entered the ark, and was sustained in the ark. If we have proper faith, we will do the job God has given us to do in the church.

B) That we must work out our own salvation.

In reference to Noah's salvation, we know that God had the plan. He knew how to deliver Noah, but Noah had to work it out. Was Noah saved by works? No, he was saved by grace, even physically. But he had to work. Such is the case with man today (**Phil. 2:12**).

C) That numbers do not mean salvation (2 Pet. 3:20).

Don't side with numbers, side with the truth.

D) The captivating power of sin.

How long was the ark in building. Year after year it was surveyed by hundreds who were living in sin. They saw the ark and heard the preaching of Noah, but didn't repent. You see, sin is deceiving and captivating. Even now some know of the need of salvation, they have heard the Word, but will not respond.

E) The ungodly will be punished.

Hear the ark preach, not only of the goodness of God in delivering the godly, but also of God's power to punished the wicked and unbelieving (**2 Pet. 2:4-9**).

Conclusion:

Let us all remember these lessons from the ark, and make application were we can.