

NOAH'S ARK

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GENESIS 6—8

EPHESIANS 1:4-8, 11-14; 2:13, 15

The book of Genesis is the first book of the Bible and in this first book we find it is a book of biographies. In the lives of eight persons in Genesis we see the original design of God concerning man, the work of God in man, and see what God will get out of it.

The fourth person in the book of Genesis is Noah. It is evident in the life of Noah that his symbol is the ark. In Genesis 6 we are told that as man began to multiply on the earth something strange happened. The sons of god looked upon the daughters of men and saw that they were fair. So these sons of god married the daughters of man. When this thing happened, God said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever because man is flesh."

There are different interpretations of this. Some say that the sons of god refers to the descendants of Seth, that godly seed, and the daughters of men refers to the seed of Cain. Personally, I feel that it is different because when this thing happened, God was determined to destroy mankind. It must have been a terrible thing. Another interpretation is that the sons of god refers to the angels. In the book of Job, the sons of god do refer to the angels. The angels are the sons of God. They do not marry nor are they given to marriage. That is their nature. But these sons of god, these angels did not keep their place. They began to be married with the daughters of men, out of their kind, out of order. They did not

keep the order that God put in them. And being out of order, they produced what the Scripture calls, giants. They were half men and half angels. But according to the law of God, everything must be after its kind (see Genesis 1). But something got out of order, out of its kind, and it became abnormal. When this thing happened, God decided that the earth must be destroyed.

This was only one of the symptoms of that time. Man also became very evil. Even the very imaginations of the thoughts of man were evil. The whole earth was corrupted, polluted by man, and full of violence. Not only the ungodly descendants of Cain were evil, but even the so-called, godly descendants of Seth had also become evil before God. The whole earth was full of evil.

There was only one person who found favor in God's sight and he was Noah. He was righteous and perfect in his generation. He walked with God. Because of this, God spoke to Noah and told him the end of this earth was coming. There would yet be 120 years and then God would destroy the whole earth with all its living things. But Noah and his family found favor with God. So God told him to build an ark of gopher wood. Through that ark, he and his family were to be preserved through the flood. Not only that, after the flood was over and the old earth, the old creation was destroyed, Noah was to inherit a new earth when he came out of the ark. He was to be the heir of the righteousness that is according to faith (see Hebrews 11:7)).

Of course we know that ark represents our Lord Jesus. The ark

was made of gopher wood, which is a kind of hard, incorruptible wood that speaks of the humanity of our Lord Jesus. He who was equal with God, and that was not something to be grasped at, yet He emptied Himself. He took upon Himself the form of a slave, even the likeness of a man. But when He took upon Himself the likeness of a man, there is something different—He is incorruptible. He is not like the rest of mankind.

The Scripture always uses wood to represent mankind. We are all corruptible; not only corruptible, but corrupted. That is human nature. Human nature is depraved, corrupted, sinful, and degenerated. But when our Lord Jesus took upon Himself the likeness of a man, He is different. Even though He is perfectly man, with a human nature, a man like we are, yet there is one difference. He is made of gopher wood. That is to say, He is incorruptible and uncorrupted. The human nature of our Lord Jesus is perfect. That is the reason why He must be born of a virgin. He did not inherit the corrupted, human nature of Adam. He is the holy Seed. He knew no sin. Yes, He was tempted in all things like we are. If we can think of any temptation that human beings are exposed to, our Lord Jesus has undergone it, but with one difference. He was tempted in all things, but He sinned not. He cannot be corrupted. He is incorruptible. He said, "The enemy has come, but he has no place in Me." There was no footing in Him. He is above all evil. He is perfect. That is our Lord Jesus.

This gopher wood was pitched, both inside and outside, with pitch. The reason this was

done was to make it water tight because it had to float upon the water. So it had to be pitched both inside and outside. But there is a deeper meaning to this. The word *pitch* in the original can be translated “atonement.” In other words, the reason our Lord Jesus came into this world to become a man is for the sake of atoning for the sins of the world. He who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God. Our Lord Jesus came into this world to atone for the sins of this world. It is through Him that we are saved, our sins are forgiven, and we are brought into one with God. That is what the ark is telling us.

God commanded Noah to build that ark. At the time of Noah, the earth had never experienced rain before. Before the flood, the earth was moistened by mist, by dew, but man had never seen rain, not to say a flood. And yet God commanded Noah to build an ark. It was something that was never seen before—not a boat, not rain, not a flood. It was something that could not be conceived by the thought of man. But God commanded Noah to build an ark, which is a boat, the first boat built in the world. It took Noah 120 years to build that big boat. There was no rain, no flood, no such experience before. People had never seen such a peculiar construction before. Yet Noah, by faith, feared God. He believed what God had said was true and he built that ark. And through that ark, Noah and his family were saved.

Do you know what the Chinese character is for boat? Chinese characters are pictures and the Chinese character for boat is a picture of a canoe with eight

mouths by its side. And a mouth is a person. So it means that a boat is a boat with eight persons. That is the Chinese word for boat. It is the story of Noah’s ark because in the ark there were eight persons. That is the first boat ever built. Of course we know that Noah’s ark was not a boat in the modern sense because if you look at it, it is actually like a floating dock. The purpose was not to navigate; the purpose was to float. So actually it was a giant floating dock, a giant floating storage. The purpose was to store things, to contain things, and to be able to float instead of to navigate. That is the first boat that was ever built.

ABIDING

What is the basic thought in this experience of Noah and the ark? I believe that the basic thought that the Spirit of God wants us to see here is really the thought of abiding in Christ. Enoch walked with God, and walking with God is an external conduct. It is a testimony to the world. A person who walks with God has an outward living. It is a testimony, it is a life that is different from the world. But abiding in Christ is the inward secret of the outward walk. In other words, you will not be able to walk with God if you do not have a life of abiding. If you abide in Christ then you will walk with God. That will be the natural result. So on the one hand, Enoch shows us walking with God; on the other hand, Noah shows us abiding in Christ.

Why was that ark built? The ark was built that Noah and his family might enter into the ark and be preserved. They were to be in the ark. It was a huge chest, a

huge three-dimensional construction. Noah was not only to enter into the ark, but to stay there through the whole period of judgment. We know that Noah and his family stayed in the ark for a year and ten days because they entered into the ark on the seventeenth day of the second month of his six hundredth year. They did not come out until the twenty-seventh day of the second month of his six hundred and first year. So they were in the ark for a year and ten days, the whole period of the flood, the whole period of the judgment. When they came out, they inherited a new world.

CHRIST IN YOU

So I do believe that the whole idea is to teach us about this matter of abiding in Christ. Of course, *abiding in Christ* is an experience; *in Christ* is a position. We have the position of being in Christ, and therefore we need to have the experience of abiding in Christ. Thank God, we do not need to spend 120 years building an ark because God has already built that ark for us. God has given that ark to us. All that we need to do is to enter into that ark. When did we enter into that ark? It happened at the time we believed in the Lord Jesus. When we believed in the Lord Jesus a number of things happened. Sometimes we think that when we believe in the Lord Jesus only one thing happened—our sins are forgiven. Thank God, when we believe in the Lord Jesus our sins are forgiven! That did happen, but when we believe in the Lord Jesus a number of things happen. One thing that happens is that the life of God in Christ Jesus came into you and became your life.

You are born again. You are born of the Spirit. You receive a new life. The life of God in Christ Jesus becomes your life. You receive Him into you. He is in you; Christ in you the hope of glory. You have Christ in you; you have His life in you; He is your life. That is a tremendous thing! It is far more precious than having our sins forgiven. Having our sins forgiven is great. We who were under that condemnation, that load, that burden of sin find that all our sins are being forgiven. That is great! But there is something much greater than that, and it is that Christ has come into your life. You have Him as your life. He is in you the hope of glory. That is one thing.

IN CHRIST

But there is another thing. Not only has Christ come into you to be your life, but God has put you into Christ. He is in you, yes, but you are in Him. In I Corinthians 1:30 it says, "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus who has been made to us wisdom from God, righteousness, holiness, and redemption." But of Him—that is of God—are ye in Christ Jesus. We are in Christ Jesus. How are we in Christ Jesus? Of God. In other words, when you believe in the Lord Jesus, God has done something to you. Not only does the Holy Spirit beget you and put the life of Christ in you, but at the same time, God has translated you out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of His love. God has taken you out of Adam and put you in Christ. That is something that you do not do yourself, you cannot do yourself, and you do not need to do yourself.

Sometimes we have an error in our thinking: "If only I could get into Christ then every problem would be solved." Even Hudson Taylor had the same problem. He had been a missionary in China for a number of years and God had already used him greatly. Yet he discovered that his life was not as it should be. He felt that he was tempted, that he failed, and that his testimony was not what it should be. He was deeply troubled and he was seeking God with prayer and fasting. He thought, "If only I could get into Christ, then every problem would be solved. But how can I get into Christ?" He tried to get into Christ, but he did not know how. He thought that he needed faith, so he prayed for faith, but faith did not come.

Is that our problem? If we are in Christ, then all our problems are solved. But how can we get into Christ? The Scripture says you are already in Christ. If you are already in, there is no way to get in again, a more "in," because you are in. One day Hudson Taylor discovered, "What am I praying for? I am already in. He is the vine and I am the branch. For a branch to pray all the time, 'Oh, that I might get into the vine' is ridiculous because the branch is in the vine and the vine is in the branch. They are one."

Do you not know that God has put Christ in you, the hope of glory? All your hope of glory is because Christ is in you, and at the same time God has also put you into Christ. You are in Christ. This is your new position. This is something very precious! He has taken you out of Adam—in Adam all die. He has put you in Christ—in Christ we are made alive. This is our position. Everyone who

believes in the Lord Jesus is in Christ. What a tremendous thing that is! Christ is the ark and we are in the ark. We are in Christ.

ENJOYING THE RICHES OF CHRIST

What does it mean to be in Christ? The Scripture shows us what a tremendous thing it is to be in Christ. Noah must be in the ark because that is the only way to have his life preserved. That is the only way to escape judgment. Anyone who is outside the ark will be drowned. Only those who are in the ark pass out of death into life.

The ark was 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. It was a tremendous ark with all kind of rooms in it. Some rooms may have had very high ceilings because of the giraffes. Some may have had to be very huge rooms because hippopotamus were there. So it had all different kinds of rooms, big rooms, small rooms, all shapes of rooms because it had to take in all kinds of animals. Not only was it filled with all kinds of rooms, but it was built three stories high. Every kind of food was to be stored there. So Noah was not only preserved from judgment, from the flood, but in the ark he was able to enjoy all the foods that were stored there. He was to enjoy all the riches that were stored there. It was so spacious, so gigantic with lots of rooms and three stories high. You could go higher and higher. All these speak of abundance of riches.

What does *in Christ* mean? God has put you in Christ. That is a tremendous thing because in Christ we escape the judgment. "If anyone is in Christ he is a new

creation. The old things have passed away. All things are made new and all things are made by God. All things are of God." The old creation was destroyed by the flood, but in Christ we are a new creation. Not only that, in Christ we enjoy all the fulness that is in Christ. In Colossians 2 it says, "All the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Him (in Christ) bodily; and ye are complete in Him." Who can fathom the fulness of the Godhead? Who can measure the love of God? Who can measure the righteousness of God? Who can measure the light of God? Who can measure the purity of God? Who can measure the strength of God, the wisdom of God? All the fulness of the Godhead, everything that you can think of God dwells in Him bodily—substantially, solidly. And you are complete in Him because you are in Him. In other words, everything of God is in Christ, and God put you in Christ. Therefore everything that is in Christ is for you to enjoy. That is our position. That is what God has put us in.

In Ephesians 1, there are a number of times where the phrase "in Christ" is repeated again and again. God is trying to show us what a blessing it is that we are in Christ. Chapter 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ." Paul blessed God when he thought of what God had done. God has blessed us—not *going* to bless us—but He has already blessed us with every spiritual blessing you can think of in the heavenlies. Where? In Christ. Every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies that God has blessed us with is in

Christ. In other words, outside of Christ there is no blessing. Outside of Christ, God has nothing to bless because He has already blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.

Sometimes we do not receive blessing because we get out of Christ. There is no way to exhaust what is in Christ. It is infinite because God is infinite. Paul just mentions a few things to make us understand. In Ephesians 1:4 he said, "According as He has chosen us in Him before the world's foundation." Do you know that we were chosen even before the foundation of the world? But where were we chosen? We were chosen in Him, in Christ. If it is not in Christ, we are not chosen. He has chosen us before the world's foundation in Christ. In Christ He knew us before we were born. He knew us before we were conceived in our mother's womb. He knew us even before the world's foundation was laid. In eternity past, God has already chosen us in Him, in Christ.

Verse 1:4b-5: "That we should be holy and blameless before Him in love; having marked us out beforehand for adoption through Jesus Christ to Himself..." He has chosen us. Chosen us to go to heaven to play harps and walk on the golden street? No, more than that. He has chosen us with a purpose and that purpose is adoption. The word *adoption* is actually "sonship, the placing of a son." In other words, God has in mind that in Christ Jesus we would not only be saved, be babes in Christ, be born again, but we would grow up, be matured, come to the place of being sons of God to take up responsibility with THE Son of God. That is *in*

Christ. It is only in Christ that this is possible and this can be done.

Verse 1: 5b-6: "According to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has taken us into favor in the Beloved." Today, we are being taken into favor by God in Christ. Why does God accept us? It is not because of what we are but because we are in the Son. He accepts us because He accepts the Son. We have favor from God, not because we are better than anybody else, but because of the beloved Son of God. God favors us in the Beloved.

Verse 1:7-8a: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace" How are we redeemed? Redeemed from the curse of the law? Delivered out of eternal death? Through the blood. How? In Him, in Christ.

Verse 11: "In Him, in whom we have also obtained an inheritance, being marked out beforehand according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will that we should be to the praise of His glory who have pre-trusted in Christ." In Him we have also received an inheritance. As Peter said, our inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, unfading. Everything in this world that you may inherit is corruptible, fading, defiled. But in Christ, we have obtained an eternal inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading.

Verse 13-14: "In whom ye also have trusted, having heard the word of the truth, the glad tidings of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, ye have been sealed with the Holy

Spirit of promise.” In Christ we have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. *Sealed* means “secure.” In the old days, when you put your seal on something, it meant that this something belongs to you. We are sealed in Christ with the Holy Spirit of promise. The Holy Spirit in us is a pledge. It shows on the one hand that we belong to God; He has bought us. On the other hand, it is a pledge saying that this is just earnest money. It shows that we will receive our full inheritance. So it says, “...who is the earnest of our inheritance to the redemption of the acquired possession to the praise of His glory. “All these are in Christ.

Chapter 2:15, 13: “Having annulled the enmity in his flesh, the law of commandments in ordinances, that he might form the two in himself into one new man...But now in Christ Jesus ye who once were afar off are become nigh by the blood of the Christ.” In Christ is a most precious place. God has put us in Christ and in Christ we receive all these blessings. They are all ours. This is our position that God has given to us. What a position we have!

ABIDING IN CHRIST

But the story of Noah speaks more than the message of being “in Christ.” The story of Noah actually gives the impression of abiding in Christ because he did not just go in. he remained there, he continued there, he rested there during the whole period of judgment. So it speaks of abiding.

The word *abiding* simply means “to stay, to continue, to remain, to rest, to endure, to stand firm, to make home in”—to make your home in Christ. The ark was

Noah’s home during the whole period of judgment. Is not Christ our home? In one sense, judgment is coming upon this world, but in another sense, judgment has already come. The whole world is under the wrath of God. But thank God during the whole period we make our home in Christ. This is the only protection and this is the only answer—abide in Christ.

Abide in Christ is actually a command. In John 15 the Lord said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches. I in you and you in Me. Abide in Me and I abide in you, and you shall bear much fruit.” In Christ is what God has done for you. You do not do anything to be in Christ. God did it. He put you in Christ. He gave you that position, that potential, but to abide in Christ is our responsibility. As a matter of fact, it is God’s commandment. He says, “Abide in Me.” You who are in Me, must abide in Me. You whom God has put in Christ, remain in Christ. Stay there. Do not come out. Continue there. Make your home there and if you do, then you will bear much fruit.”

Do we abide in Christ? If we abide in Christ we will discover and experience all the riches that are in Christ. But if we do not abide in Christ, we will not be able to know how rich our Christ is. The problem today is not with Christ; the problem today is with our abiding in Him. If we will only abide in Christ we will find everything there to experience and enjoy.

THE ANOINTING WITHIN

Once I asked some young people, “How can we abide in Christ?” You know the young people gave me various answers.

Some said that to abide in Christ you should spend more time before the Lord in prayer. Some said that you should read the Bible more. Well, they are right. But to simplify the whole matter, there is one verse that is very precious to me and that really reveals the secret of abiding. I John 2:27: “And yourselves, the anointing which ye have received from him abides in you and ye have not need that any one should teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you as to all things, and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in Him.”

“Ye shall abide in Him.” How? By the teaching of the anointing. Thank God for that. The apostle John is telling the believers “you have the anointing.” The anointing which you have received abides in you. Why is it that the word *anointing*, *unction* is a verbal noun? You know it is the Holy Spirit, but instead of using Holy Spirit, he used the word *anointing*, which is a verbal noun because there is action there. In other words, it is the Holy Spirit in action—the anointing abides in us. Do you not know that on the day you believed in the Lord Jesus, another thing that happened? On the day that you believed in the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit of God came into your new spirit and made His home there. Do you not know that the Holy Spirit came into your life to dwell, to live, to remain, to continue to make His home in you?

In the Old Testament times, in Psalm 51, David said “Take not the Holy Spirit from me.” Sometimes today you hear Christians pray, “Take not the Holy Spirit from me.” Remember,

in the Old Testament that was possible, but under the new covenant it is not possible. Under the new covenant the Holy Spirit came into your life to make His home there. You can grieve Him; you can quench Him, but you cannot drive Him out. Thank God for that! The Holy Spirit came to stay. He abides in you. He makes His home in you. But sometimes you make your home disorderly; you make your home defiled. That makes Him uncomfortable, that is true; but no matter what you do, He will not leave you. Thank God! He abides in you. He will never leave you nor forsake you. He is always there and He is such a diligent teacher. He is in you teaching you in all things, day and night, big things and small things—everything. He is responsible for your spiritual well being. And whatever He teaches is true and not a lie.

Sometimes we have a fight within. The Holy Spirit, the anointing is teaching us but our distorted mind, so-called rational mind tries to offer another theory. They begin to argue with one another and you know who is true. Whatever He teaches is true and is not a lie. And it says, “And even as He taught you, you shall abide in Him.”

Oh, if we will only listen and obey the anointing within us, we will abide in Him. We will make our home in Him. It is very simple. God has given us all the provision. He has given us the Holy Spirit for this very purpose, that we may abide in Christ. That we may make our home in Him. Oh, how we need to honor the Holy Spirit! How we need to listen to Him and obey Him! If we do, we will abide in Christ.

FRUIT BEARING

Why is it that we do not abide in Christ? It is because the flesh is very uncomfortable in Christ, so we want to get out. That is why we need the cross working in our lives. Abide in Him. If we abide in Him and He in us, we bear much fruit.

Do you think that Noah and his family just ate and drank and slept through a year and ten days in the ark? That would be very dull. No. During the year and ten days, Noah and his three sons and their wives were not only being kept from the judgment, but they were able to enjoy life in the ark. The ark was not a dark place because there was a window up at the top. Some versions use window, some versions use light. The word actually is used 24 times in the Old Testament, and all the other times this word is translated noon light. This is the only place that it is translated window. In other words, there was a light like a the light of noon, full light there. Noah and his family walked in the light of God. It was not dark there. They were in the light. Not only that, they were busily occupied during that year and ten days. They had all the animals to feed—lots of work to do. God never means that we should be lazy. It is good for us to work. But work to them was not work; it was a pleasure. It was unto the glory of God. It was working together with God to preserve the animals. It was fruit bearing.

To abide in Christ is not some mystical concept as if a person who tries to live an abiding life is a hermit, a recluse, a good-for-nothing, super-spiritual, passive person. Not so! Abiding in Christ

will result in fruit bearing.

Often we are active, but our activities are probably just dead works because the more active we are the more deadly we become. But if we abide in Him, then whatever we do, it is like fruit producing—so blessed. It is producing fruit unto the glory of God.

When the flood was over, they inherited a new earth. Noah became the heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

One day the judgment will be over. The old creation will be gone and those who abide in Christ will become heirs and co-heirs with Christ. They shall rule with Christ over a new creation. That is a promise.

Finally, sometimes people use Noah's entering into the ark as a type of Christians being kept through the great tribulation. In Matthew 24, “As the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of Man. On the day that Noah entered into the ark, then the flood came.” So people try to use that as a type of Christians being kept through the great tribulation. And they even use Lot as a type of Christians coming out of tribulation. I think it is a very bad analogy.

I personally believe that Noah's entering into the ark is a type of rapture because the ark represents Christ. If we are in Christ, then we will escape and we will inherit the new earth. Actually it is the same story—Enoch taken; Noah entering into the ark. If we walk with God, if we abide in Christ, then we will escape the judgment, the things that will come upon this earth, as Luke 21 says, “And to stand before the Son of Man.” So may the Lord help us.