

# (Genesis) - Part 10

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith, hard work, reverence, and obedience to God's commands in building the church and following God's will.*

**Duration:** 59:08

**Scripture:** Genesis 8:20-22, Ezekiel 14:13, Matthew 24:37-39

**Topics:** "Eschatology", "Obedience"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the continuity of natural phenomena such as cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night for the past 4,000 years. He highlights that these consistent patterns exist because God promised not to judge the earth with a flood again. However, the preacher warns that God will judge the earth with fire when Jesus returns. He urges the audience to be ready for the rapture by being like Noah, who was obedient and prepared for the flood. The preacher also emphasizes the importance of protecting the church from worldly influences and warns that judgment will come suddenly, just as the flood came upon the earth.

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## Transcript

Let's turn now to Genesis and Chapter Six. We were looking at these closing verses of this chapter in our last study, considering how God commanded Noah to bring into the ark two of every kind of animal and bird and creeping thing, and also to take food for themselves and for these animals. And when we realized that they stayed inside the ark for more than one year, you can imagine what a fantastic amount of food that was for the people, those eight people and all the animals.

And that God gave Noah a command which really involved a lot of hard work. It wasn't just sitting back and taking it by faith. Noah's faith involved a lot of hard work.

If he really believed what God had said, it involved his becoming diligent and hard-working. And that's always the result of faith in God. It makes the person hard-working, frees him from laziness.

Thus Noah did, it says in verse twenty-two. According to all that God commanded him, so did he. And we can turn to Hebrews chapter eleven and verse seven and read something there.

It says, By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence, that is, in fear, in a fear of God, prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world and

became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. There are two things mentioned about Noah here. One is his reverence for God and the other is his faith.

And it's only when people have faith and a reverence for God that they can build a church and do God's work. Some people claim to have a lot of faith, but they don't have the fear of God. We see lots and lots of people today like that, particularly in charismatic circles.

They talk a lot about faith, but there's no fear of God. And the end result is that some counterfeit faith. And then there are others who major on the fear of God and they concentrate on the fear of God in their life and they really seek to be pure, they really seek to be holy, but when you look into their life, there's not much faith.

They can't trust God for anything. They really seek to live holy lives, but when there's a problem, they can't believe that God will deliver them out of it. But if we can have this balance between faith and reverence and have both, like Noah had, then we can do God's work as God intends us to do it.

There was reverence and there was faith. He believed what God had said and he feared and it brought salvation not only to himself, but to his household. We see a beautiful example here in Noah of how we can build a church not only with faith and reverence, but also where we have experienced salvation in our house, in our home.

If we have not experienced salvation in our home, we can't try to go out and build the ark in the church. And it says here that when Noah built the ark, prepared the ark, thereby he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. The righteousness which is according to faith is what the New Testament calls justification.

It's referring to Jesus justifying us, declaring us righteous, even though we have sinned. But notice how it comes. The first person who was justified by faith in the Bible is not about whom it's specifically written that he got righteousness through faith was not Abraham.

Abraham came many centuries later. But the first person about whom it says he became righteous through faith, he became an heir of the righteousness through faith is mentioned about Abel in verse 4, by he obtained the testimony by faith that he was righteous, and then about Noah. And we see here a little more in Noah's case than in Abel's case.

In Abel's case, we know he brought a sacrifice. But in Noah's case, we see something more. And that is that he gave all that he had for building the ark and thus condemned the world.

And what do we learn from this for ourselves? That when Noah gave himself to building the ark, that was the proof that he didn't care for the world, that the world had nothing for him. Theoretically, it's possible for lots of people to say that the world has no attraction for them, and that we don't belong to the world. That's easy to say, lots of people to say that.

But it's only when in our life there is a priority given to the things that will remain after the world is destroyed. In Noah's case, the ark. In our case, the church.

It's only then that we prove that we have faith. It's only then that we really condemn the world. And that's the meaning of seeking first the kingdom of God.

It's something that takes absolute priority in our life over everything else. We do a lot of things in the world. Noah also had to do things to get food.

Food didn't drop for him from heaven like the manna. He had to go and get food and take care of his family and have clothing for his family. He had to take care of all that.

And there are these earthly necessities that we also have to take care of, which Noah also had to take care of. But people saw that that was not a priority in his life. What were the days of Noah like? We read in Matthew chapter 24 that Jesus said, Matthew 24 and verse 38.

Thirty-seven and thirty-eight. For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood.

Here is a description of the days before the flood. They were eating and drinking and were marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark. And so we see here that Jesus did not speak about the violence and the sexual sin that we have seen in the days of Noah.

That was there. And Jesus knew they were there. And Jesus didn't speak about it.

But he spoke about the ordinary things. The eating, the drinking, the marrying, giving in marriage. Ordinary earthly things, the cares of this life.

In other words, they were so taken up with their eating and drinking. Noah also got his sons married. Shem, Ham and Japheth, he gave them in marriage.

And the marriage, three marriages were conducted in Noah's home also. But he wasn't taken up with it. Eating and drinking took place in Noah's home also.

But they were not taken up with it. That's the thing we have to be careful about if we really want to condemn the world. That we use the world, but we don't get taken up with it.

We eat and drink, but it's not the main thing in life. We marry and give in marriage, but it's not the main thing in life. There are lots of believers I've seen.

When it comes to marriage, it is like a mania in their life. They're so taken up with it, just like people out in the world. And then you know they are gripped by that spirit that there was in the times of Noah.

We have to use all these things and not get taken up with any of them. That it doesn't so fill our thinking. Eating or drinking or our job.

It could be a job, doing a job. It could be anything legitimate and right, which Noah also did. But it was not to take a priority in his life.

And that is what qualified him to be an heir of the righteousness, which is by faith, and qualified him to enter the ark. And we want to read further here something more of what this means. In verse 39, they did not understand until the flood came, Matthew 24, 39, and took them all away.

So shall the coming of the Son of Man be. In other words, the coming of the Son of Man is going to be sudden, just like when the rain came and Noah entered the ark. Now there's a very beautiful picture.

It says here, then, verse 40, there shall be two in the fields. One will be taken, that is inside the ark, and the other will be left outside to face the rain, the judgment. And two will be grinding at the mill, and one will be taken like Noah inside the ark, protected from the judgment, and the other will stay outside, and the judgment will fall.

So we see that Noah entering the ark, Jesus said here, is a picture of the taking up of those who have walked like Noah here on this earth, the church. Being taken up, so shall it, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. And we turn to Genesis chapter 6, and we can see there, before the Lord told Noah to enter the ark.

The Lord told Noah to enter the ark in chapter 7, verse 1. Just by the way, in the Old Testament, there are three arks mentioned. This is the first one, Noah's ark. The second one is the ark made for Moses when he was a baby, which is also covered with pitch, to protect it from being drowned in the lake.

And that was also to protect Moses from the judgment that Pharaoh had inflicted on all the Hebrew male children. And the third ark is the ark which is in the most holy place of the tabernacle, where the blood was sprinkled, which is also symbolic of protecting Israel from judgment. So we see that all three arks were protecting people from spiritual death.

And the Lord says in verse 1 of chapter 7, the Lord said to Noah, enter the ark, or as the King James Version says, come into the ark. Now when you say, come into the ark, that means the person speaking is already inside the ark. And that teaches us that God was inviting Noah to come in, to fellowship with him in the ark.

And that's how the call for the rapture will be, come to me. And that's how the Lord will call his people, to himself, you and your household. Think of that, my brothers and sisters, that when the time for the rapture comes, there were eight people in Noah's family, and all eight got raptured into the ark.

And God grant that it'll be like that in our families too. That when Jesus comes, it will not just be us, but our household taken up also. For you alone I have seen to be righteous before me in this time.

And what preceded this? We read here that God entered into a covenant, verse 18 of chapter 6. I will establish my covenant with you. Noah and God entered into an agreement. That's what prepared him for being raptured into the ark.

And that covenant led, verse 22 of chapter 6, to Noah doing all that God commanded him. Noah didn't offer any suggestions. He didn't say, Lord, why don't you modify it this way or that way.

He did exactly. God gave the details of how to build the ark. Noah did exactly like that.

You read later on in Exodus chapter 40 about Moses, when God gave him the pattern of the tabernacle. He did exactly as God commanded him. And we see the same thing here.

He did exactly as God commanded him. This is a mark of those with whom God has entered into a covenant. That when God gives them some specification, whether it's to build an ark, or to build a tabernacle, or to build a church.

The ark is a picture of the church, the tabernacle is a picture of the church. And in both cases, we see one statement made. Noah did exactly as God commanded him.

In Exodus 40, the whole chapter really, Moses did exactly as God commanded him. And now in the church, those who have entered into a covenant relationship with God, if it can be said of us that we built the church exactly as God had said in his word, then we are ready. When the Lord comes and says, come, like in chapter 7, verse 1, come.

Then we are ready to go. Because we have been faithful to that covenant. To keep God's word exactly as we have received it.

Without modifying it, without changing it, without adapting it to suit our circumstances, without making excuses and saying, such things are not possible in these days. No, we have an example in Noah to do exactly as God says, with fear and with faith. That's how to build a church, and that's how to build our home, and that's how to build our life.

And the Lord said to Noah, enter the ark. It's very important, my brothers and sisters, if we get taken up with all the things that are going on in the world, then we shall not be ready. It says they didn't know.

That's what Jesus said. The flood came suddenly, they didn't know. And we read here, you shall take with you all of every clean animal, seven pairs, a male and a female, and of the animals that are not clean too, a male and a female.

Of course, the seven pairs of clean animals were later on to be used for sacrifice. Also, the birds of the sky, seven pairs, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth, for after seven more days. Now, notice this.

He told Noah to come inside the ark, verse one, and the rain didn't come immediately. I want you to notice this. He said, you come inside the ark, and then seven more days the judgment will fall.

And I'll send rain on the earth, forty days and forty nights. And I'll blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I've made. And again, that same statement, that wonderful statement that's repeated many times about Moses.

Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him. Sometime when you get time, read Exodus chapter thirty-nine and chapter forty, and you'll see that same statement many times concerning Moses, as the Lord commanded him, as the Lord commanded him, as the Lord commanded him. That's a very significant thing that is said about Noah building the ark, which is given according to a heavenly pattern, and Moses building the tabernacle, which is given according to a heavenly pattern.

It's an example for us who are to build a church, there is a heavenly pattern for the church as well. We can't build it according to the way a lot of these denominations build it, saying, yeah, it doesn't make much of a difference. It makes a lot of difference.

Noah couldn't extend the ark by one foot and say, I did it according to the Lord's design. No. He couldn't shorten it by a few feet, saying, I couldn't get enough wood.

It had to be exactly as God had said. And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water came upon the earth. He had been preaching for a hundred and twenty years.

He was a preacher of righteousness. We read that in second Peter two, verse five, that he was a preacher of righteousness. But not only was he a preacher of righteousness, we read that he was a righteous man.

Not only he had righteousness by faith, notice God's testimony about Noah in Ezekiel chapter fourteen. Ezekiel fourteen, we read God giving a testimony about Noah. Ezekiel chapter fourteen, the word of the Lord, verse twelve.

Ezekiel fourteen, verse twelve. Came to me saying, this is the chapter where we read in verse three about people who set up their idols in their hearts. Idols in the heart.

That's verse three. Verse thirteen, son of man, if a country sins against me by committing unfaithfulness and I stretch out my hand against it to destroy its supply of bread and famine and cut off both man and beast, even though these three men, and there are three men that God picks out of the Old Testament, who are righteous, Noah, Daniel, and Joe, were in the midst by their own righteousness, they could only deliver themselves. Verse sixteen, though these three men were in its midst as I live, they could not deliver either their sons or their daughters, they alone would be delivered.

In Noah's day, because he was righteous, he could save his sons and his daughters-in-law. But that was the time God's word had not been given, as it has been given now in Old Testament times. He says, now things have changed.

I've given my word. And a father's righteousness will not save his family. Noah can save himself.

That's how it is today. Your father's righteousness won't save you. But think that God could pick out three men from the Old Testament, Noah, Daniel, and Joe, said there were three righteous men who lived in righteousness on the earth.

Noah in the midst of an evil world, and Daniel in the midst of Babylon, a righteous man. Joe also in the midst of an evil world, alone, righteous. One significant thing about these three men were that they were alone in their day.

They were not part of a great flock of righteous people. They were alone. There are going to be very few righteous people in the last days, very few, totally righteous.

So there we see that there was a man who not only preached righteousness, he lived a righteous life that God himself could testify to, like he could testify about Joe and Daniel. And that's an example for all preachers of righteousness, that they have to have a life that God can testify to is righteous. That qualifies them to be preachers of righteousness.

Now we read further in Genesis chapter 7, verse 7, Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood, of clean animals and animals that are not clean, birds and everything that creeps in the ground, they went in. Now notice, it doesn't say that Noah went and caught the lions and caught the tigers and pushed them inside the ark. That would have been impossible, humanly speaking, for him to go and try and catch every type of bird there is.

He would never have been able to finish. Have you ever thought how all these giraffes and elephants and hippopotamuses and all the birds, how they all came? Noah didn't go catching them. It says, They went into the ark to Noah, two by two.

It's an amazing thing. As I understand it, God told Noah to enter the ark first. Verse 1, And they went into the ark to Noah.

That means where was Noah? He was inside the ark. And these animals came in. And just think of this, just think of the unbelieving world watching this amazing thing happening.

A lion and a lioness going in, a male and a female elephant going in. One would have thought that at least then they would have believed that this is the work of God. How in the world can it happen? And they still did not believe.

They were so hardened in their sin. Yeah, they went in, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. It's an amazing thing that the animals obeyed God.

It says there, As God had commanded Noah, the animals went in. That means they obeyed God. Noah obeyed God first, and the animals obeyed God after them, teaching the rest of the unbelieving world that in God's eyes they were worse than those animals.

They were living at a level lower than those animals, because those animals got into the ark and were saved. But lot of so-called human beings made in the image of God were lost. And it's the same condition today.

Man's level is lower than the animals. There are three categories of, there you see, Noah, the righteous man, his family, the animals, the second and the third category, the rest of the human beings, who were worse than the animals. And there we see, animals were better than the unrighteous people.

And it's the same today. It's just the same today. And it came about after the seven days that the water of the flood came upon the earth in the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the 17th day of the seventh month.

On the same day, all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. Now, it's quite likely that rain had never fallen upon the earth up until this time, and that was another reason why people couldn't believe Noah, because it says we considered that in Genesis chapter 2, verse 6, that a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. And that, verse 5, it says, the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth, but a mist.

Probably some type of dew would fall on the ground every morning. And that's how there was no rain. And then Noah was preaching, there's going to be rain, there's going to be rain, there's going to be rain, and nobody believed it.

And the Bible says, in the last days, there'll be people who are scoffers, who say, you people, you say that judgment is going to come, the Lord's going to come. It hasn't come. It's been going, people have been preaching this for 2,000 years.

2 Peter chapter 3 says that, that people will say that, in the last days. They scoff. Turn for a moment to 2 Peter and chapter 3, verse 3. Know this, first of all, that in the last days, mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, saying, where is the promise of His coming? Verse 4, you people who say that Jesus is coming again.

For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation. And when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that the word of God, the heavens, existed. The earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

And the present heavens are reserved not for water, but for fire, verse 7. But don't let this one fact escape your notice, verse 8, that one day is with the Lord is a thousand years, thousand years is one day, and the Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance. For the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away. So we see here, the Lord waited in the days of Noah.

The patience of God, we read in 1 Peter 3, waited in the days of Noah. And that patience came to an end after 120 years. The patience of God has been waiting over the earth, over the world now for a long time, and one day it will come to an end.

Meanwhile, God has kept the church here, just like Noah, to preach righteousness, and to come into the earth to be saved, which people don't believe. And the rain fell on the earth, Genesis 7, verse 12. The rain fell on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights, on the very same day Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, the sons of Noah, Genesis 7, verse 13, and Noah's wife, and three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark.

And every beast after its kind, all the cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every bird, and all sorts of birds, so they went into the ark to Noah. Again, it says that they went to Noah, who was already inside, two by two, of all flesh, in which is the breath of life, Genesis 7, verse 16, and those that entered, male and female, of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him. Again, the repetition of that phrase, again and again and again, as God had commanded.

And the Lord closed the door. It's the Lord who shuts the door. After all these people, and the animals that come in, and the birds, God shut that door.

It wasn't Noah who closed the door of the ark. God shut that door. And when the last person, whose name is written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, has been converted, God got a list long before He made Adam.

He made a list of all those who would be saved through faith in Christ, all those who would be disciples of Christ. He got their names in that book long before Adam was created. My name was in the book of life long before Adam was created.

I hope you have faith for that. And there are some names in that book who have not yet been converted. That's why God's waiting.

Otherwise Jesus would have come. There are some names in that book not yet being converted. I wonder if there's someone listening to this message like that.

There's names in that book, but you haven't been converted yet. You haven't yielded completely to Jesus to be a disciple. God's waiting.

Of course, we don't know whether your name's in that book. It may not be. But there are some names in the book who are not yet converted.

When that last name is ticked off, he's given himself to the Lord. The Lord will shut the door. Just like when that last animal or the last bird came in.

God shut the door. He said, that's it. It's finished.

And we read of a time in Matthew chapter 25 where we read about the wise virgins and the foolish virgins. And it says here that suddenly there was a cry. Behold the bridegroom.

Come out to meet him. Matthew 25 verse 6. And there was just a little bit of time to get ready. All the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.

And the foolish discovered that their lamps were going out. They didn't have a hidden life. They suddenly realized the Lord's come and I've just taken it easy.

My brothers and sisters, those who heard the word of God about the importance of a hidden life and have postponed it, postponed it. Yeah, I will get victory one of these days. I confess my oath.

I confess my oath and I don't take it seriously. One of these days the cry will come, behold the bridegroom comes. And all our arguments and all our self-justification will be of no use in that day.

He will come and in that day, if I don't have a hidden life of oil in my vessel, I will not be ready to go. If I have just lived before the face of men, I try to trim my lamp in that day and it doesn't get, doesn't get light. And we read here, they went and tried to get some.

And by then they came back. It says here the same thing. Verse 10.

While they were going away, the bridegroom came. Jesus came. And those who were ready, like Noah went into the ark, they went into the wedding feast and the door was shut.

Who shut it? God shut it. Just like in Noah's day. He shut the door.

And then the others came, banged and said, Lord, open to us. And he says, I don't know you. Just like the people came and banged at Noah's ark when the rain started falling.

Can you imagine the people running to the ark and saying, please open, we believe you now. It's too late. There is a time when it becomes too late to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

Now is the time to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. There is a time when it will be too late. That's very important, brothers and sisters.

Take it seriously. Don't take it lightly that you have had the opportunity to hear such a glorious gospel for so many years. So many years before Jesus came, you had the opportunity to hear.

And we have to think, what have we done with it? What have we done with it? How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? Not if we reject it. Rejecting is another thing. Hebrews 2.3 is not written to the unbelievers who reject it.

It says, how shall we escape if we neglect, not reject. We have accepted it, but we neglect it. Do you know the difference between rejecting a child and neglecting a child? Rejecting is pushing it out of the house.

Neglecting is keeping it in the house, but not caring for it. To neglect the salvation means to receive the message, believe it, accept it, and then just don't bother about it. That's neglect.

How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? Just think of that seriously. You know, the Lord closed it behind him. The Lord shut the door.

One of these days, he'll shut the door, and the rapture would have taken place just a few days. And then the judgment of God will fall on the earth at the time of the battle of Armageddon. So we ought to be ready.

Jesus said that two will be in the field, two will be in a bed, one will be taken, the other will be left. Families will not go. If there is a Noah, like we read in Ezekiel 14, he will save only himself by his righteousness.

He won't be able to save his wife. He won't be able to save his son. He won't be able to save his daughter.

If there's a lady like Noah, she'll be able to save only herself by her righteousness. She won't be able to save her husband. She won't be able to save her children or anyone.

And that's why it's important that we really understand that these things are serious, that we really seek to live before our families as those who condemn the world and who show to this unbelieving and adulterous generation that this world is not our home, that our kingdom is not of this world. We don't fight for earthly things. We are only interested in building the church.

That's all. We always need to ask ourselves, how does this relate to building the church? All of my ambition and aim in life must be to build a church, and then we do our secular jobs so that we can earn our living and don't end up as beggars. But our main priority and thinking in our life is, how can I do my part to build the church? That needs to revolve in our thinking, how can I build a church? And then we read Genesis chapter 7 and verse 17.

And the flood came upon the earth for forty days. The water increased, lifted up the ark, so it rose upon the earth. The water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth.

The ark floated on the surface of the water. This is judgment. Finally it came.

And the water prevailed more and more on the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere and the heavens were covered. The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered. Which means Mount Everest, too, was covered more than twenty or thirty feet above that mountain, and all flesh that moved on the earth perished.

They didn't believe it. They didn't believe this one man. They thought he was crazy.

They thought he had gone off his head. They thought he was a fanatic. They thought he was a heretic.

They thought he was extreme. They thought he was too narrow-minded, as if God is going to judge people and just wipe out millions. Just like that.

People ask that question, Do you mean to say God's going to wipe out all these millions who haven't heard about Christ, or who have rejected Him? Well, God did it once, and then why won't He do it again? All these crazy ideas. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Don't lean upon our own reason.

When God has said something, it's going to be true. He who believes not in Christ will be damned. That's clear.

And all flesh perished, and only when the judgment came, they started believing. And then it was too late. Birds, cattle, beasts, every swarming thing in all mankind, of all that was in the dry land, all in whose nostrils the breath of the Spirit of life was, died.

And Noah couldn't do anything, because the door was locked by God. If Noah had shut that door, he may have felt sorry for some people and opened it when they banged at the door, but God shut it. And even if Noah wanted, he couldn't have opened it, even when they banged on that door.

Thus God blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals. People can't believe that a loving God will blot out human beings like that. Here it is.

He did it once, and that's proof that he'll do it again. When people don't fear, when people live in sin, when people don't put God as a priority in their life, when people play the humbug and play the hypocrite, God will one day blot them out, and they'll only have themselves to blame, particularly if they have heard the word of truth in the church. And they were blotted out from the earth, and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark.

And the water prevailed upon the earth 150 days. Just think of that, my brothers and sisters. Noah and those that were with him in the ark.

That was the picture of the church. Just think how it must have been inside the ark. It must have been pretty crowded, with all those animals, and pretty smelly.

Inconvenient, but safe. There are a lot of inconveniences in being in the church, but in the day of judgment, it'll be safe. I'll tell you that.

And that's how it was inside the ark. There they lived together, and you know how it is when you have to live in the same house, day in, day out. It's almost like a prison.

They stayed there for more than one year. And I thought of that, you know, when you're living on a ship. I've never lived on a ship for one year, continuously, without seeing anybody else.

But think how it must have been. When you live like that, there are so many lusts in the flesh that get provoked. You see that, for example, when you live together in a home, and never get a chance to see anybody else except each other.

Think if you lived in a house where you never saw anybody except each other for one year. All your nerves will be raw, and so many things where somebody's not carrying the food for that elephant, and somebody else should have taken the food for that lion, and all these things. There's work inside the ark.

And Noah and his sons had to do it, and his wife. And that's how it is. And there, they have to learn to bear with one another.

Because God has put them together in the ark. There's a lesson for us in the church. There's work to be done in the church.

And so easy for us to think, he should have done that, she should have done this. And that's why we've got to learn to bear with one another. It may be inconvenient, but it is safe in the church.

And particularly in the evil world in which we live. I wish all the children growing up in the church will realize there may be a lot of inconveniences in the church, but it is safe. And you'll realize it more as we approach the end.

And I trust that all of you children will always find your home in the church when you grow up. It's dangerous outside the ark. Maybe safe for a while.

Maybe a lot of place to run around outside the ark. There's a lot more freedom outside the ark to do what you like. The ark is a confined space.

We can say many commandments, many restrictions. So many things that people out in the world can't do. We sit here in the ark, but one day we'll thank God for the ark when the judgment comes.

And if Noah's children didn't appreciate the ark before the flood came, they certainly did when it came. And I'll tell you this, the people who don't appreciate the church today, there are those who have got life who appreciate the church already, praise God. But those who don't will appreciate it one day when judgment comes.

Those who don't appreciate the message preached in the church today, take it for granted, will one day appreciate it when judgment comes. Blessed are those who learn to appreciate it now. And so I want to warn you children, don't be influenced by all those children outside the ark who are apparently having a wonderful time.

You don't have much playing space inside the ark like those children. You know what that means. You can't do things they do.

But one day when judgment comes, all these people who sat watching movies on television, and all the other rotten things there are in the days in which we live, which our children didn't see, our children will be thankful that we had some restrictions on these matters in the church. They will protect it from all these things. When judgment finally falls, it's going to be exactly like that in the last days.

A day will come when God will shut the door, and then it'll be too late for those who didn't take it seriously to work out their salvation with fear and trembling. May we read here in chapter 8 verse 1, but God remember Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark. We read here that God told Noah when the flood would come, but he didn't tell him when it would all dry up, how long it would last.

That was going to be a trial of his faith. And there's a wonderful word here, God but God remember Noah. There is a time limit, brothers and sisters, to every testing.

It is never indefinite. In God's mind, he had already planned Noah should be in the ark only for so many days. And read that further.

And God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the water subsided. Also the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were closed. The rain from the sky was restrained, and the water receded steadily from the earth, and at the end of 150 days the water decreased.

And in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat. The flood came, we read in chapter 6 verse 11, in the second month. And the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat five months later, in the seventh month.

And, but they didn't come out. It still took a long time before they could come out of the ark, even though the ark had now rested on top of a mountain. The water decreased steadily until the tenth month.

Another three months before the tops of the mountains became visible. Then it came about at the end of forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made, and he sent out a raven. And it flew here and there until the ark was dried up from the earth.

Then he sent out a dove from him to see if the water was abated from the face of the land. Gradually, the period of judgment was over, and they could have sensed the ark has now stopped floating. It seems to be sitting on something now.

It's steady on top of the mount of, they didn't know where it was, but it was on Mount Ararat, which is in Turkey. That's where the ark rested. Now, the thing I want to point out here is that God remembered Noah.

You see, when we are in through a trial, it can look as though nothing's happening. Raining, raining, raining, raining, raining, raining. The ark is floating, floating, floating, day after day after day after day, month after month after month after month, and it looks as though, has God forgotten us? This trial seems to be quite prolonged.

That's the time we have to remember this verse, but God remembered Noah. What we read in Job 23, verse 10, He knows every detail of what is happening to me. And that's the word we need to remember, particularly when the trial seems to be so long.

For five months, they didn't even know whether the ark is touching down anywhere. Once it touched the mountains, they could at least have some hope that, yeah, okay, now things seem to be subsiding. But for five months, think of that.

Think if something goes on day after day after day after day after day for five months, and then all you got to have, all you have is this window open to heaven, and you can pray to God. And you need faith to believe that God remembers what's happening. God remembers who all are inside the ark.

He will not allow us to be tested beyond our ability. We can apply that to any trial we go through. And there was a particular date in God's timetable for the ark to rest on Mount Ararat, for the water to dry up, and for Noah to come out.

And we can believe that for every trial that God sends into our life, there is a particular time that God's appointed when it is to finish. If you can believe that when you're going through a trial, there is a date in God's book already, when this is to be over. It's not indefinite.

God remembered Noah, and you can put your name there, but God remembered you. When it looked as though you were shut up there with all these smelly animals, and you don't know when it's all going to finish, and when you can come out and breathe some fresh air. We can feel like that when we're going through a trial.

When will I come out of all this and breathe some fresh air? And remember that in God's book, the date's written, when it's all going to be over. So that's a great encouragement to us, because the wind and the water are all His service. He caused the water to come and flood the earth in judgment, and it says here He caused the wind, verse 1, to pass over the earth.

All things are His service. There's a beautiful verse in Psalm 119. If you can believe it, I believe it can bring a lot of salvation to your life.

Psalm 119, it says in the last part of verse 19, thou didst establish the earth. And verse 91, the last part. Psalm 119, verse 91, the last part.

All things are Thy servant. All things, wind, water, people, all created things, are God's servants in this sense. Unwilling servants, many of them, unbelievers.

But God is in control. He knows when to send the wind to stop that flood in our life. And there's a particular date for it, and on that particular day, it'll be written like it says in Genesis 8, when God caused a wind, and the flood passed away from our life.

That's faith, to believe that God has got a timetable for everything that He allows us to go through. So, all things are His servants, and the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect towards Him. Even if they are hidden inside an ark, or hidden inside some cave, or hidden inside some building, God remembers them, and He knows what they're going through, and He's got a timetable to send the wind and to cause something to stop.

And then, Noah sent out the raven. A raven is a crow, and you know that a crow is only interested in eating dead meat. And he sent out the dove.

In Genesis chapter 8, verse 7, he sent out a raven. It flew here and there, and never came back. Do you know why it didn't come back? Because there were thousands of dead bodies.

Ha ha! It's a lovely meal for me, out here. And the raven is a picture of the flesh, and the dove is a picture of the Holy Spirit. And there's a difference between the two.

The raven went out, the flesh goes out, and it sees all these things that it can delight itself on, dead matter, and it's got-- there's no connection between that and coming back to the ark. But the dove, it went, and when it saw all this dead matter, it came back. And I believe that's the difference.

There are people who go out of the church, and they never come back, because their heart is in the world. They may have come here and sat and listened, but a time comes when they go out, and they're not interested in coming back. But those who've got the Spirit of Christ, if they go, they come right back.

So they say, it's no good out there. It's no good out there. It's all dead matter.

And I really pray that, particularly for our children, that it'll be like that, that they won't be like the raven, and they'll be like the dove. When they see the world, they'll say, back to the ark, that's my home. And they sent out a dove from Him to see the water, and the dove found no resting place, verse 9, for the sole of her foot.

Beautiful. If it can be said about all of us, that when we go out into the world, we find no resting place, the raven can find it. Those who've got that nature, they'll find it.

But we find no resting place. So she returned at the mark of the Spirit. When we go to unbelievers, we find no resting place there.

Back to the fellowship of the believers. There are lots of so-called believers who find it wonderful when they are with their unbelieving friends. If you feel comfortable with your unbelieving friends, my dear brother, my dear sister, the chances are that you're a raven.

You've got the nature of a raven, that you've found a resting place. The sole of your foot has found a resting place in the midst of these unconverted, godless people, who have no interest in the Church or in salvation. You're happy with them.

Quite comfortable. Your sole has found a resting place there. Don't deceive yourself that your Christianity means anything.

You've got the nature of a raven. But the dove could find no resting place and came right back into the Church. Say, my home is here.

My home is with the believers. That's where I find my resting place. Then Noah pulled out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark.

He waited another seven days, and the dove went out. And in her beak was a freshly picked olive leaf. And then he knew that the water was abated from the earth.

And then he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, and she did not return to him again, which meant that the was now habitable. There will be a time when we can go out and be out on the earth forever. And that is when Jesus says, change this earth again.

And it has become habitable in terms of righteousness. Then we can go out in the millennium. The whole earth, the meek will inherit the earth, Jesus said in that day.

But there we see a picture of life in the flesh and life in the spirit. The raven and the dove. And also I want you to see here a beautiful picture of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in three different periods.

In the Old Testament, the dove going out from heaven and coming back could not rest on anyone permanently. The Holy Spirit could not be given. And then a second stage, when the dove went out and rested on one tree, an olive tree, brought an olive leaf, a picture of one person, Christ, on whom the dove could rest permanently, but only one.

And then a third period in the New Testament, where the Holy Spirit has come out and he's never gone back to heaven. He's been here on this earth forever. So you see all that's hidden there, way back in the Old Testament, the ministry of the Holy Spirit in three different periods.

In the Old Covenant, going on some people, coming back. Rested on a David, on a Samson, on an Elijah, came back. The second period in Christ, where he rested on one person permanently, the Prince of Peace, for the olive leaf is a picture of peace.

And then thirdly in the New Testament age, the New Covenant, where the Holy Spirit's gone out and poured out on all flesh, and she did not return to him again. Verse 13, it came about in the six hundred and first year in the first month, in the first of the month, the water was dried up from the earth. Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the surface of the ground was dried up.

And in the second month, in the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry. More than one year has passed, one year and ten days. Compare that with chapter six, verse eleven, you'll find it's one year and ten days, three hundred and seventy-five days.

Then God spoke to Noah, saying, Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Now it is time to enjoy the earth again. It's a picture of going out into the millennium.

The new earth, the old earth, has been destroyed, and the new earth is now ready for habitation for the righteous people who were in the church. Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you, birds and animals, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

It may breed abundantly on the earth, be fruitful and multiply on this new earth. So Noah went out, he and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him, every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by their families from the ark. Everything in obedience, going in by obedience, coming out by obedience.

Then Noah, very beautiful to see this, said the first thing Noah thought of doing as soon as he came out was not look around for a place to build a house, but saying, Lord, I want to build an altar. I want to worship you. I want to thank you for saving my life.

That's not always the first thing we think of after a trial is over and God's brought us safely through. God's healed our sickness, which we thought was near unto death. God's taken care of our children, whom we thought something serious had happened to them.

And the first thing is it to bow down before God and say, Lord, I want to thank you. It says here, he took every clean animal, every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. Now, the burnt offering is different from the sin offering.

When you study Leviticus, you'll see that the sin offering was for sin. That's Jesus dying on the cross for our sins. But the burnt offering is not for sin.

The burnt offering is a picture of presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice to God for him to use for his glory. That's the burnt offering. If you can remember that difference between the sin offering and the burnt offering.

And Noah offered, not a sin offering, a burnt offering, which symbolized, Lord, here I am, take me, I want to live for you. That is the only response of gratitude that we can give when God has answered a prayer, when God's done something for us, protected us through judgment, protected us from some, saved us through some calamity or trial. If we can remember what, that God remembered Noah.

And then when Noah came out, Noah remembered God. And we remember him and offer our bodies to him and say, Lord, you preserved my life so that I can live for you. Think of an accident that God may have saved you from.

Accident that could have taken away your life, that you may not be on earth today. I've been through situations like that, that I may not have been alive today, even before I was converted. And I say, why did God save my life? Was it so that I can live for myself, do what I like, enjoy myself? No.

That I might live for God. That I might give my body to him. I hope you realize that.

If God saves you from some serious sickness or from some accident, that you might live for him. Offer a burnt offering to him and give to him. And it says here, he took every clean animal and every clean bird.

Remember this. Those were not the days when there were plenty of animals and birds and everything else on the earth. No.

This is the limited quantity that he had, and he gave it to God. He took out of the little he had, and he gave to God. He put God first.

Verse twenty-one, And the Lord smells a soothing aroma. The Lord takes note of that. And the Lord said to himself, I'll never again curse the ground on account of man, because I know that the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth.

Remember that. Man's imagination is evil right from his youth. And I'll never again destroy every living thing as I've done.

While the earth remains, sleep, time, and harvest, cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. And we can say for four thousand years now, God's kept that promise. Sleep, time, and harvest are there in the world, and they will not cease till Jesus comes again.

Cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night have not ceased for four thousand years. Remember, sleep, time, and harvest are in God's hands. All these things continue today because God has said, I will not judge the earth by a flood again.

But He is going to judge it with fire when Jesus comes back. May I trust that what we have read here will help us to understand what it means to be ready for the rapture when Jesus comes again. Because we have to be the type of person that Noah was in order to enter into the ark, to be ready for the coming of Christ.

May the Lord help us.

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