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## Studies in Genesis - 10

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# Studies in Genesis

(Leaflet 10)

## CHAPTER VI

### "THE DAYS OF NOAH" AND THE ARK OF SAFETY

God had given the antediluvians repeated instruction in the way of salvation, as well as repeated warning of His righteous judgment upon sin. But His instruction was spurned; His warning, unheeded by the great mass of humanity. Therefore, He sent the flood upon the earth in the days of Noah.

Let those who would dare to find fault with God for so terrible a judgment remember that, when man defies God and refuses to repent, God must judge sin. But not only so; He must put away sin, in order to deal in mercy with His creatures, giving those who will obey Him yet further opportunity to receive His "great salvation." The flood, then, was God's way of cleaning up a corrupt and an evil world; and it was His way of giving man a new beginning, a purified earth, another chance. It was an act of the righteous judgment of our holy God upon those who stubbornly and finally rejected His salvation. And it was an act of mercy of our loving Lord, in getting rid of unspeakable evil on the earth, so that His children might receive His gift of eternal life.

There have ever been those who mock, denying that there was a flood, such as is described in the Genesis story of the eternal Word of God. But those who ridicule this record deny also all the miracles, all the supernatural, in the divinely inspired Scriptures. To them the "Thus saith the Lord" means nothing; to the man of faith it settles every issue, finally and completely.

The man of faith also believes the words of the Lord Jesus, who said that the deluge "in the days of Noah" was a fact of history. He believes the words of God's servants who, guided by the Holy Spirit, also bore testimony to the

historical fact of this judgment of God in sending the flood. (See Job 22:15, 16; Psalm 90:5; Matt. 24:38, 39; Luke 17:26, 27; Heb. 11:7; I Peter 3:20; II Peter 2:5; 3:4-7.)

Moreover, if the skeptic only knew it, both geology and tradition prove that there was such a flood. Only the Holy Spirit can convict him of his sin in doubting the eternal Word of God. Our purpose, in this lesson today, is to see what God has said, in the sixth chapter of Genesis and in related New Testament passages, about why this judgment came upon an exceedingly wicked world; and what God has said about the ark of refuge for Noah, the only man who "found grace in the eyes of the Lord."

And in searching the Scriptures for God's record of these things, we find that He tells us, in much detail, why the flood came, why Noah and his family were saved in the ark, as well as why God put the rainbow in the sky when He made a covenant with Noah, never again to destroy His creatures on the earth by a flood. In our future lessons we shall study about the flood itself and God's covenant with Noah. Today we want to see why the flood came, and how God mercifully saved Noah and his family from the waters of judgment.

### "THE DAYS OF NOAH"

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth . . ." (verses 1-5).

1. "*The Sons of God*" and "*The Daughters of Men.*" Who were these "sons of God," whose union with "the daughters of men" produced a race of "giants," or "Neph-

ilim," as the Revised Version translates the word? ("Nephilim" means "fallen ones.")

The words we have just read from the sixth chapter of Genesis describe a form of sin that was so terrible before God that He would not let the human race continue in it. But mark you what Jesus said, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man" (Luke 17:26, 27; compare Matt. 24: 37-39). The degraded form of sin practiced in "the days of Noah" will be indulged in again during the darkest period of this world's history, just prior to the return of Christ in glory.

But who were these "sons of men"? Bible students hold two views as to their identity. Consecrated, orthodox, scholarly men of God differ in their opinion on this point. Therefore, we shall try to present both views, quoting fully from the footnote of the Scofield Reference Bible and from "Gleanings in Genesis" by Arthur W. Pink. Both works are true to "the old faith"; and they summarize concisely the two views held concerning this difficult passage. We might add just here that the Bible commentators, Jamieson-Fausset-Brown agree with Dr. Scofield; the late Reverend James M. Gray, D.D., taught according to the interpretation held by Arthur W. Pink.

This is the footnote on Gen. 6:4, as found in the Scofield Reference Bible:

"Some hold that these 'sons of God' were the 'angels which kept not their first estate' (Jude 6). It is asserted that the title is in the Old Testament exclusively used of angels. But this is an error (Isa. 43:6). Angels are spoken of in a sexless way. No female angels are mentioned in Scripture, and we are expressly told that marriage is unknown among angels (Matt. 22:30). The uniform Hebrew and Christian interpretation has been that verse 2 marks the breaking down of the separation between the godly line of Seth and the godless line of Cain, and so the failure of the testimony to Jehovah committed to the line of Seth (Gen. 4:26)."

According to this view, the "giants" which came of this unholy union were not necessarily of great stature, but were

men of human achievement, possibly "of reckless ferocity, impious and daring characters, who spread devastation and carnage far and wide" (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown).

The other interpretation, which to me seems to agree more fully with all Scripture truth, holds that these "sons of God," or "Nephilim," "fallen ones," were "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation" (Jude 6). When these fallen angels consorted with depraved man, the "cup of iniquity" was full. The moral depravity and decay were such that God had to sweep the earth clean by the flood. Only one family did not defile themselves with the Nephilim; for "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations" (verse 9). But of the corrupt ones, we read:

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (verse 5).

Corruption and violence—moral depravity and crime—filled the earth!

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. . . . And God said unto Noah . . . the earth is filled with violence" (verses 11-13).

Note the emphasis, by repetition, placed upon the words, "corruption" and "violence." And this basest of evils grew out of an awful sin. Here is the way Arthur W. Pink summarizes the interpretation that this "wickedness" resulted from the union of the Nephilim, or fallen angels, with "the daughters of men":

1. If "the sons of God" were of the godly line of Seth; "the daughters of men," of the godless line of Cain; then "it would follow that at the time this amalgamation took place God's people were limited to the *male* sex." This seems improbable.

2. "If these 'sons of God' were believers, then they per-

ished in the flood; but II Peter 2:5 states otherwise: 'God spared not the old world . . . bringing in the flood upon the world of the *ungodly*.'

3. "There is no hint in the Divine record (so far as we can discover) that God had yet given any specific command forbidding His people to marry unbelievers. In view of this silence it seems exceedingly strange that this sin should have been visited with such a fearful judgment. In all ages there have been many of God's people who have united with worldlings, who have been 'unequally yoked together,' yet no calamity in anywise compared with the deluge has followed." This, of course, does not mean that God is pleased when His blood-bought children are "unequally yoked together with unbelievers." We know that He is not. Yet we believe that this does not alter the fact stated above.

4. "One wonders why the union of believers with unbelievers should result in 'giants.' 'There were giants (or 'fallen ones') in the earth in those days' (Gen. 6:4)."

5. "If, then, the words 'sons of God' do not signify the saints of that age, to whom do they refer? In Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7 the same expression is found, and in these passages the reference is clearly to angels. It is a significant fact that some versions of the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament used by Christ when He was on earth) contain the word 'angels' in Gen. 6:2, 4."

6. "That the 'sons of God' who are here represented as cohabiting with the 'daughters of men' were angels—fallen angels—seems to be taught in Jude 6: 'And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.' " In leaving their own habitation, they "came down to earth" evidently, and "sinned" (II Pet. 2:4).

7. "Against the view that 'the sons of God' were fallen angels, Matthew 22:30 is often cited. But when the contents of this verse are closely studied, it will be found that there is really nothing in it which conflicts with what we have said above. Had our Lord said, 'In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of

God,' and stopped there, the objection would have real force. But the Lord did not stop there. He added a qualifying phrase about angels—'as the angels of God in heaven.' The last two words make all the difference. The angels 'in heaven' neither marry, nor are they given in marriage. But the angels referred to in Genesis 6 as 'the sons of God' were no longer in heaven; as Jude 6 expressly informs us, 'they left their own principality.' They fell from their celestial position and came down to earth, entering into unlawful alliance with the daughters of men. This, we are assured, is the reason why Christ modified and qualified His assertion in Matthew 22:30. The angels of God 'in heaven' do not marry, but those who 'left their own principality' did.

The result of this unholy alliance was "a race of monstrocities." "There were giants in the earth in those days"—"fallen ones," "Nephilim." "The term 'men of renown' of Genesis 6:4 probably finds its historical equivalent in the 'heroes' of Grecian mythology."

And "why did these angels thus sin?" The answer is that Satan evidently sought, by this means, "to frustrate" God's purpose, which He had announced to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, to send into the world the promised Redeemer, the "Seed of woman." Thus "Satan attempted to destroy the human race," which was to be "the channel through which the Lord Jesus was to come." And, to repeat for emphasis, Satan hoped to do this "by producing a race of monstrocities." Why? Because Satan hates God; and because Satan evidently sought "to avert his threatened doom."

(Among other Bible students who present this view are: Pember, in "Earth's Earliest Ages"; and Sir J. William Dawson, in "The Meeting Place of Geology and History.")

Dr. James M. Gray, in his "Christian Workers' Commentary," adds this striking statement: The words "after that" in Genesis 6:4 seem "to refer to Numbers 13:31-33, where in the report of the spies to Moses they speak of the men of Canaan as of 'great stature,' adding: 'And there we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak which come of the Nephilim.' This suggests that the culminating sin of the Canaanites was not different from that of the antediluvians."

These are the two interpretations held by orthodox Christians concerning this difficult passage. Regardless of which view you accept, my friend, the awful depravity that filled the earth "in the days of Noah" brought the waters of judgment in the flood.

And even today, in spite of former judgment upon sin, in spite of repeated warnings in God's Word of yet future judgment upon sin, the unregenerate heart is unchanged. And "the days of Noah" will be re-enacted on the stage of the world's last drama of sin and lawlessness, corruption and violence. Our Lord said so, in words unmistakably clear and plain.

2. "*The Days of Noah*" and "*The Days of the Son of Man*." When the Lord Jesus said that evil, as in "the days of Noah," would fill the earth just prior to His return in glory, He set at naught all the doctrine of men who teach that the world will get better and better, and that the church, with her teaching, will usher in the millennium. It will be the personal, bodily return of Christ, the King, that will bring this golden age to pass upon the earth. Listen to our Lord's own words:

"As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:37-39; compare Luke 17:26, 27).

"In the days of Noah" there was a race of supermen, men of enormous size, who were born on the earth because of some terrible spiritual sin, into which the human race had fallen. And my friends, remember that this world is going on, and God is going to let it go on in sin, in a way that nothing will stop it.

Man is determined to have sin at any cost. The magazines and newspapers of this country today are printing just as much as the censors will let them print; and if censorship were raised today, our magazines and newspapers could not be allowed in our Christian homes. Man is bent



on sin. Everything that man does today has to be censored. Thank God, there are a few men left who have a little decency! But when the church is gone; when the little "salt" now in the world, restraining it from putrefaction, is gone; when "the great tribulation" comes upon the earth in all its fulness; then "the days of Noah" will be re-enacted, even as the Lord Jesus said.

The corruption which followed the unholy union of "the sons of God" with "the daughters of men" may refer to spiritualism in its worst form. Spiritualism as we know it is a terrible thing today. But spiritualism; that is, traffic with fallen angels (for that is what spiritualism is, traffic of the human race with angels) is to increase as the age draws to a close.

"The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons" (I Tim. 4:1). According to Rev. 17 and 18, God will send fire instead of a flood, to cut off the progress of sin in the world, as the great tribulation runs its awful course. "The Mother of Harlots," spiritual wickedness, will come to her terrible doom.

"In the days of Noah" "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

That is the condition, my friends, of the unregenerate human race. Mark the word "continually." You know this world does not have seasons of goodness; wicked men do not have seasons of goodness. The whole human race just goes on clamoring for sin more and more, and the thoughts and imaginations of their hearts are only evil continually. Corruption and violence reign in the greater part of this sin-cursed world.

"Violence!" Is that not an apt word to describe the godless today? A short time ago a cartoon appeared on the front page of one of the morning papers. A cartoonist is always a clever creature to me, one who can see things as they are and put them in pictures. This cartoonist had seen crime in the city. He had seen the holdups, the murders, the bank robberies; he had seen the increase of lawlessness; he

had seen that it was getting beyond the police and their power to check it. His picture was of a giant, standing in one of the thoroughfares of one of our cities, towering beyond the telegraph wires, and away up with some of the skyscrapers—a great giant, pictured in the streets. In one hand he held a club, while the other hand was dripping with the blood of men. Across the belt of that great giant, who was walking through the streets of a great city, was lettered one word, the word God used in Gen. 6—VIOLENCE.

That cartoonist may or may not have known the record of the sixth chapter of Genesis and the prophecy of our Lord concerning the end of this age. But as, "in the days of Noah," the earth was filled with violence, so it is today; and so it will be when Jesus comes again. Repeatedly God foretold that it would be so, in such passages as those already quoted, to say nothing of II Thess. 2:1-12; I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 3:1-13; II Peter 2:1-22; 3:1-17; Jude; and many similar passages.

My unsaved friend, look to Calvary's Cross and be born again; for you know not the day nor the hour when the Lord will come to rid this evil world once more of sin. And "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" unsaved, forever lost! (Heb. 10:31).

3. "*My Spirit Shall Not Always Strive with Man,*" God said concerning the wicked generation before the flood (verse 3). And He warned man in that time that his days should be prolonged "an hundred and twenty years." But the ungodly of that generation would not heed God's warning, proclaimed by "Noah . . . a preacher of righteousness" (II Peter 2:5). Doubtless they scoffed as they watched him build the ark. And in this they rejected Noah's God.

As we saw in our last lesson, the Lord had already given them a sign by saying that, when Methuselah died, the end would come. And now, 120 years before the end, He gave them the exact date. My friends, that is how God pours on and pours on grace. He lets us know of judgment to come. If anybody in this radio audience is lost, it will not be God's fault; remember that. God gave the best He had to redeem the human race. If you reject His Son, the

only Saviour, my friend, then the responsibility will be yours. If someone has not heard of this only Saviour, then the responsibility is upon us who are Christians. It is not God's fault. Never has anyone wanted to tell lost humanity of Christ who died for sinners, but that God has opened the way for him to go with the message.

God gave these antediluvians a sign, this man who lived the longest. Then God said, in substance, to Noah, "Now I will tell you the time; 120 years from this date the end will come." And we learn in the New Testament that Noah became "a preacher of righteousness." Whether Noah had preached up to that time, we do not know; but certainly he preached justification by faith; for Heb. 11:7 tells us that he "became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

Likewise, the message of the crucified and risen Lord is being proclaimed in this age of grace. Moreover, the Word of God faithfully, repeatedly warns the ungodly of impending judgment. One of these days the Holy Spirit's restraining influence will be taken away. Like Enoch before the flood, the church, which is "the salt of the earth," will be translated, removed from this wicked world, forever to be with the Lord. "The great tribulation" will quickly run its course. And then the "Judge of all the earth," the "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords," will return to tread "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. 19:15, 16).

"The man of sin," even the Antichrist, can not be revealed until the Holy Spirit, with the church, "be taken out of the way" (II Thess. 2:7). Until then, the Spirit of God will "strive with men." But when "the cup of iniquity is full," He will let sin come to its awful fruition. The Holy Spirit "now hindereth" and "will hinder" the manifestation of "the man of sin" until He ceases to strive with a corrupt and godless world, as He ministers in and through the church. But when He is "taken out of the way . . . then shall that Lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (See II Thess. 2:6-10.)

Again let me warn you who are out of Christ to put your faith in His atoning blood, and "flee from the wrath to come." The Lord said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man."

Now this is a favorite text with many who preach about "the unpardonable sin." Nearly every evangelist, if he can not move the unsaved in any other way, preaches on "the unpardonable sin," and tells the lost that they may get to a place where they will have sinned so much the Holy Spirit will leave them and never strive with them again.

There is nothing like that in the Bible, absolutely nothing. Men have rejected the Lord Jesus Christ all their lives, and then at eighty years of age, or more, have found Him as their Saviour. What God said to Noah was, in substance, this: "My Spirit will continue to strive with this generation now for 120 years. At the end of 120 years the Holy Spirit will be withdrawn and the flood will come." That is clear. Why take a Scripture out of its setting, and make it teach something it does not teach? God does not say anywhere that, when man gets to a certain place in the rejection of Christ, the Holy Spirit will leave him to himself so that he will be lost.

I have read of terrible cases where people have heard a sermon on "the unpardonable sin," and have died in agony because they believed that they had committed this sin, and that the Holy Spirit had left them because there was no hope for them. Some evangelist was responsible for that, probably. Certainly God was not.

Let us turn to Mark 3:28-30. It may be that some of us need to have this matter of the unpardonable sin cleared up in our minds.

**"Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: because they said, He hath an unclean spirit."**

That is the sin against the Holy Ghost. What spirit did Jesus have? He had the Holy Spirit. These men said, "He hath an unclean spirit," the spirit of "Beelzebub." They were condemning Him for having an evil spirit, when he had the Holy Spirit. That was a sin against the Holy Spirit.

I have never heard anybody do that in my ministry. Men say today, "We believe that Jesus was only a good Man." How they can say that, when He claimed so much, we do not know; but they do say it. Our Jewish friends say that; they say, "We believe that Jesus was a good man. We believe that He did good. We believe that He did noble deeds of righteousness, but we do not believe He was eternal God, the Messiah of the Jews." But have you ever met a man, my friend, who said he believed that Jesus of Nazareth, the Jesus of history, the Lord Jesus Christ, was possessed of an evil spirit? I have never heard that. That is the sin against the Holy Ghost. Men have rejected the Lord Jesus through a long life; and then, through some ministry of the Word, they have been touched by the Holy Spirit and brought to the feet of the Lord Jesus, in faith, to be saved. Anyone on the face of the earth can be born again by believing that Christ died for his sins and rose again for his justification.

I believe that the sin against the Holy Ghost was confined to the day when Jesus was in the flesh, when the Jews of that day saw Him heal and said, "He does it by the power of Satan, or Beelzebub." But when God said to Noah that, after 120 years, He would "no longer strive with man," that was a very different matter. He was saying that He would purify the sinful earth by a flood, giving man a new beginning in His walk with Him.

4. *"And It Repented the Lord That He Had Made Man on the Earth, and It grieved Him at His Heart"* (verse 6). What tragedy, that man should grieve the heart of the God of love!

"And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them" (verses 6, 7).

"And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth" (verse 13).

Now we know that God's eternal purpose never changes. He is "the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). Therefore, we must remember that the language, God "repented" that He had made man, is "suited to our nature and experience," in that He alters "His visible procedure towards mankind." "Jehovah never repents or changes His mind, but His dealings with men, as governed by their conduct, appear to them as if He did so."

As we have already seen, corrupt man had spurned God's pleading. He had turned a deaf ear to the preaching of Abel and Enoch and Noah. He had rebelled against God, and refused to believe in the Saviour to come. Therefore, God gave man another chance—after He had cleansed the defiled earth by the waters of judgment. And to propagate the race, to fulfill His promise of the "Seed of woman," who was to come, even our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, He preserved Noah and his family, taking them through the waters of judgment. And why? The answer is found in these wonderful words:

**"NOAH FOUND GRACE IN THE EYES OF THE LORD"**

"Grace!" "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33).

"By grace" Abel and Enoch and Noah and all the redeemed of God of all the ages were saved. And "grace" is "unmerited favor." "By grace are ye saved through faith," my friends; "and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9).

The wicked generation "in the days of Noah" spurned God's grace.

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord . . . Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and

Noah walked with God. . . . And God said unto Noah . . . with thee I will establish my covenant; and thou shalt come unto the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee" (verses 8, 9, 13, 18).

"Noah was a just man," having been "justified by faith" in the promised Redeemer. Therefore, he "found grace in the eyes of the Lord."

"Noah was . . . perfect in his generations"; that is, he and his family had not indulged in the moral evils of the time. They had kept themselves from the "Nephilim." "Perfect" here means "upright" or "sincere," a right relationship with God.

"Noah walked with God" in a fellowship made possible because of the place of the altar, on which he sacrificed the offering unto the Lord—an act of faith in the atoning blood of the coming Saviour. Therefore, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."

**"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7).**

Noah had faith in the Word of God. It seems very clear that rain was then a thing unknown. In Gen. 2:5, 6 we read that "the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth . . . but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground." If, indeed, rain was a thing unknown hitherto, then how great must have been Noah's faith—and how cruel the ridicule heaped upon him by a scoffing world as he preached of impending judgment, and as he built the ark!

Noah was "moved with fear" of the righteous judgment of his holy God. Oh, that men today, reckless men, would fear Satan and hell and eternal torment! Little wonder the arch-enemy of man's soul ridicules the awful reality of judgment to come! But yet "the wicked shall be turned into hell." "Thus saith the Lord."

Noah had taught his family to separate themselves from the evils around them. And he was rewarded by "the saving of his house." To the Philippian jailer Paul and Silas said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." And that "same hour of the night" he "was baptized, he and all his, straightway . . . believing in God with all his house" (Acts 16:31-34). Each child, of course, must acknowledge Christ as his own personal Saviour; but God has promised to honor the faith of believing parents. And He always keeps His promise!

Noah, "a preacher of righteousness," (II Peter 2:5), by the testimony of his life, "condemned the world" of the ungodly. My Christian friend, is your life a sermon to your unsaved loved ones and friends? "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men," God said to us through Paul (II Cor. 3:2). "Can the world see Jesus" in us?

"Noah became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Clothed in that imputed righteousness, which only Christ can give, Noah has been sharing heaven's glory for more than four thousand years. And he will behold the face of his Redeemer and Lord for all eternity.

What grace! "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." And the same grace of God awaits every soul that will "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

#### THE ARK OF SAFETY

It was no little task to build the ark; it was "a stupendous task"! The actual cost in materials and time must have been very great. But Noah obeyed God, regardless of material cost or labor or ridicule. "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (verse 22). And God's commands were very explicit:

"Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms (or 'nests') shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch" (verse 14).

"Gopher wood" is "probably cypress, remarkable for its durability, and abounding in the Armenian Mountains"



(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown). (These commentators tell us that the word "Ararat" in Gen. 8:4 is translated "Armenia" in II Kings 19:37 and Isa. 37:38. Evidently, therefore, "the ark rested . . . upon the mountains of Armenia.")

"And God said unto Noah . . . This is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits" (verses 13, 15).

Dr. James M. Gray makes this explanation about the size of the ark: "The measurement of the cubit is uncertain, the ordinary length being 18 inches; the sacred cubit, twice that length; and the geometric, which some think may be meant, six times the common cubit. At the lowest calculation the ark was as large as some of our ocean liners. . . . The ark in all its three stories contained probably 100,000 square feet of space."

According to Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, if one cubit here is  $21\frac{888}{1000}$  inches, then the ark was 547 ft. long; 91 ft., 2 in. wide; 47 ft., 2 in. high—"not a ship, but an immense house" of the East, designed "not to sail, but to float." The number of animals it was to accommodate was "not so large as one is apt to imagine. It has been calculated that there are not more than 300 distinct species of beasts and birds, the immense varieties in regard to form, size, and color being traceable to the influence of climate and other circumstances." Of course, the fish of the seas were not taken into the ark.

"And God said unto Noah . . . A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above" (verses 13, 16).

How good God was, to keep Noah and his family looking up—God-ward; and to spare them the distress of seeing the waters of judgment drown "every living thing"!

"And the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it" (verse 16).

Thus there were "rooms" or "nests" for man and birds and beasts and creeping things.

"And behold, I," God said to Noah, "even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die" (verse 17).

According to God's express command, Noah preserved "of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort . . . to keep them *alive* . . . male and female"; and "of every clean beast . . . by sevens, the male and his female," for *sacrifice* unto God. (See 6:19-21; 7:2.) But let us note also God's loving provision when He said, "and take thou unto thee of all *food* that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it unto thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them"; that is, the animals (verse 21).

"Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him so did he" (verse 22)—regardless of the cost in personal sacrifice; for Noah was a man of faith. Little wonder he "found grace in the eyes of the Lord"! He received from God the faith to believe the Word of Jehovah, not spurning His abundant grace.

#### THE ARK—A TYPE OF CHRIST

Looking ahead, into our next lesson, we read that after Noah and his family had gone into the ark; after the Lord had caused the animals to enter "two and two unto Noah into the ark"—a miracle which must have amazed the godless spectators; then "the Lord shut him in" (7:9, 16). God sent the animals in "unto Noah," in perfect order; and God closed the door! The literal translation of "The Lord shut him in" is "The Lord covered him round about." What a refuge! And what a beautiful analogy we have here—the ark a picture of Christ, the living God, our Refuge and Strength! In Him we are safe for all the endless ages, safe from Satan and hell, safe in His great love!

Noah's safety was in his position—in the ark. Outside there was nothing but death and desolation. Everything died. But in the ark all were perfectly safe from judgment and death—not because of their feelings, but because of their position!

Likewise, the believer in Christ is eternally secure from everlasting torment, not because he feels safe, but because of his position in Christ.

There may have been times during the year that Noah was in the ark when he was having a very trying time. He had many animals to care for. Some animals make much noise, and some animals fight. There may have been many things for Noah to contend with during that year when God had him shut in. There were times, undoubtedly, when he was discouraged. But was there ever a moment when he was not safe? Certainly not! His safety was not in his feelings. His safety was in his position.

My Christian friend, when God saved us, He placed us in the eternal Ark of Refuge, even the Lord Jesus Christ. All about us are death and desolation. But in Christ we ought to be happy; in Christ we ought to be satisfied; in Christ we should never be in despair. Yet we do get discouraged; we do despair; we do become unhappy; we do wonder why certain things happen. There is often too much noise; our nerves are nearly shattered; we do not feel as happy in our Christian experience as we should like to feel. But let no one doubt that his salvation is eternally secure in Christ. Do you see, my friend; it is your position in Him, not your own feelings that safeguard you from the certain condemnation that is the portion of all out of Christ.

Perhaps you say, "I don't feel the way a Christian ought to feel." Do you not think Noah should have been happy during the flood, to know that he and his family were saved and safe? Well, do you not think you ought to be happy in Christ, the safest place, the only safe place in the universe? When you know that you may lay down your human life today; when you know that at any moment you may be called to meet the Lord; when you know that at any moment Christ may come and take you home to be with Himself—when you know all this, should you not be happy regardless of the trials and testings? Do you not see how much better position is than feeling? Many people want feeling. They run after an experience. They say, "This

man has an experience I don't have." My friends, he does not always have that experience he claims. Moreover, it is better not to be caught up into the heavens with joy and rapture, if the next day, when you may be in the valley, you are going to doubt God. Better never to be on the mountain top of emotional excitement, trusting your feelings instead of your position in Christ. If you have put your faith in His atoning work on the cross of Calvary, then Satan and all his hosts can not touch your eternal soul! Like Job, you may go through fiery trials. Like Noah, you may pass through severe testings. But in Christ Jesus, the only Ark of Safety, you are forever secure.

In this connection, let us note that God told Noah to "pitch it (the Ark) within and without with pitch" (verse 14). We are told that the Hebrew word for "pitch" is translated seventy times in the Old Testament "to make atonement," meaning "to cover." Only as we are sheltered beneath the atoning blood of Christ, are we eternally safe. Not His sinless, wonderful life, but His precious blood, and that alone, can wash us "whiter than snow."

Moreover, the ark was planned by God, even to the most minute detail. Our Lord Jesus planned, before the world was, to die for us, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

The ark was made of the tree "cut down," of "earth's materials." So also our eternal God took upon Himself human flesh—"yet without sin"; and He was "cut off," crucified, that we might be forever safe in Him.

The waters of judgment fell upon Him, wave upon wave; for He "bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (I Peter 2:24).

The ark had only one door. And there is only one way to God, even as our Lord plainly said, "I am the door of the sheep . . . I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 10:7; 14:6).

The one window in the ark was "above." Our Lord Jesus, "the Light of the world," would have us ever look God-ward for light and life.

The "rooms" or "nests" in the ark were resting places. And to Noah God said, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark" (7:1). "Come unto me," the Saviour said, "and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

Having passed through the waters of judgment, "the ark rested . . . upon the mountains of Ararat" (8:4). And our Saviour, having borne the penalty of all our sins—wave upon wave of suffering—arose from the grave, ascended into heaven, and "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3). Moreover, because He arose, all who are in Him, the Ark of Safety, shall share His resurrection glory.

#### "COME THOU . . . INTO THE ARK"

My unsaved friend, "the days of Noah" were dark, indeed, for those who were not sheltered in the ark of refuge; but they were not darker than your eternal soul will be—forever—unless you enter the Ark of Safety by faith in the shed blood of the Son of God. Like Noah, you may find "grace in the eyes of the Lord," and be saved. But God's Spirit "will not always strive with man"; one day He will come again to purify this sinful world, and to reign supreme. Listen to His gracious invitation, "Come unto me." Heed His voice of forgiving love: "Come now, and let us reason together . . . though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18).

In Him, sheltered beneath His atoning blood, you will find rest, even as He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).