

The Faithfulness of Noah
Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC
Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr.
August 2, 2020

Diaspora XX – The Church Scattered, Twentieth Sunday

Text: Genesis 6:3-22, 7:1-5, 15-17, 23

Purpose To help us recognize that God calls people to do certain tasks. In Noah's case, he was to build an ark. God saved a remnant of people and animals. From those saved, God repopulated the earth.

The story of Noah is so rich with detail that is so hard to preach about the life, time, and tribulations of Noah in just one sermon. This is a story of adventure, justice, mystery, grace, trust, and obedience. Some stories like Noah and the huge Ark God called him to build can only be conveyed by pictures.

We see Noah was given the task to build a boat big enough to fill a football stadium. We see the society in which he lived was corrupt and evil. Man's lifespan back then far exceeded what we are used to today. Yet living longer did not make them better people. Once evil settled in their heart, that evil seemed to grow and continue as long as they lived.



Last week, we saw how God gave instructions about worship and sacrifice to Cain and Abel. We saw the tragic ending when Cain disobeyed and allowed sin to reign in his heart. Cain killed Abel and was sent wandering the face of the earth. But the child of promise came to Adam and Eve. That child of promise was Seth.

Today, I want us to move forward a few generations to a man named Noah.

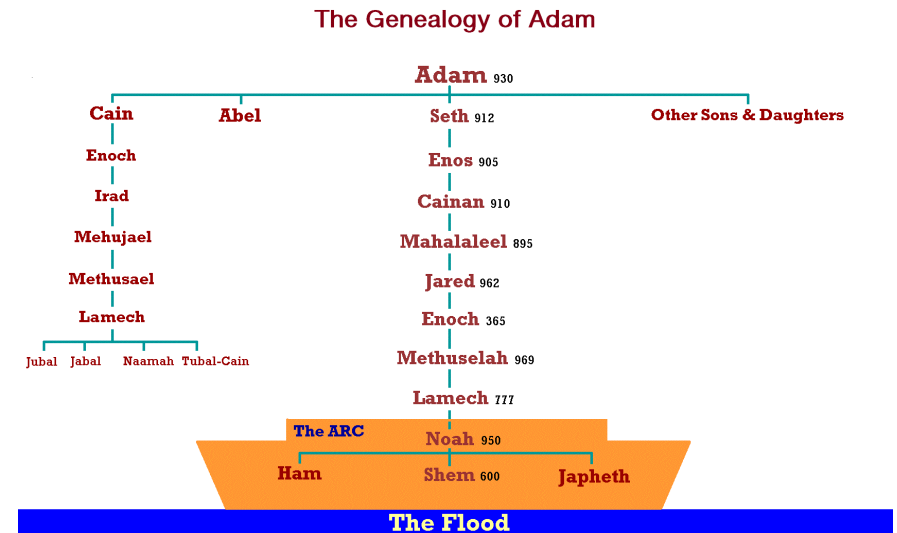
What I want us to do this morning is to imagine we are on the deck of that boat that Noah built. It has been almost a year since the great flood began. The winds have begun to blow upon the waters. The waters have begun to recede. I want you to imagine you are sitting right there on that huge boat made of Gopher wood. I want you to imagine that I am Noah telling you the story for the first time. You are to be visitors transported to the deck of the ark from the 21st century. I know this will be a stretch for some of us to imagine this, but let us give it a try this morning.

[Sermon presented in the voice of Noah]

I am so tired of seeing water. It seems all I do all day is feed the animals, listen to my family complain and asking me when will the waters recede, and all I can do is say, "God will provide in His own time."

I am so glad all of you have come this morning to hear my story. I know my family has heard my story over and over until they are sick of me telling them. I am sure you have heard your grandparents tell their stories of the war or when they grew up. Well, since you are new to this boat, let me tell you my family story.

During our day, people live to be hundreds of years old. I can trace my genealogy back to Adam and Eve. That's easy for me since there have only been 9 generations between me and Adam.



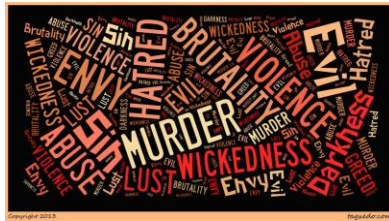
Genealogy of Noah

Adam	lived 930 years	130 years old then begot
Seth	lived 912 years	105 years old then begot
Enosh	lived 905 years	90 years old then begot
Cainan	lived 910 years	70 years old then begot
Mahalaleel	lived 895 years	65 years old then begot
Jared	lived 962 years	162 years old then begot
Enoch	lived 365 years	65 years old then begot
		Walked with God and then was not.
Methuselah	lived 969 years	187 years old then begot
		Longest living man listed in scripture
Lamech	lived 777 years	182 years old then begot
Noah	500 years old then begot three sons	
		Shem, Ham, Japheth

The great flood came 1656 years after God breathed life into Adam. I have lived over 600 of these years myself. The only remaining family I have now is my wife, my three sons, and their wives. My father, Lamech died five years before the flood came. Methuselah died the year the flood came.

I can remember like it was yesterday (even though it was nearly 100 years ago) when God spoke to me about how evil the world had become.

God said, *“The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold I will destroy them with the earth.”* (Genesis 6:13)



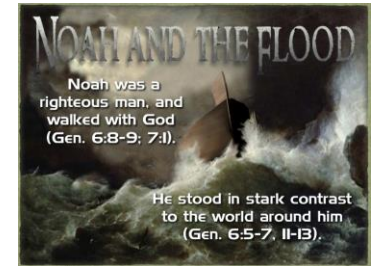
I was shocked. Sure, evil was everywhere. People were doing what they thought was right in their own eyes. The sons of God were taking the daughters of men for their wives. Their offspring were known as the giants in the land. I wasn't sure if my sons would remain faithful to God and the task that God put before us. But it has pleased God to save my immediate family.

I was shocked that God's limit of patience had been reached. He warned us for years that he would bring an end to man's flesh. But no one would listen. He even set a limit to the number of man's years at 120 years.



I have found that if a person does not repent and turn to the Lord early in life, adding more years only lengthens the time evil men walk on the earth. (Genesis 6:3)

God regretted even making man due to the evil that multiplied across the face of the earth. But God saw something in me and extended grace to me and my family. God came to me and told me to build an ark – a huge floating boat. I knew He was serious. I was blessed that He trusted me with this great responsibility. God entered into a covenant with me. I was told that we would be protected from the coming disaster. I was chosen by the grace of God primarily because I chose to walk with God in all my ways. (Genesis 6:8-9)



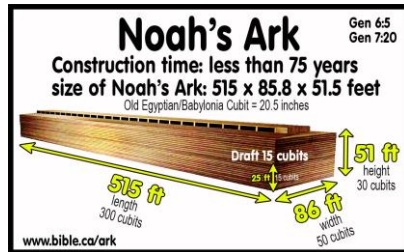
When God gave me instructions about the ark, I took detailed notes. He told me to gather gopher wood and build a boat that was 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits tall. I have tried to find a comparable wood that you would be familiar with that compares to gopher wood, but I cannot find one. As a matter of fact, this word, gopher wood is only mentioned this one time in the entire Bible here in Genesis 6. Within the ark, there were to be decks and levels. I was to cover it with pitch, or tar, to make it waterproof.



THAT DOES NOT QUALIFY AS GOPHER WOOD.

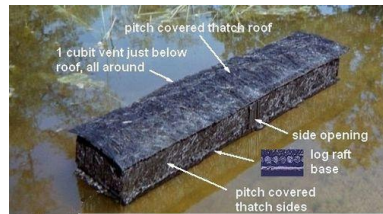
To help you understand how huge this project was, a cubit is equal to about 18 inches, so the ark is about 1 ½ times as long as what you call a football field.

I understand you have something called railroad containers in which you ship product and goods around the country. The volume of the ark is equal to 1,400,000 cubic feet. That would equal 522 standard railroad containers. If I filled up the ark with sheep, I could hold a total of 125,000. But we are not that crowded. Some have estimated that the ark holds about 72,000 animals.



I am really unsure how many we have on this ark. God gave me the task of building the ark and bringing seven of each clean animal and two of all the other animals on the ark. A few of you may be wondering if we have any dinosaurs on this ark. I have seen a few, younger, smaller reptiles in one section of the boat. I understand that these animals grow to be great big depending upon how much they eat and how old they get. I am glad we are almost near the end of our voyage; some are getting a little big for their cages!

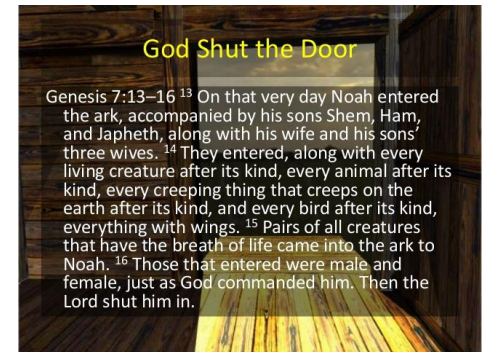
What I wanted to tell you about is how God gave me detailed instructions about the ark. First God gave me the dimensions of the ark. He insisted that the boat be covered in pitch to protect it from any leaks. (I can understand and appreciate how important that is now!) He also instructed me to put one door on the side of the boat. It was through this one door that we have found our safety and security. God promised Adam that one day a redeemer would come and save their people from their sin.



I know that I am not the savior. But one day, God will provide the One that will be the door to salvation.

Some of you may have heard about that man named Jesus. He was born several thousand years after I lived, and almost 2000 years ago from your time. Jesus said one day that He was the door by which all would be saved. I guess this door on the side of the ark is a kind of salvation for our family.

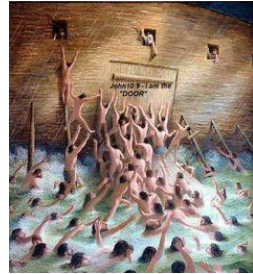
When I was 500 years old, my sons were born. It was then that God instructed me to begin to build this ark. Can you imagine the ridicule and scorn that my friends and family hurled at me? For one hundred years, my sons and I have gathered supplies, sawed logs, built cages for animals, and been faithful to the task given. I didn't know exactly when God would flood the earth, but I wanted to be saved from judgment. So I obeyed. We finished the task.



God warned this wayward people to repent, but they didn't. They continued to scorn God and ignore Him. Then one day just as we were finishing up, God said that the time had come. We were to gather the animals, family, and supplies inside the ark. God said that in seven days, He will then cause it to rain.

And we did as we were told. We didn't know what rain was. We didn't know what a flood was. In all my years of living here on earth, I only knew of the mist that watered the fields

and plants. But we trusted God. As the rain began to fall, God closed up the one door of the ark and kept us safely inside and those that rejected God's plan of salvation were left on the outside. Sure, we heard others hollering outside as the waters began to rise. But we didn't dare interfere with the judgment of God.



I remember the day it began to rain. It was the second month and the seventeenth day of that month during my 600th year. You could feel the earth break forth and all the waters from below came gushing out. It was like the window of heaven opened and the water poured forth. It rained like that for 40 days and 40 nights. The water covered the valleys. It covered the houses. It covered the upper pathways around the city. It even covered the surrounding mountains. By the time the 40 days were finished, the water must have covered the highest mountain by at least 15 cubits.



My heart was breaking. My extended family that rejected God was now drowning in this sea of water. Methuselah, the oldest living man ever recorded, my grandfather, died the same year that the flood waters rose. Enoch, my great grandfather preached to that generation to repent. His message was

“Behold the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds

which they have committed in an ungodly way and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” (Jude 14, 15)

This generation should have known that something was up when God decided to take Enoch on to be with God without him first tasting death.

God gave me and my family the task of building a place of refuge – a place of safety. While here on this ark, we feel protected and safe from the flood waters. It has become a place of separation from the judgment of the world.

All this came about because of God's divine invitation. Others were invited to turn from their evil ways but they chose to look, but not act upon God's offer. Some talked about changing their way of life, but by not choosing to accept God, they were simply saying “NO” to the invitation. Some even sneered at the prospect of judgment from a “loving God.”

But I accepted God's offer. I went into the boat building business. My family accepted God's offer. I went inside, my wife went inside, my children and their wives have also accepted God's offer. We all believed, acted, and are now resting in the provision and protection of God. There is only one door to this ark of refuge and safety. This has become our ark of salvation. God designed it that way. There is only one God.

I am so glad you are here today. My family has lived this journey of faith. I am glad to tell you about God's mercy and grace. As we conclude our time together here today, I want you to consider God's call on your life. I understand

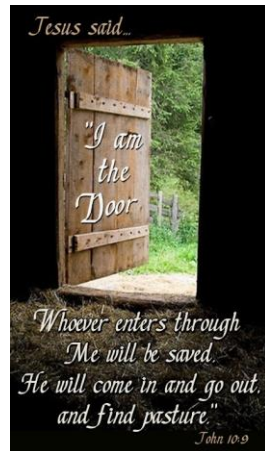
your world is in much the same mess as my community was just a year ago.

I understand there are stories every day from every town and village, of stealing, lying, betrayal, and murder. Across our nation people are rioting and destroying property for various reasons. Seething anger is spewing forth in many large cities across America.

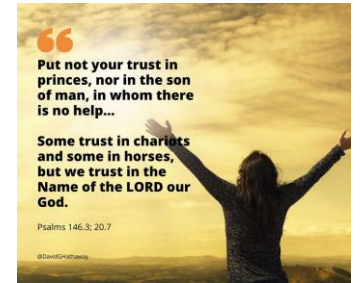


People are turning away from God and following the desires of their own heart. They are seekers of pleasure instead of seekers of holiness. They are selfish with their possessions while many are hungry and in need of nurture and care. There are people that are sick and in prison and no one goes to see to their needs. God will not strive with man forever as they turn their back on God and their neighbors and continue to reject the grace offered by God to all that repent and turn to God.

Just as I have one door on this ark of safety, there is only one door of safety for you. That doorway is Jesus Christ. Jesus came as God's own son. All that call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. All that continue to hear the message but do not respond to the message will be left out when God's patience with mankind runs out. Those that reject the message will be like those that are on the outside of this ark of safety – judged lacking and found guilty. All those outside the ark drowned.



God is longsuffering and patient with everyone. But when you take your final breath, your eternal fate is sealed. Either you are safely in the presence of the Lord, or you will find yourself in Hell where weeping and gnashing of teeth endures eternally.



In whom do you place your trust? Yourself or God?

We will soon be landing on dry ground where we will begin a new life. God told Adam to be fruitful and multiply. He has told us again that we too should be fruitful and multiply across the face of the earth.

We will have a world to replenish. There are crops to be planted, animals to repopulate the earth, and people to be born and we are to become stewards of the earth once again.

God has provided a way of salvation for me and my household.

What about yours?

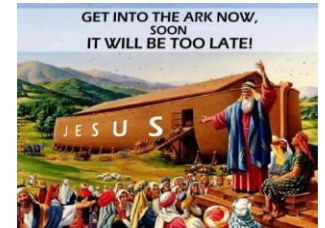
Is all your family safely gathered in?

Take inventory of your life.

Which side are you on?

Are you on the inside, safe and secure?

Or are you on the outside, treading water until judgment comes? You know you cannot tread water forever!



I leave you with this. There is still room for you. It is not too late to turn to God. Judgment is coming – and we don't know when it will rain.

LET US PRAY