

## The Ark of Salvation

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0 Comments



I typically send an email out to the worship team early in the week. In that email I let them know the text we are going to be looking at. I also try to include some song suggestions too.

I do this because we like to try and achieve some semblance of uniformity to the service. In other words, we don't want it to look like a committee has put together the service.

### Genesis 6:11-22

[You know God let a committee put together one animal. They came back with a giraffe.]

But this week, there were two songs that I intentionally left out. And I know that you know them, perhaps you are already singing them. I bet most of you haven't even heard a word I've said so far because you have a ridiculously monotonous kid's songs stuck in your head.

The Lord told Noah to build him an arky, arky.  
Build it out of gopher barky, barky!  
Children of the Lord.

Or, some of you might have this one:

Who built the Ark? Noah! Noah!  
Who built the Ark? Brother Noah built the Ark!

We are going to talk about the ark today, and we are going to address a number of things. We are going to talk about its size, the construction of it, and ultimately, the purpose for which it was built. But, because of those songs and your Sunday School background I want to begin by talking about the reality of it.

### I. The reality of the Ark

I want to begin by affirming the truth of this story. There really was a guy by the name of Noah and he really did build a very large ship which we call an ark.

I'm not knocking kids Bible songs. They can be well and good. But I do want you to be aware that they can sometimes trivialize things. Sometimes the things we learn from Bible songs (or maybe even children's storybook Bibles!) end up doing the exact opposite that we intend. Instead of giving us an accurate picture of God's story, they end up making it out to be somewhat silly or fairy-tale-ish.

Singing "The Lord told Noah to build him an Arky, Arky" might have an adverse affect on kids. Here is a story about some serious stuff. It is a story that details the wrath of God. But these

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songs are yippy-skippy little diddies. The two don't really go together.

It is almost like playing Mozart's symphonies with a kazoo. The gravity and glory of Mozart cannot be accurately communicated through such an instrument. As a matter of fact, it would be making a mockery of Mozart's works and trivializing his work by doing that.

The same can be true when we try to communicate what is said here the way we do with these songs and cute-sie little pictures.

As a matter of fact, my kids have a my children even have a Noah's Ark Little People set. And it is all so cute. There's Mr. & Mrs. Noah and all these cute little animals. And my kids can have a fun time with all that stuff.

But that's just the thing, we've made it into play. And we are saying that it is all so cute-sie. That's unfortunate, because there is nothing cute-sie about what is said here. Everything that is talked about here and in the upcoming chapters is quite serious and should be thought of with the utmost sobriety.

Again, I'm not trying to preach against fun little kid's songs or telling you to throw out your kid's Bible CD's. I'm simply saying that there are many Christians today who look at this text and relegate it to fairy tale land. They think that Noah was something that happened "long ago and far away."

So I want to make sure that we realize that everything that we read here is not a part of some imaginary story or child's fable. This is talking about real situation and it is communicating truth about what God has done in history.

Now that we have established the reality of the ark, let's start thinking about what the text actually says about it.

I think the best place to begin is in verses 15 and 16. In these verses God lays out the floor plan for the ark. This is where the Lord gives Noah the blueprint sketch of the Ark. And what I want you to see is the immensity of this thing.

## II. Its immensity [15-16]

This boat was enormous. The text tells us that it was 300 cubits by 50 cubits by 30 cubits. Now, if you take a cubit as approximately the length which spans from your elbow to your fingertip, you come out with a measurement that spans approximately 450 feet. That's about 1 1/2 football fields. You also have to keep in mind that it had three levels. So the proportions of this thing are absolutely amazing.

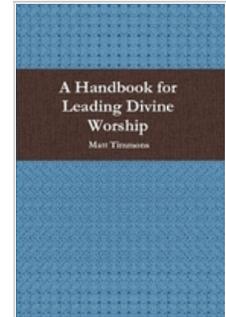
As a matter of fact, it wasn't until the 1800's that we had another ship rival the size of it. The boat that Noah constructed was still twice the size of the largest wooden boat ever built. So, for recorded history, the largest wooden ship wouldn't even take up a football field.

It wasn't until metal ships started being constructed that you had serious rivals come along. Today, your average metallic cruise ship is about 1000 feet long and 70 feet high. So if you would line them up side by side the ark would be about half the length a modern cruise ship, but it would be just as tall.

So, for its time, the ark would be an engineering monument. It would have been enormous! Most likely, it would have been featured on some Discovery channel back in its day.



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I mention this because I want you assure you that it is most certainly capable of holding all the animals needed to repopulate the earth.

Keep in mind that you don't need every single animal in the world. Ocean bearing animals could fend for themselves. All you need to have are roving animals. Even there you don't need every single species of land roving animal. The text says that he was to bring two of every kind. Those of you who are familiar with biology, you know that animals are classified by kingdom, phylum, class, family and species. Noah didn't need every species of animal. Perhaps "kind" was God's way of limiting the number of animals, and allowing them.

And again, you probably need to tweak what you might have learned from Sunday School back in the day. All the pictures that you see in children's books and SS materials show full grown elephants and giraffe's lining up to enter the ark. It's more likely that Noah brought young animals onto the boat. And given the fact that most full grown animals are smaller than a sheep, we starting to see that there may be quite a bit of room on the ship. (and that's even including the dinosaurs!—but that's a discussion for another time).

Commentators can give more specifics. But the end result is that when it is all broken down, the animals could have fit comfortably in just half of the ship. And that leaves plenty of space for food and provisions and living space for Noah and his family.

All this is to say that we are not a bunch of loonies if we believe the text. A lot of skeptics will scoff at what is said here. But the fact of the matter is that the truth of Scripture is rock solid and there is no reason to question any of it.

Those who do thumb their noses at the text are simply showing that they don't want to believe what it says. All that has been said is not that hard to figure out. It doesn't take rocket science or a leap of blind faith. The truth is they don't want to admit it because they don't want to acknowledge that there is a God in the heavens to whom they are accountable.

But for us, we recognize the authority of God and his word. And we understand that the immense size of the ark could have easily allowed God's plan to be carried out.

But it does make you think though. Given the dimensions of the ark and the enormity of it, you have to think about the actual building of it.

### **III. Its construction [22]**

Now, the only thing said here about the construction of the ark is found at the end of our text. It says, "Noah did this, he did all that God commanded him."

It doesn't sound like much, but in that little sentence you have what was probably 100 years of work. Think about how monumental a task this would have been for Noah. He didn't have modern machinery. He didn't have any cranes or semi trucks to transport the logs.. He didn't have any chainsaws or mechanical tools to grind the logs down to size and make into make into planks. Everything had to be done the old fashioned way. He had to do it all by hand.

It might be that he had some help. We usually think that it was just Noah building the ship. But the text doesn't say that. He might have had some more helpers. It might have been that some of his ancestors that we read about back in chapter 5 helped him along the way. But even if you had a whole city of men, it would have taken quite a length of time given the crude tools they had at their disposal.

You all have heard how the Creation Museum is constructing a life size replica of the ark. Well, needless to say they are fast tracking this thing. It is supposed to be finished in just a few years. But Noah would have to cut down the tree, haul it home, trim it down, create all the pegs and so forth. That would have taken a long time, perhaps up to 100 years.

Now think about what the situation would have been like. Here is Noah building his boat. Day after day he is out there chopping wood and hammering pegs. Trees are felled and hewn each day for the first year. Then the second year. Then the third. Meanwhile, all round there are these wicked people observing all this. Just think of how all this had to have panned out.

The first guy walks up, "Hey Noah! What'ch ya doing?" "I'm building a boat." "Wha'ch ya doing that for Noah?"

"It's going to rain."

"Rain? RAIN? Ha! No really, Noah. Wha'ch ya doing?"

Now you have 100 years for all the snickers and wise cracks. "There goes Crazy Noah!" "Hey Noah. How's your boat doing?"

But it's no wonder that Noah is called a "preacher of righteousness." In his second epistle, Peter calls Noah a preacher of righteousness. He would have had no end of opportunities to explain himself and why he was building this boat. And as the gigantic work continued to rise off the ground, the message would have been clearly issued forth. Noah and his work declared in loud volumes that God was a just and holy God. And everyone would have heard, whether audibly from Noah or simply by witnessing the construction of the boat, that God was God who could not stand the presence of sin.

But I believe this antagonism is why you have what is said in 18. It says, "But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark." Noah must have been a lot like Jeremiah. Jeremiah is commonly known as the weeping prophet. He was rudely treated all his days, mocked and mistreated for his faith. And there were times when Jeremiah wanted to give up.

I wouldn't doubt that Noah felt that way too. For 100 years he had to endure the scoffers. There can be no doubt that Noah would have been despised and cruelly treated by the throngs of wicked people around him. You have to wonder what keep him going that whole time. What kept him pushing ahead day after day after day? I believe it was the fact that God had covenanted with him.

God had made a promise to Noah. He promised to love him and keep him all his days. Basically, God was promising Noah that he wouldn't be swept away in the wrath. And the fact that God had entered into this relationship with him, no doubt is what kept him pressing forward.

And the same is true for you. What keeps you pressing ahead today? When you are mocked and ridiculed for your faith, what is it that makes you determined to continue on? I no doubt believe that it is the fact that God has promised you eternal life and unbroken fellowship with him. If you have ever known what it means to have the eternal God draw near to you and pledge to not let you be swept away in the fury of his wrath, then you can't help but respond by serving him all your days, not matter what opposition you face.

There is one other item we need to address from this text though. It is something that we

have already hinted at. It is the purpose of the ark. We've look at its immensity, and seen that it really could have served its purpose. And we've considered its construction, and what it would be like building it. But what was it all for?

#### **IV. Its purpose [13]**

Perhaps it is obvious enough, but it ought to be mentioned. It was God's appointed means of salvation.

In verse 13 the Lord speaks to Noah. He gives Noah special revelation of what is about to happen. And he says, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth." And then, in the very next breath he says, "Make yourself an ark..." The implication is that this boat is your only hope. I have appointed this ship as the sole means of escaping my wrath and curse.

And that is why the ark is a type or a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ. It was a picture of pointing forward to the ultimate means of God's salvation. As it says in the book of Acts, "There is only one name under heaven given among men whereby you may be saved."

My friends, I want you to recognize the importance what is being communicated here. This story of Noah is really challenging each and every one of us as to our faith in Christ. It is reminding us that there is absolutely no other way to escape the punishment that is due to us for our sins.

Our bother Caleb did a superb job a few weeks ago reminding us of the impending judgment of God. Caleb reminded us that God judges nations and he judges each and every individual upon the planet.

And we need to remember that each and every one of us deserves God's wrath and curse. This passage reminds us of that. As a matter of fact, it repeats it 3 times in 2 verses (i.e. verses 11-12). And you heard how the previous passage described us. It stated that "every intention of the thoughts of our hearts is only evil all the time." There in the very root of our being, the thoughts, the intentions, the heart of our soul, it is nothing but evil all the time.

I mention this because it is important to recognize our need for a savior. I want you to understand just how great your predicament is. Unless we see ourselves as drowning in sin, we will never see our need to come to the rock of salvation.

We all too easily flatter ourselves with grand notions of how wonderful we are. As a matter of fact, you can go to the Ronald Regan Memorial at the Library that was dedicated to him and you will see this. There on that great wall of marble is inscribed these words, "I believe in my heart that man is good and that what is right will always eventually triumph."

That lie is engraved on every human heart. And it is only when you come to recognize that such a statement is unilaterally false will you see your need for the saving power of Jesus Christ.

And the great thing is that if you do come to Christ you will be safe in the day of Judgment.

Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. And you can be assured that all who put their trust in him are as safe as Noah was in that boat.

#### **Conclusion:**

DL Moody once said that the little fly was just as secure on Noah's ark as the Elephant was.

That's because their safety wasn't due to their size or strength. It was the ark that saved both.

The same is true for us. Salvation has nothing to do with how righteous we think we are or how much good we think we can do. The only way we can be safe in the day of God's visitation is by trust Jesus Christ and what he has done to atone for your sins.

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