

# Christians At Texas State Bible Study Genesis #13

## The Line of Life with Noah (2)

### THE LIFE AND WORK THAT CHANGED THE AGE

Scripture Reading: Genesis 6:8, 13-22; Eph. 2:21-22, 3:17

**Gen 6:8** But Noah found favor in the sight of Jehovah. **13** And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and now I am about to destroy them with the earth. **14** Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make rooms in the ark and shall cover it within and without with pitch. **15** And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. **16** You shall make an opening for light for the ark, and you shall finish it up to a cubit from the top; and you shall put the entrance of the ark in its side; you shall make it with lower, second, and third stories. **17** And now I am about to bring a flood of water upon the earth to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. **18** But I will establish My covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. **19** And of every living thing, of all flesh, two of every kind you shall bring into the ark to preserve them alive with you; they shall be male and female. **20** Of the birds according to their kind and of the cattle according to their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every kind will come to you in order to preserve them alive. **21** And for your part, take some of every kind of food that is edible, and gather it to yourself, and it will be for food for you and for them. **22** And Noah did this; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

**Eph. 2:21-22** In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

**Eph. 3:17** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love.

### NOAH'S WORK BEING A WORK THAT CHANGED THE AGE

Noah's work was a work that changed the age (1 Cor. 2:9; 2 Cor. 6:1; Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:12). God gave Noah an all-inclusive revelation, a further revelation, the revelation to build the ark, which was the way that God would terminate the corrupted generation and bring in a new age. Noah was so intimate with the Lord, walking with the Lord, allowing the Lord to be everything to him, and finding grace in the sight of Jehovah. He enjoyed God by loving God, and because he loved God, God opened up the secrets of His heart to him. Thus, 1 Corinthians 2:9 says, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him." We need to give ourselves to love Him and enjoy Him so that He can open up His heart's desire to us.

The reason Noah could do the work of the Lord is because of the grace of the Lord. We need to labor for the Lord in the power of His grace (1 Cor. 15:10, 58; 3:12). In 1 Corinthians 15:10 Paul says, "I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me." Paul labored, yet it was not him but the enjoyment of the Triune God. God as his enjoyment was the One who was laboring. This kind of labor is not in vain. This is why Paul says in verse 58, "Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

## **Receiving More Revelation**

God gave Noah what was nearly an all-inclusive revelation, a further revelation which none of Noah's forefathers saw. Although Enoch prophesied that when his son Methuselah died the deluge would come (the meaning of the name "Methuselah"), and that God's judgment would be executed upon the corrupted earth, and although he even prophesied about the Lord's coming (Jude 14), Enoch never received the vision of the way that God would terminate the corrupted generation and bring in a new age. None of Noah's forefathers saw this revelation. One day, God came to Noah and revealed it to him. As a result of this, Noah's view of godly things was greatly broadened, and he saw much more than all his forefathers did. He saw the vision and received a definite revelation from God. We all need such a revelation.

In principle, our situation is exactly the same as Noah's. Today's generation is corrupt, and the earth is filled with evil and violence. It seems that, according to man's concept, God has been defeated and driven out of the earth. However, do you not realize that today there is a big "but"? Some dear ones have inherited all the godly ways of the saints from the first century of the Christian era until the present. We have inherited all the godly ways that were exercised in the past centuries. But should we stop here? Should we say, "Look at what we have"? No. Although we have inherited so many godly things and are satisfied and contented, how about God? How about God's purpose? God needs to terminate this age. He needs a change of generation. He needs an ark that can bring His people out of this generation and start a new age. God needs an ark. We have to see this and cry out for this.

Do you realize that God intends to terminate this generation and bring in another age? In order to do this, He must have an ark. We cannot build the ark by our imagination. Like Noah, we must receive a revelation concerning God's need of the ark.

## **Believing and Practicing the Revelation Seen**

After Noah received the revelation, he believed it and practiced it (Gen. 6:22). He practiced it in a way of not caring about being different from his forefathers and from his generation. Perhaps people said to him, "Noah, what are you doing? Adam never talked this way. Neither did Abel or Enosh. All the fathers lived, begat, and died, but none of them talked the way you do. Who are you? Are you greater than Adam or Enoch? We admire Enoch, for he walked with God. What are you talking about, telling us that a flood will come? What do you mean by building an ark?"

We are following God's revelation that is according to the Bible in order to practice the church life. God's revelation will always make you different. Daniel and his three companions were different, for they refused to eat the royal food. Paul was different, and so was Martin Luther. Everyone who has seen God's revelation is different. The revelation makes him different. We must be different from our folks, our schoolmates, our neighbors, and even from our fellow Christians. Whenever we see something, it makes us different. It is good to be different.

Now we must consider Noah's work. Firstly, Noah worked in preaching righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5). If you read the whole context of the Bible, you will see that in Noah's day preaching righteousness was to protest against the evil generation. His generation was evil and filled with violence, but Noah was a man who preached righteousness and protested against all the unrighteousness, evil, and violence. He testified of the righteous way of God.

## **Building the Ark**

While Noah was preaching righteousness, he was building the ark. In principle, we are doing the same thing. We are preaching righteousness and we are protesting against the evil age. While we are preaching, we are building a corporate ark. Noah built the ark by faith according to God's revelation (Heb. 11:7). He did not construct it according to tradition or his own concept and invention, but

absolutely according to God's revelation. This is the reason that in everything we must return to God's revelation in His holy Word. We must come back to the pure Word of God.

The building of the ark was absolutely against the tide of Noah's generation. He was against the trend of that age and "he condemned the world" (Heb. 11:7). No one besides Noah's family appreciated that work. The work of Noah and his family was unique, peculiar, and strange. In human eyes it was impractical. It was according to God's revelation and, thus, it was against the trend and tide of that generation. Do you not think that the principle is the same today? What we are preaching and doing is altogether against the tide of this generation. But we praise the Lord that we are in His flow. We are not in the tide of this generation; we are in the flow from the throne according to His revelation. Praise Him!

This building is the working of Christ into people to build them together *by* Christ that they may become God's manifestation in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:15-16). The crucial matter in our work is to minister the building and builded God into others so that the Triune God may build Himself into their being (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:21-22; 3:17a; 1 Cor. 14:4b). We need to practice one thing—to minister the Triune God into others so that He may build Himself into their inner man; we need to pray that the Lord will teach us to work in this way (2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Cor. 3:9a, 10, 12; Rom. 11:36).

If we are going to build the ark, the corporate Christ, we need to realize what the crucial matter in our work is. The crucial matter in our work is that we need to minister the building and builded God into others so that the Triune God may build Himself into their being. We need to minister God into one another. Who is this God? This God is the building God. He is not in an inactive state; rather, He is actively building Himself into us. When we minister God into people, we minister the One who is imparting Himself as life into people. The impartation of God as life and enjoyment into a person is the building of God into that person. Not only do we minister the building God; we also minister the builded God. Christ is the builded God. He is God who has been built into humanity, and He is the man who has been built into divinity. Not only so, but the builded Christ is also the very God who has been built and constituted into our being. We minister this God who has been built and constituted into our being into others.

There also needs to be the Word of God in our speaking. Thus, in order to build the ark, we must spend time in the Word of God. This is the way to build the ark. First we need to ask for a spirit of wisdom and revelation that the Lord could unveil to us the divine truths of His economy in the holy Word and in the ministry. Then we need to spend our time and energy to be saturated and soaked with the holy Word. This means that every day we must spend some time with the Lord to get into the Word. I love the story of George Whitefield. He would pray over his Greek New Testament on his knees. But beside his New Testament he also had a copy of Matthew Henry's commentary. He would pray and read the Word and then pray over Matthew Henry's commentary. Spend your time to read and pray the Word and some ministry.

By building the church and entering into the church life, we will be saved from God's judgment on today's evil generation through the great tribulation and will be separated from that generation to be ushered into a new age, the age of the millennium (Heb. 11:7; Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27). After Noah built up the ark, he entered into what he had built up. Likewise, when we build up the church life, we simultaneously enter into the church life and are saved from this crooked generation. Ultimately, we will be ushered into the millennial kingdom to reign with Christ.

\* Ministry portions from *Ministry Magazine* and *Life-Study of Genesis*. Verses from *Recovery Version of Bible*.