

VIII. NOAH AND THE BUILDING OF THE ARK

~Other Speakers S-Z: John Sung:

(Gen. 6-7:1 5)

Ch. 6:1-4. In these verses are described two kinds of people. The first are the sons of God. The second are the people of the world. Believers may be called God's children. They belong to the first kind. Unbelievers are called the people of the world. They belong to the latter kind. Is it good or not that God should be our Father? Someone asked me, "Who is your father?" I said, "God!" I remember while my earthly father was a pastor and I a pastor's son, how proud I was to go in and out with him! Some who didn't know my father asked me, "Who is he?" I said, "He's my father!" Glorious! Now God is our Father. How blessed! We have self-respect.

Here it says that the sons of God had intercourse with the people of the world. For this reason the Spirit of God would not remain always in their hearts. The sons of God inter-married with the people of the world. How awful! The children of the world love gambling, smoking and drinking. We must be separated from them in holiness. If you do not keep separate in holiness from them, you will surely become worldly and carnal.

Vs. 5-8. Because of the increase of wickedness of the people of the world, God repented. For what the worldly people thought about day in and day out was wickedness. God was deeply saddened at the sight of all this. Man should listen to God's Word. Having changed into carnality, he is separated from God. God is very saddened at this. I remember when I was a boy I used to argue with my dad and he thrashed me for this. When he went into the room I peeped to see what he was up to. O! My dad was in tears! When God saw the people of the World sinning, he was also very sorrowful. He would not destroy them from off the earth if He could help it.

Nevertheless, Noah found grace in God's eyes. All had sinned, but only Noah found grace, This was no small matter. The world might disregard me. If God takes notice of me, that is enough. A woman said to me, "My husband and in-laws all disregard me." She was heart-broken. I said, "Does God regard you?" She said, "He regards me!" I said, "That's enough!" Was not Noah one individual who found grace before God?

Vs. 9-13. Why did God love Noah? For his wealth? Education? No, but for three good points. 1) Noah by faith was a righteous man and born again. 2) Noah was a perfect man. 3) Noah walked with God, i.e., he was obedient to the Holy Spirit. God loved him for these three things. Are you like Noah? Born again, in holiness and obedience.

Noah had three sons. Shem, Ham, Japheth. Eight in the family. Now, the character "Hsin" i.e. "Believe" includes eight mouths in its composition. All the eight of them had faith. They believed God. This is no small matter. In many families we do not see such oneness of faith. Where the husband believes, the wife does not. Where the mother-in-law believes, the daughter-in-law does not. Where the father believes, the son does not. And where the elder brother believes the younger does not. O the quarrels and heartaches that upset so many families today! But Noah's was a happy family, a peaceful house.

I found our family a delight for we believed God with one heart. My mother used to lead in family worship. My mother at first had no education. She came from a Buddhist home. But my father taught her to read, and she became a zealous believer. Our family worship was most interesting. We prayed and read the Bible by turns. My dad told us many stories. After worship we continued with a musical session. Each played his own instrument. The family was filled with joy. Now we all have our families. Let us hold family worship. Yes, let us practise family worship. I believe Noah's family had family worship. So God called Noah to prepare the Ark to save himself and his family.

Vs. 14-22. God told Noah to do this on a mountain. Now, the boat belongs to the sea, but God told Noah to make it on a mountain. The boat Noah made was rectangular: length 300 cubits, width 50 cubits and height 30 cubits. It looked rather like a Bible. And the Ark is a type of the Bible. There are three storeys with a window on top. The Bible is divided into three sections: 1) the Old Testament, 2) the Four Gospels and 3) the Epistles. Revelation is the window on top. The boat has only one door. To enter the Kingdom of Heaven there is also only one narrow door. The whole Ark is made of one type of wood. The whole Bible is written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Ark's length is 300 cubits inasmuch as Jesus' life span on earth was thirty years. Three storeys also stand for Jesus' three years of preaching. The window on top stands for the last year of Jesus' work, and it also typifies the Cross.

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The people of the world seek worldly wisdom in marriage. They go into worldly enterprises. But, Noah remains on the mountain to build the big boat. Now it takes united effort to build the boat. Should Noah's family be disunited, the Ark would not be completed. This was Noah's first good point. Secondly, Noah stored up treasure in heaven. He had sold away all his property. To the years put into building the Ark, he would not mind further sacrifice of selling all he had. He was concerned only with the Ark's completion.

I have also told my wife, "Nothing matters as much as preparing the Ark." To build the Ark is to give oneself to fulltime preaching. In preparing the Ark, we should not regard the present, but rather the future. To look at the present we would be discouraged. Perhaps one of Noah's daughters-in-law got discouraged, when she saw others with permed hair, gold ring, gold watch, leading a leisurely and pleasurable life while she herself had to slog in the kitchen. Noah comforted her. Perhaps one of Noah's sons said, "Other sons have returned from abroad with a university education. They come back necktie-in-collar, and they eat with fork and spoon, but I have to slog on like this! Noah comforted his son, "Don't look at the present, but the future!" Perhaps Mrs. Noah said, "I'm old. Still I have to do all the cooking. Other wives go to the park, and how relaxed! Noah also comforted her, "Look to the future and not the present." Perhaps Noah had to hold a revival meeting at home each day.

When I returned home a few years ago, I remembered how my wife burst into temper, "What, I, a doctor's wife, have got nothing? And to do cooking everyday? Others can relax. My classmates take it easy and I suffer thus? I comforted her, "Look to the future and not just at the present." Not only we are to look to the future, but also hold back every present ridicule. All laughed at Noah's foolishness in building the Ark. Some said he was crazy. But Noah called on all to repent, for The Flood was coming. He was no madman. Though the people assailed Noah, he kept his peace. He carried his cross daily, building the Ark. He laboured everyday on the mountain. He preached 120 years. No one listened. Noah was not discouraged. He plodded on.

Ch. 7:1-5. The Ark being completed, Noah took all his in. Besides himself there were seven others. These seven are a type of the seven churches. There were also seven pairs of animals. Some tall, some short. The birds, and there were seven pairs of them too, represent the victorious Christians. Noah organised a Gospel team and he was its captain. They all entered the Ark. On the 10th day of the 2nd month, the big door of the Ark was shut. On the 17th of the 2nd month the Flood came and covered the earth. The people escaped to the mountain tops. Now they began to call for help. Now there are many who come to Church as "rice" Christians who shall never enter the Ark. The whole world was covered by the Flood, but only Noah's Ark was on top of the waters.

Beloved brothers and sisters! Many there are who weep, but only Noah's tears remain. Noah preached 120 years and no one listened, but his preaching remains. Outside the Ark all perished, but all inside the Ark, men and beasts, remained. I tell you, there are those who labour ceaselessly for nothing. Noah's work remains through our Lord Jesus Christ. Many study hard to make money, become corrupt officials and are finished. But if while you study you prepare yourself to be an instrument for the Lord's use, the Lord will preserve your study. Doctors who make a lot of money and build big mansions for their own glory end up nothing, except those who practise for the Lord. Teachers lead a hard life everyday, but if while they teach they are doing it for the Lord, theirs will remain.

Beloved brothers and sisters! Is it vain to be born again and lead a holy life? Is it vain for us to hold this fortnight's meetings? I believe it is not in vain. Many mothers bring up sons who make a lot of money, but in vain. If it is for the Lord to bring up sons, it will remain. Is it vain that our preaching be ridiculed! To carry the Cross for the Lord remains. To bleed and sweat for the Lord --- is it vain? It remains,

One day the whole world will be burnt up. But to witness for Christ, to preach to bear fruit, remains forever. Only the Cross shall stand firm in this mundane world. Should I have 1,000 sons, I would that they all be preachers. For all is vanity. To preach the Gospel to save souls is not in vain. I hope all of you will preach and witness, even while you're a teacher or merchant. We can witness in any profession. Who'll do this? Noah's building of the Ark was not in vain.

THEME SONG

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Never fear! He is near!

Look to no man,

Care not what the world may plan.

Only trust in the Lord,

All the way to Beulah Land.