



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Genesis 8:1-22

“Noah’s House Saved, the World Condemned”

TRANSCRIPT

We are turning to Genesis chapter 8 for our scripture reading this morning. I am reading the entire chapter versus 1 through 22.

"But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark; and God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the water subsided. Also the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were closed, and the rain from the sky was restrained; and the water receded steadily from the earth, and at the end of one hundred and fifty days the water decreased. And in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat."

It is an interesting fact that the seventh month was originally the same month in which the Passover took place. And then, in Israel's history God changed the calendar in the light of the Passover and the seventh month became the first month. And then you will also remember that in the case of the Passover service on the tenth day of that seventh month, they selected the lamb and they kept the lamb for a while to examine and to be sure it was without blemish and then on the fourteenth day of the month, the first month after the Passover but the seventh month originally, the lamb was slain. Typical of

our Lord's sacrifice and then on the seventeenth day, that particular sacrifice of our Lord Jesus culminated in the resurrection. So that the seventeenth day of the seventh month when the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat, it is the same day upon which our Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead.

And there may be some connection between the new creation after the flood or the new life, the new world and the resurrection of Christ but that is an interesting coincidence at any rate.

"And the water decreased steadily until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains became visible." (I do not know if there is any thing significant about the tenth month and the first day of that month.)
"Then it came about at the end of forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made; and he sent out a raven, and it flew here and there until the water was dried up from the earth. Then he sent out a dove from him, to see if the water was abated from the face of the land; but the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, so she returned to him into the ark, for the water was on the surface of all the earth. Then he put out his hand and took her, and brought her into the ark to himself. So he waited yet another seven days; and again he sent out the dove from the ark. And the dove came to him toward evening, and behold, in her beak was a freshly picked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the water was abated from the earth.

“Then he waited yet another seven days, and sent out the dove; but she did not return to him again. Now it came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first of the month, the water was dried up from the earth. Then Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the surface of the ground was dried up. And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry. Then God spoke to Noah, saying, ‘Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing of all

flesh that is with you, birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply the earth. (A cultural mandate you notice is reaffirmed following the flood.)

"So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by their families from the ark. Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled the soothing aroma; and the Lord said to Himself, I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

May God bless this reading of his word.

The subject for this morning in the exposition of the Book of Genesis is "Noah's House Saved, the world Condemned," or "judgment and grace." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews in a striking verse has summarized the life of the patriarch Noah. By faith, Noah being warned of God prepared an ark for the salvation of his house. And the reference also goes on to point out that as a result of this Noah became the heir of a righteousness according to faith and was the means and instrumentality for the condemnation of the world. Well, the landing of the ark on Mount Ararat accomplished those things. It was the salvation of his house, it was also the condemnation, or it was the conviction of the world, it was the means by which the faith that Noah had expressed itself and certainly indicated that he was an heir of the righteousness which was according to faith.

It was also a mighty revelation of the grace and judgment of God and of the issues of life. Thomas Whitelaw has said, "Never had the world looked on such a vindication of

the insulted holiness and offended justice of Almighty God and never will it look upon another till the hour strikes when the heavens being on fire shall dissolve and the Lord himself shall be revealed in flaming fire.” Not only was the ark and Noah and their experience, a revelation of judgment, it was also a beautiful display of grace. And therefore it is not surprising that the first thing that Noah and his family did after they emerged from the ark is to offer the sacrifices of the burnt offerings.

Now, of course they offered them for an incomplete deliverance. It was not the complete deliverance that we have from our sins and furthermore it was for a temporal deliverance from the judgment of that flood, but nevertheless, it is an expression essentially of the response of the redeemed to the blessings of God. And how much more ought our own expressions of thanksgiving to be in the light of the superior deliverance that we have experienced through the Lord Jesus Christ. And the fact that we do not die any more should be occasion for the greatest thanksgiving to God. The purposes of divine judgment are before us in the flood and we think first of all of the separation of the righteous from the wicked. That is one of the great purposes of divine judgment and we certainly see it emphasized in the case of the judgment of the flood.

The Lord Jesus in the great chapter on the parables in Matthew chapter 13 speaks about the tares and the wheat. And at the conclusion he says, "Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn." And so the wheat are separated from the tares, there is a separation of the righteous from those who are the good. He also speaks, "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness." And later on in the same chapter speaking of the dragnet, he says, "And when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away."

Divine judgment serves to separate the righteous from the wicked. And of course when we say separate the righteous from the wicked, we do not refer to those who are just -- or to those who are inherently righteous. There is no person who is inherently righteous other than our Lord Jesus Christ among men. But what we are speaking about is those who stand righteous before God, who have the standing before him of righteousness by virtue of the sacrifice that he offered for them. A second purpose of divine judgment is the infliction of retribution upon the finally impenitent.

In the description of the flood and the judgment of it in 2 Peter, chapter 3, Peter goes on to speak about the fact that the flood which occurred in the past will be followed by a fire, a great conflagration in the future, in which there will be the infliction of retribution upon the finally impenitent. And then of course, the judgment of God serves for the preservation of believers. When Pharaoh was judged it was for the preservation of the children of Israel. And so, when he was drowned as the waters returned to cover him, it was for the benefit of the Nation Israel.

When Goliath was judged through the instrumentality of David, the coming king, it was in order that the children of Israel might be preserved from the evil. And when Haman was judged, it was also in order that the believers might be preserved. So, God inflicts judgment in order to preserve believers, to inflict retribution upon the finally impenitent to make a separation between the righteous and the wicked.

We see this illustrated, of course, in the flood for that is exactly what has happened, the righteous are separated from the wicked. Retribution is inflicted upon those who were lost and the believers those eight souls, if all were believers we know Noah was, are preserved through that experience. To sum up chapter 8, we could sum it up in three words, dissipation, exit from the ark, and worship. We read in a first verse of Genesis chapter 8 "but God remembered Noah," nothing our words for God noticed that the term that is used is one translated in our versions as capital G, little o, little d.

The reference is to the Hebrew word Elohim, which looks up to God as a Creator, his strength and his might is in view, and it is the proper word to use here because not only do we read that God remembered Noah but we read here, he remembered all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark. So the relationship between God and the creation here is a relationship that goes beyond redemption itself. So the animals being in view, he properly writes, but God remembered Noah.

Now we should not think because Moses said that God remembered Noah that he had forgotten him up until this point. The reference to for remembering Noah is remembering him in the sense of exercising mercy and grace toward him, he remembers him in that sense. Then we read as a result of remembering Noah and the beasts that he calls to wind to pass over the earth and the water subsided. The wind was one of the products, it would seem of the post delivery and changes that were brought about by the flood.

Then Moses writes as he describes the abatement of the flood's water of the landing of the ark on Mount Ararat. And in the seventh month on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat. That expression is an expression that refers to a region in the Old Testament as well as to a mountain peak.

Now, if this rested on Mt. Ararat or the modern mountain of Mesis, 16,254 feet high, you can see that it was providential that it rested on an even keel, because it would be possible for an ark to rest in such a place that it would mean the ultimate death of the inhabitants as the water receded. That was a giant ship. But it rested on an even keel in the providence of God. And the location of the ark is important because this was a very central location and from it, the spread of the nations over the earth is possible. Asia is accessible, Africa is accessible, Europe is accessible, and so the ark settled in a place that was ideally suitable for the inhabitation of the whole of the earth.

The most interesting part of this section is, however, the story of the raven and the dove. One of the commentators, Derek Kidner, in introducing this section has said that this almost asks to be treated as a parable. And many of the interpreters of the Bible have considered the raven and the spirit to be somewhat typical or illustrative, or parabolic, and I do think that there evidently is something unusual illustrative or parabolic, and I do think that there evidently is something unusual about the fact that these two birds were the two that were selected. It indicates incidentally that Noah was a very resourceful man, he had a collection of birds on the ark and he selected just the two that would tell him what he wanted to know.

I must confess, I do not know anything much about a raven and I don't know a great deal more about a dove than I do about a raven. I did read Edgar Allan Poe's work on the ravens and I liked that, but that didn't really teach me anything much about the ravens. I rather think that Noah was like Adam, one of the really intelligent men who has ever lived upon the face of the earth. Luther and others and I think with some justification used to say that Adam was probably the most intelligent man outside the Lord Jesus Christ who ever lived upon the earth. He had the experience of fellowship with God, he was talked directly by God, he also had the experience of at one time being righteous and he had a tremendous fund of knowledge and we certainly can assume that he communicated a great deal of that to the patriarchs.

And so, Noah was undoubtedly a man of superior intelligence. I'd dare say that no Einstein could have sat at his feet and learn for all of Noah's 900 years because he was a remarkable man. And he selected just the birds that wanted to tell a particular story. Now when you take your concordance down and look at the term raven, you find an interesting thing or two about it. In the first place the raven is an unclean bird according to the later Levitical division of animals into clean and unclean. And in fact my recollection is I looked at this, I am not -- I just don't remember every construction, but my recollection is that a separate sentence is devoted to the raven in both the Leviticus

account and also the Deuteronomy account that the raven is specifically singled out as one of those unclean birds.

In addition, in the Book of Job, I believe it is the ravens are said to not care for their young, one of those rare kinds of animals that does not care for their young. Who are going to feed the younger ravens because their mothers do not care to feed them? That's the reason incidentally that God selected the ravens to feed Elijah by the brook Cherith because it would be even more of a miracle to be fed by a bird that did not care for even its own young. So that the ravens were selected to feed Elijah in order to enhance the miracle, not only was he fed by birds every day, but fed by ravens who don't even care for their own young, but they came and fed the prophet.

Now the raven is an unclean bird and characteristic of the raven is that the raven feeds on carrion. What it loves is dying, decaying flesh, something that's not really on my list of appetizing things. So the raven is a bird that feeds on carrion, it likes death, it likes decay. And so the raven is sent forth, and the fact that the raven flew about and never came back into the ark suggests that it was satisfied with what it found to feed upon. And Noah, by that learned that the old creation is not yet completely gone, the effects of it. And so the raven suggests then that which has satisfaction in death, but then he sent out the dove. Now, the dove is a different kind of a bird.

The dove incidentally is the bird that is selected by God to be illustrative of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. So when the Holy Spirit comes up on our Lord Jesus Christ at his baptism as he begins his Messianic ministry, the Holy Spirit comes in the form of a dove. Now, the dove is a sensible, sensitive, discriminating bird. That's why it always bothers me why men at a certain season of the year go into their closets and pull out their shotguns and fill their pockets with shells and go out and shoot these sensitive, discriminating birds. Doesn't that trouble them? I'm looking about all the audience to see which men are turning pale. I am just kidding, you know, so don't feel bad about it. I know that about dove season, what sentiments that arouses in the hearts of a man -- heart

of a man -- but it is a sensitive, discriminating bird and for that reason it is beautifully selected by Noah and so the dove goes out and comes back to the ark and that lets Noah know that the all creation is -- the effects of the death of it are still there.

Now, if we may speak in an illustrative way as many have, they have suggested that in the case of the raven we have an illustration of the old nature of a man and the dove typical of the new nature of a man. There may be some truth in this, I don't know, I frankly don't want to press this too far, there may be a reference to the two natures, one feeding on death, and the other satisfied only in the new creation or in the ark, typical of our Lord Jesus Christ. But it's a remarkable little story and there may be something here in an illustrative way. We noticed then that after several tests while the dove came back once with a freshly picked Olive leaf and the reason for that is that the Olive trees do not grow on the mountains, the Olive tree is tended to grow in the valleys.

And so when the dove came back with an Olive, a freshly picked Olive leaf, that was an indication that the waters had subsided into the valleys and now there was some growth from the trees that were left there. And finally, when the dove did not return, it's suggested then that the new creation was fresh and inhabitable, the dove found a resting place there in that new creation, but man is not yet in it, and so he has not defiled it yet, but it won't be long.

Noah now receives a new commission and we read in verses 13 and 14 of the occasion, one year and ten months after the flood began, great changes have no doubt taken place in the earth in the meantime. Henry Morris whom I have cited a number of times I have been reading as I have been preparing the messages on the Book of Genesis, his little book on Genesis, called, I think the Creation Record or The Record of the Creation or the Genesis Record. He has made some suggestions. Dr. Morris was a scientist as many of you know, was a professor, I believe of civil engineering at VMI for a number of years, he was also was on the faculty at Rice Institute a number of years ago. And when I was first in theological seminary, Dr. Morris was very active in InterVarsity

Christian fellowship in the State of Texas. And I got to know him, I guess 30 years or so ago.

He is well known for his views that the flood is responsible for many of the changes that have taken place apparently in our physical universe and also that the flood explains a lot of the things that scientists seek to explain, other scientists seek to explain in other ways. He says as some of the effects of the flood, as far as he sees it, that the oceans were now much more extensive because they now contained all the waters that were once above the firmament, as well as those that had been in the subterranean reservoirs of the great deep which had been broken up. He also said that the land areas were therefore now much less extensive than they had been before.

He said that the thermal, according to him the thermal vapor blanket had been dissipated and so that strong temperature differentials were inaugurated, that explains the fact that there could be winds on the earth, which may not have been possible previously that the mountain ranges had been uplifted and that winds and storms and rains and snows were possible now. And that even the environment had become more hostile because of harmful radiation from space that was no longer filtered out, by a canopy above the earth. It certainly to a layman makes sense.

Now then he also said that as a result of that that made account for the fact that men do not live as long after the day of the flood as they did before because of the harmful environmental effects that were now present, which were not present with the canopy over the earth. Tremendous glaciers, rivers and lakes existed for a time with the world only gradually approaching its present state of semi-aridity. He speaks also of other great changes and in fact of, in view of the fact that the subterranean reservoirs were broken up and the other things that took place that there was general instability and that may account for the fact that we have recurrent volcanic and seismic activity, now that the earthquakes that we know about so much today may have been caused by the change that occurred in the earth during the time of the flood. Even suggests that the

earth's rotation was speeded up as a result of the fact that the year was 360 days before and perhaps 365 now, as I understand it. But anyway there were a number of changes. Now it appears after the day of the flood.

God speaks to Noah and you will notice he still speaks just to Noah. Then God spoke to Noah. He does not say yet, Noah and his family, but Noah. It's almost as if Noah is a kind of second Adam. He is the family representative as he steps from the peril of the old world into the safety of the new. He is like a representative for people and they stand in him, suggestive to us of course of the world, which our Lord Jesus Christ is our representative, as a result of his becoming our Redeemer.

The response of Noah to the command of God is given verses 18 and 19. He obeyed the command immediately, there was obedience of a universal character everybody went out, there was joyful obedience and of course they went out and never would return and so it was a kind of final type of obedience so far as judgment of the flood was concerned.

We have come now to what is the most important part of this chapter in my opinion. We are reading verse 20. Then Noah built an altar to the Lord. And you will notice that right at the heart of life of this man Noah and his family is the attunement. Isn't it striking? The first thing he did when he got out of the ark is to build the altar and to offer the offerings. This is the first altar mentioned in the Bible. It is perhaps true to say that when Cain and Abel offered their offerings they were offered up on an altar, but this is the first time that the term *mizbeach*, which is the term for an altar, is used. So this is the first altar mentioned in history. And it is an altar up on which the clean animals evidently were offered.

If you turn back to chapter 7 verse 2 and 3, you remember that God said you shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female and of the animals that are not clean two a male and his female. So evidently since there were seven of the clean animals there were three pairs, but one extra of the clean animals and if this one

extra of all the clean animals is the offering that is offered on the burnt offering here in Genesis chapter 8. So you can see then that Noah is a person who first of all makes his sacrifices and offers the clean animals in token of his relationship to the Lord.

Now what is signified by the offering of the clean animals as burnt offerings? First of all I suggest to you that it's just propitiation. Now the word *mizbeach*, that word is a word that means literally “the place of slaughter.” So right at the beginning you can see, right at the heart of this is the idea of slaughter of the slaying of an animal. Now we know from the New Testament doctrine that the Lord Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins. That is, he is the one who by the shedding of his blood has satisfied the holiness and righteousness of God. For God has claims upon the soul of every man and the claims that he has up on the soul of every man involve perfect obedience. Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all their heart with all their soul with all their mind and their neighbor as thyself. Have you done that? If you have not done that -- and he does not speak about the future; you cannot say well I haven't done it to this point, but I will do it in the future for God. As the Bible says, require it that which is past -- If you have not done that, then you stand before God guilty.

Your sin has brought guilt and condemnation up on you. His requirement is the infinite perfection of holiness and righteousness. Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. You cannot possibly stand before the Lord and say well if a professor had graded me one of the Apostles, I would have had a passing grade. You cannot say that. You must have perfection. You must have a righteousness that is acceptable to a perfectly holy God. Do you have such? Is that you are standing before God, you may have it, but only through our Lord Jesus Christ and the gift of righteousness, which he gives as a result of the altar of Calvary. So the altar suggests them propitiation.

It suggests the death that satisfies the holiness and righteousness of God. It suggests that Christ bore the punishment that you and I would have, where it not for the fact that we have a representative, those of us who are the redeemed. Now in the light of

the fact that the offering was slain or slaughtered, the animal was slain. That suggests the idea of a penal sacrifice. A penal propitiation, that is the Lord Jesus bore punishment. He bore the punishment of his own people. But it also suggests something else. It suggests the idea of substitution. So it is a penal substitution, the animal suffers instead of those for whom the animal stands as representative. So penal substitution by which propitiation is rendered toward God is stated by Noah's offering of the clean animals as burnt offerings.

Evidently Noah recognized his sin, he recognized his guilt, he recognized also the efficacy of the death of these clean animals for the covering of his own sin. And he saw that it was by virtue of that that he was able to stand upon the new creation or the cleansed earth upon which he stood. Now the full revelation of all of these has not given us until we come to the New Testament and to such passages of Romans chapter 3 verse 21 through 26 where the Apostle speaks about the fact that we all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God has set forth a propitiation through faith in his blood, in order that he might be just in punishing for sin and the justifier redeeming his own in love through Christ the just -- might be just and the justifier of him who is of the faith of Jesus or in Jesus. So, propitiation, what a magnificent doctrine, penal substitution, a true substitution, and all of those for whom the lord Jesus Christ substituted, “shall be saved.”

We do not worship a confused God, in which there is confusion in the God her: the Father seeking to do one thing, the Son seeking to do another thing and the Holy Spirit seeking to do something else. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit cooperate in the economy of the God here in seeking to save those who have been set upon by electing grace in the ages past. The Father elects, the Son comes to die for the elect and the Holy Spirit gathers the elect through regeneration in faith into the family of God. We do not worship a confused God, a God who elects, but the Son who says, “No, I'll not die

for those whom God has elected. I'll also die for others." There is no confusion in the God here. There is perfect harmony and agreement in the God here.

We don't worship a confused God, nor do we worship a frustrated deity, who seeks to save everybody, but is frustrated in his purposes because we can puny man, is able to frustrate a sovereign God, it cannot be, it cannot be. Now, there are brethren who differ with me on this point. But after all, let me speak my mind too and I don't worship a confused God and I don't worship one who is restrained in accomplishing his purposes, frustrated. We worship a God who knows what He is doing and who accomplishes exactly what he intends to accomplish.

What a disappointing thing it would be to realize that God could be frustrated and that actually he could be overthrown in his purposes? What kind of a God could we really rely upon if we really believe that doctrine? I don't believe that genuine Christians really believe that doctrine that they talk about when they are not praying. You can tell their theology best, when the time comes for prayer and they do just like all of those who believe in electing grace. They get down on their knees and they say, "Oh God, do something that I cannot do," and they appeal to a sovereign God. They don't say, "Now Lord, if you'll do your part, I'll do mine." But they appeal to him to do what they cannot do. Their prayers give them away.

So, propitiation. Isn't that a great truth? No wonder, Noah when he got off the ark, worshipped the Lord. Now you notice too that the text says, "Then Noah built an altar to the Lord", not to God, but to the Lord, the Jehovah. Another term that is used here is the term that marks up God as faithful to his promises. I is the covenant keeping God and Noah recognizes that and what a full and free offering of gratitude he offers. One seventh of all of the flock of clean animals, those valuable parts of his flock he offers to God. Not entire, but one-seventh of his flock he offers in burnt offerings. Full and free expression of gratitude to God. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews calls it reverence, godly piety and it certainly was. It was a beautiful expression.

Now I know that there are people who say that the patriarchs of the Old Testament don't understand what we understand and there are certain things that are true when a person makes that statement. But there are some things that these patriarchs understood that some of us have not grasped too well yet. And they understood the relationship of a man who had been redeemed to God and they expressed their gratitude.

The third thing that this offering expressed is the thought of dedication. This was a burnt offering, we read. Now, later on we are given specific instructions concerning burnt offerings. The term used to express a burnt offering is the term *olab*. Now, *olab* is related to a Hebrew verb that means to go up and even the noun "as send" is related to it. So an *olab* kind of offering is an offering in which there is a relationship upward, toward heaven. In the Old Testament, in the Septuagint, there are several words that are used to express to translate the *olab*. But the one that is used here is not the most common one, but one that is used, it is the noun *holokartosis*.

Now this particular word is a word that means simply “wholly burnt.” A most common word is the word *holokautoma* which refers to a whole burnt offering, and most of the several words that are used have that idea, different endings in the Greek text, so that these expressions were desired -- were intended to express the fact that, when an offering of burnt nature was made, the burnt offering, the whole of the animal was consumed only on the altar and certain of the other offerings only certain parts of the animal were consumed, such as the sin offering for example. There was a division of the pieces.

But in the case of the burnt offering the animal was consumed upon the altar, the whole of the animal. So it expresses a wholesale devotion to the Lord. So, the burnt offering then suggests dedication. Everything is consumed only altar. The burnt offering suggested this. Incidentally the offerings were not made by the individual who brought them, they were made by the priest. What they did was to bring their offering to the priest who acted as a mediator. Now the reason for this is that, our Mediator is the Lord

Jesus Christ. We do not offer the offering, it is the Mediator, the priest who offers the offering. We do not offer the offering of Calvary it is the Lord Jesus, our priest, our mediator who offers the offering of himself. So the animals were brought to the priest.

Now the one who brought the burnt offering reached out and put his hand on the top of the animal later on. I presume that the same ideals were prevalent at this time too. But later on, the burnt offerings the man put his hand on the top of the animal and as a result of that, that animal became his substitute and assumes all of his guilt transferred to the animal and in the case of the burnt offering, also all of his desire to walk before God is expressed in his identification with the animal, so that his guilt is transferred to the animal and also all of his aspirations to walk wholly before the Lord even to death in obedience. So when the animal was slain, it was his substitute bearing the punishment. Typically that was due to him, but also it expressed his willingness or his desire to live holy for God. So, the idea of dedication is there as well.

Then it becomes, you see a beautiful suggestion of propitiation, penal substitution and secondly of gratitude to your way and of a sense of dedication to his will. So know the first thing of his burnt offerings to the Lord. Now the divine response is most interesting. We read in verse 21, "And the Lord smelled the soothing aroma." Now I must confess I don't particularly like that rendering. I really don't like the renderings of the New American Standard Bible too well. The persons who translated this Bible, in my own personal opinion were not able to command usage of the English language in the most beautiful way. The Lord smelled a soothing aroma. But we will leave it at that. It really was a fragrant aroma to the Lord.

The expression again is a most interesting one. In the Hebrew text, it is *re'ach nichowach* and in the New Testament it is the -- and in the substitute and in the New Testament, it is the expression *osmeo dia*, an odor of a sweet smell, a fragrant aroma. Not simply soothing, that ideals there, but fragrant as well. The striking thing about the Hebrew expression is that it really means something like this literally. I don't want to

press this, it was actually in the final analysis, the meaning of words is not determined by their origination, by their roots, by their derivation, the meaning of words is determined by usage. This will enhance however a very interesting derivation. It really means something like an odor of rest, and the second word is a word that is related to the term Noah as well, for that is the name of Noah. He was a rest-giver and odor of a sweet smell is literally an odor of rest.

So that when the animals were burned as burnt offerings and the odor, the smell of animals goes up toward the Lord. Noah here finds that the Lord accepts the offering and spoken in the language of the physical, he smelled the fragrant aroma. That is, there was an odor of rest. So, it’s as if he looks down, he sees the animal and sees what it signifies and his right arm which is raised in judgment does not now fall up on men because in the blood of the animal, in the sacrifice of the animal, he smells a soothing fragrant aroma that causes him to rest. He finds rest in the sacrifice ultimately of the Lord Jesus Christ. As he expressed it, it is finished and God rested having completed the work of redemption. So there was an odor of soothing aroma of rest because God is satisfied in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Isn't that wonderful? Isn't it great to know that what he has done means that we shall never come under the judgment of God if we stand in Christ.

Well, the ark is a parable of grace. It's really a story that teaches us many interesting things by illustration. It teaches us if there is one means of salvation, there was only one ark and the people and the lions and the insects found salvation through the one means, the rich and the poor, the black and the white, those who are respectable sinners and those who are a disrespectable sinners they all find salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. The man who stands on Mount Sinai trusting in the law and works, is also drowned in the waters of divine judgment. There is one ark, one means of salvation. The ark is a vast vessel, a vast refuge for sinners.

There are people who think that because we preach the doctrine of divine election that we therefore preach the election of a few, how foolish! How ignorant can people be of the Bible. What do we read in the Bible? Well we read that God has elected man to salvation over and over again. Read through the Bible and seek to avoid it, you will have to tear out a great part of your Bible. But also read everything that is said and you will find that in the last days, we read of great multitude which no man could number. The number of the elect is a vast herd of people that no one can number. We preach election but we do not preach the election of a few. We preach the election of a vast multitude which no man can number. The very numbers of the people who are saved through the blood of Christ will magnify the glory of our great God in heaven.

We also read by the way, that those who entered the ark were saved from everything that happened. Do you think this is really what happened as they all got in the ark and God shut the door, Noah said now Shem, Ham I want to make the pumps and Japheth, I want you to look for leaks and so for a year, Shem and Ham mend the pumps and Japheth was looking for the leaks and trying to handle the repairs that were necessary.

Salvation to some people is like that you know, they say salvation is like riding a bicycle or going to heaven is like riding a bicycle. If you stopped pumping, you will fall off and so consequently we are saved by what we do plus what God does. Noah when they entered that ark, they were safe and there was no need for pumps. We read of no pumps on the ark, we do not read of any necessity to repair any of the leaks that may have been sprung in that ark. Men who are in the ark are safe. Men who are in Christ are safe. They are safe on the basis of what Christ has done.

Some of the commentators waxing a little more allegorical have suggested that the many rooms suggest many different kinds of people, that is there Wesleyans in one room and there are some Presbyterians in another room and still some Anglicans in another room – I’m willing to grant that the Wesleyans will be there if they are true believers in

Jesus Christ just as much as the Calvinists or Presbyterians. They all stand on the same basis what Christ has done. But I doubt that the many rooms suggest that different kinds of people that are there.

It is interesting that there was only one door into the ark and that surely suggests the one gospel. There is only door into the Tabernacle suggesting the same thing and the Lord Jesus finally says, "I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved and shall go in and out find pasture." And isn't it interesting to that all of those animals came by a mysterious kind of impulse into the ark. We read in chapter 7 and verse 9, there went into the ark to Noah by twos male and female as God had commanded Noah and he laid it upon the being of those animals so that they didn't have to be gathered by Noah or he didn't have to engage in enormous hunts in order to find the animals, but they were moved by this impulse from God to come into the ark, just as all people who are saved whether they recognize it or not are moved by the sovereign impulse of the Holy Spirit and efficacious grace to come to the Lord Jesus as their Savior.

In Acts 13 and verse 48, Luke describing the work of Paul and Antioch says and when the gentiles heard this they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed the calls of the impulse of God in bringing them to Christ.

What an imposing sight it was as the animals moved toward the ark and what an imposing sight it must be from the standpoint of heaven to see God gathering in His elect through the influence of the Holy Spirit, that mysterious impulse by which a man is moved from unwillingness into willingness to turn to the Lord Jesus. What a solemn picture of judgment it is to? All of the things that were said to Noah, you old gray headed man, you are crazy. And again I repeat that there are as far as the Scripture is concerned, no indications whatsoever that there was any warning. The judgment came swift and quick when it was too late.

Mr. Spurgeon in one of his messages on the flood, comments upon the fact of a picture that he had seen, he called it a master picture. It was picture of someone trying to describe what happened in the flood. And he was describing a man who was a father reaching the top of the last of the mountain peaks to which he could reach. He was moving up, he had his father hanging to his back, he had his wife by side and she was clinging to him and the waters were rising. She had a babe on her breast and one that she was holding with her hand. And they were climbing to the top of the mountain peak. And he said the artist painted the picture in such a way that just as they were in agony reaching the top of the mountain, the little child that had been in its mother's grasp had just lost hold of the mother. The father had fallen to his knees and the wife as well and the waters were coming and the father had reached out and had grasped a limb of a tree and the roots of it were coming up from the ground. A picture of the agony, of the judgment of the flood, no warning, no warning of it to come.

My dear friends sitting in the audience, there is no warning so far as we know in the word of God of the ultimate judgment that is to come at the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will come suddenly. Jesus says in Mathew chapter 24, "there will be a tremendous sign in the sky and the sign is the sudden appearance of the Son of God."

So I call upon you today to remember the judgment of the word of God and to flee to the ark of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has offered the upholding sacrifice which is available for all. Come join that great massive multitude of the elect that no man can number and now know the joy of the forgiveness of sins. I assure you that in the great trials of life it will stand you in good stead. Come to Christ, acknowledge your sin and guilt, believe in him, give yourself wholly to him and receive as a gift eternal life and a standing of righteousness before him. May God through the spirit the secret impulse of the Holy Spirit bring you to Christ before it's too late. Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] We are grateful to thee Lord for these ancient pictures, pictures of real events but things, which go beyond the ancient history to speak to us of the ministry of

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the Lord Jesus Christ. And O God, if there are some in this audience who are not yet in the company of the family of God, bring them through the Holy Spirit to the knowledge of the Son of God. May grace, mercy and peace go with us.

For Jesus sake, Amen.