

May 11, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We just had a wonderful Mother's Day celebration yesterday in the church parking lot. We gave out communion, a carnation and a present to every one that was able to attend. It was a wonderful time and everyone was happy to see us, and to smile and chat for a few moments. This was an appetizer for things to come.

I want to once again thank all the people who helped out, not only on Sunday, but every Saturday we tape the service. There are many people behind the scenes and they are all appreciated and necessary. Praise God. I hope everyone was blessed either by communion or the recorded service, or both. Yeah and Amen.

I want to share with you a thought I had last night at home. It was about Noah. Here are a few facts I want to share before I come to my conclusion.

God flooded the earth because he regretted creating humans. Who came to rescue the earth from God's destruction? This old man named Noah, who was 500 years old when first mentioned. Noah built this gigantic ship that housed thousands of animals and kept them safe from God's destruction of the Earth, aka The Flood. God chose Noah not because he could build ships. He sinned like the other humans, but he was "a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time."

The Ark Noah built was 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high. Since a cubit is about 1.5 feet, the Ark was about 450 ft by 75 ft by 45 ft, or close to 1.5 million cubic feet. That could fit about 1,300 standard 20-foot shipping containers you see on cargo ships. The Titanic was about three times bigger than the Ark, with a volume of 4.6 million cubic feet. The ratio of the Ark was 30:5:3, and was used by ship builders until the 1900s.

It took over 100 years to build the Ark. At the time the Ark went off on its journey, Noah was 600 years old. There were two of each animal on the Ark, or were there? In another passage of the Bible, God told Noah to take "seven pairs of every kind of clean animal" and "one pair of every kind of unclean animal" and "seven pairs of every kind of bird." This could mean there were 14 of each clean animal on the Ark.

The Ark had three stories and a roof with a small opening below it, but no steering wheel. It was made to float, and God steered the ship at will. Rain and "floodgates of the heavens were opened" for forty days and forty nights. According to the Bible, the water was 15 cubits high, or about 23 feet. The floodwaters stayed for 150 days, then they receded for another 100 days. That's when Noah sent out his dove and it came back with an olive branch. Noah and his family (wife, sons and sons' wives) were stuck on the Ark for one year and ten days.

After coming off the Ark, God showed a rainbow as a sign of his covenant (promise) for all mankind that he would never flood the Earth like that again.

Here are some important facts we sometimes overlook. In Genesis 7 it says that Noah, his family and the animals were in the ark "7 days before the flood began". Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him and it was "God who shut the door to the ark". Interesting! I hope God is in the sanctuary of your heart and it is God who has closed your door. He will let in those things that are beneficial, and keep out those things that are harmful.

Second, you will notice that Noah was on the ark for more than a year. While Noah first set out a raven and later a dove, and while the ark did land on Mt. Ararat, it still took time for the flood waters to reside enough for them to leave the ark. We need to know that during this pandemic, we are in a process. It may take some more time for this to end and it may take more time for others to gather together. When we are finally able to congregate, there will be those who still need to take precautions and I pray that they do. But for those who are confident that we can gather together, that is a day we are looking forward to.

And finally, what Noah did the first thing when he left the ark was to offer a sacrifice to God. The sacrifice I am going to offer God is a sacrifice of praise. In Hebrews 13:15 it says "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise, the fruit of lips that openly profess his name." What will make this offering easier is if you have been doing this everyday, especially during this pandemic. After all, spontaneity is a planned event!

So I hope you can learn from Noah on what do in preparation. Do everything God has commanded. Prepare to live for God when this is over because that's what you did before it started. And may the first thing you do everyday is to offer a sacrifice of praise to God and openly profess that Jesus Christ is your Savior.

Praise God,
Pastor Dave