*Wednesday Morning Devotional in June 26, 2024*

**Passage: Genesis 7:1-24**

**1. Noah's Ark and the Salvation of Christ**

The Hebrew word translated as 'ark' is 'tebah,' which means 'box.' This same word is used in Exodus to describe the 'basket' that baby Moses was placed in and set afloat on the river.

Both Noah's ark and Moses' basket were means of God's salvation.

Let's consider the significance of Noah's ark in terms of salvation.

**First, judgment and salvation are entirely the work of God's sovereign will.** The flood and the ark demonstrate this. God decided to judge the sinful humanity with a flood and carried it out. Likewise, He chose Noah and his family for salvation, demonstrating His sovereign will.

**Second, God revealed His intention to judge and save through His word.** He told Noah about the coming flood and that Noah and his family would be saved through the ark.

**Third, we must believe and obey the word God has revealed.**

**Before the flood, Noah's task was to build the ark, believing and obeying God's word.**

When the rain began, Noah entered the ark by faith. One important difference between the boats we think of today and Noah's ark is that Noah's ark had no rudder to steer or any means of propulsion. The ark could protect from the flood but could not be directed by human effort. Noah's only option was to trust in God.

**Fourth, in Genesis 6:14, Noah covered the ark with pitch, a type of waterproofing.** The word for 'pitch' and 'to cover' are the same word used for 'atonement' throughout the Bible. Atonement means 'to cover sin.'

In the Tabernacle, the blood of the sacrificed animals covered the sins of the people, symbolizing Christ's ultimate atonement for our sins through His blood.

**2. Noah's Ark and the Church**

Noah lived in a time when the world was filled with sin. Even the godly descendants of Seth intermarried with the descendants of Cain, adopting their idolatry and culture. As the godly people who were meant to be salt and light disappeared, the world rapidly became corrupt, leading to God's inevitable judgment.

In such a sinful world, God showed grace to Noah and his family and saved them through the ark. The ark separated Noah from the sinful world, just as the church is a community of believers separated from the world through faith in Jesus.

**In Noah's time, the world's judgment came about because of the blending of the church and the world.** When the distinction between the church and the world disappears, and believers live like worldly people, the world becomes rapidly corrupt.

When the church and believers follow the world's values, culture, and ways, they too become corrupt. The descendants of the serpent not only persecute the descendants of the woman but also tempt them. The world entices us with things that appear desirable and beautiful.

However, think about this: if the door of the ark were wide open, allowing water to enter, the ark could no longer protect or save anyone. **Similarly, when the church follows the ways of the world, it loses its purpose.**

The church is like Noah's ark. Just as God chose Noah and saved him through the ark, He calls and saves His people through the church. While the ark was on the water, it did not let the water in. Similarly, the church exists in the world but must not become like the world.

**In this day and age, there is something that each of us as Christians, and our church community as a whole, must be very cautious and vigilant about: humanism.**

**Humanism can sound abstract, but at its root, it leads to a comfortable way of practicing faith. For those who practice faith comfortably, there is no sacrifice, because sacrifice is uncomfortable.**

**Christians influenced by humanism do not engage in serious reflection during worship, asking, "What is God telling me to do? What does He want me to change in my life? What habits does He want me to alter?" Instead, their focus is on other things: "Is the worship service too long or short? Is the sermon too long or short? Did the choir sing in harmony? Did the sound system work well?"**

These elements are meant to aid in worship, but we easily mistake them for the core of worship itself.

Why does this happen? It's because churches, caught in a competitive mindset, unknowingly get swept up in secular marketing trends, asking themselves, "How can we attract more people to our church?"

Therefore, each one of us must reflect on ourselves and reject the practice of seeking comfort in our religious life. We must be willing to face the discomfort and sacrifice that true faith often requires.

Let's remember God's purpose in calling and saving us and strive to live as a church distinct from the world.

**A Prayer to Start a New Day:**

Dear Heavenly Father,

As we conclude our time of devotion and reflection on Your Word, we come before You with hearts full of gratitude and reverence. Thank You for the message of Noah's Ark and the salvation it symbolizes, reminding us of Your sovereignty, grace, and the importance of obedience to Your Word.

Lord, we acknowledge that judgment and salvation are entirely in Your hands. Just as You saved Noah and his family through the ark, we thank You for saving us through the sacrifice of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Help us to live our lives in a way that honors this great gift of salvation.

As we step into this new day, we pray for Your guidance and strength. Help us to trust in You fully, just as Noah trusted You without hesitation. Give us the courage to build our lives on the foundation of Your Word, even when we face challenges and uncertainties.

Father, we recognize the dangers of humanism and the temptation to seek comfort over sacrifice. Help us to be vigilant and to guard our hearts against these influences. Teach us to worship You with sincerity and devotion, focusing on Your will for our lives rather than the external aspects of worship.

May we not be swayed by the values and ways of the world. Instead, empower us to be a light in the darkness, reflecting Your love and truth in all that we do. Keep us steadfast in our faith, and may our church community stand as a testament to Your saving grace, just as Noah's ark stood amidst the flood.

Lord, we pray for a spirit of self-reflection and humility. Show us the areas in our lives that need change and give us the strength to make those changes. Help us to seek Your will earnestly, to listen to Your voice, and to follow where You lead.

As we go about our day, fill us with Your Holy Spirit. Let our thoughts, words, and actions be pleasing to You. May we encounter each person with love and grace, and may our lives be a testimony to Your goodness.

We dedicate this day to You, Lord. Use us for Your glory and help us to walk in Your ways. Thank You for being our protector, our guide, and our Savior. We trust in Your plans and commit to living out our faith with courage and conviction.

In Jesus' name, we pray.

Amen.