

LESSON III

N O A H

Preparation

Gen. Chap. 6-9

Gen. Chap. 11:1-9

Markers

1. Gen. 6:9
2. Gen. 6:14
3. Lev. 17:11
4. Hab. 1:13
5. Hebr. 11:7
6. Gen. 8:20
7. II Peter 1:21
8. Isa. 54:9
9. I Peter 3:20
10. Matt. 24:37
11. Luke 17:26,27
12. Gen. 10:6,8-10
13. Gen. 11:7,8
14. Acts 2:1-18

Lesson III

NOAH

(1) In Genesis we read that “Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations and Noah walked with God” (Gen. 6:9). Because of the great corruption in the world, a vast upheaval was approaching which would be manifest humanly as a flood. Noah, because of his goodness, discerned the cumulative evil, and through God’s guidance made plans to surmount it and to preserve himself and his family during this period of tribulation.

In order to save himself Noah began the construction of an ark under God’s guidance. This ark became a symbol of salvation or safety. It was the same mental consciousness present with Noah that we later find present with the infant Moses when he was saved by being put into the ark in the river Nile. Again, it was the same sense of the preserving and saving power of God present with the adult Moses when he put the tables of the Ten Commandments into the ark with the pot of manna and Aaron’s rod that budded.

(2) Noah was told, “Make thee an ark of gopher wood—rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shall pitch it within and without with pitch” (Gen. 6:14). Pitch was to make the ark watertight. In a higher sense it was to keep out the world flood of evil. The drawing together of the parts of the vessel may be likened to the drawing of man to God. This unity of man with God is what enables man to surmount and ride over the flood of evil. The word “kaphar” translated “pitch” is the same word translated atonement in the Bible (see Lev. 17:11). Just as pitch

(3)

makes a vessel one unit, so the atonement of man makes him to be at one with God. To make an atonement for sin was to sacrifice or give up evil and thus unite oneself to God. Noah's sense of atonement or at-one-ment* with God saved him and his family from being swallowed by evil. The root of the word translated pitch or atonement meant to cover. The vessel was covered with pitch. The sacrifice to be made on an altar was to cover sin whereby an atonement for sin was made. The first mention of an altar in the Bible is the one built by Noah for sacrifice after the flood.

The sacrifice made upon an altar was a substitute to be punished instead of the evil-doer. The one seeking atonement provided the sacrifice with the thought that he had repented and the sacrifice represented giving up something of value, and his atonement a return or reuniting with God.

The sacrificial offerings represented and pointed to the final sacrifice to be made by Jesus when he offered himself on the cross. Jesus' offering was to substitute himself as a sacrifice for others, to accept upon himself the punishment for the sins of others and thereby atone for the sins of all, to cover their sins, and to bring about the at-one-ment of all with God.

In the time of Noah the flood of evil took the form of a flood of water. In Moses' time the flood of evil took the form of the plagues. In our times it appears in the form of epidemics, depressions, wars and droughts. Noah saved himself and his family from being overwhelmed. He surmounted the waves of evil. His method and success point the way for us to follow in dealing with present-day waves of evil.

Did God send the flood? If God had sent the flood, Noah would have been disobeying God in overcoming it.

* The Scofield Reference Bible, Oxford Univ. Press, 1917, Ex. 29:33 note.

- (4) We learned in an earlier lesson that the Bible tells that “God is of purer eyes than to behold evil” (Hab. 1:13). Hence the flood was not God-sent but a product of mortal errors and symbolic of their breaking up. Thus today we should look upon evil as not God-sent but rather as something which can be eliminated by the power of God.

The ark symbolized salvation, preservation and safety. By entering into the consciousness symbolized by the ark, Noah was saved. This consciousness was the sense of the power and presence of God, good. Today, that same sense of God’s power and presence is available and is essential for protection against the floods of error.

Noah sealed and covered the ark with pitch. Through atonement or unity with God we seal ourselves against the penetration of evil into our consciousness and demonstrate that we are covered with truth and united by an indissoluble bond to God. Our atonement is accomplished by sacrifice, the sacrifice or elimination of evil from consciousness. The ark symbolizes Christ as a refuge and means of salvation. The atonement keeps out the waters of judgment and keeps the believer safe in Christ.*

- (5) In Hebrews 11:7 we read, “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark.” This expression translated fear is in the original meaning circumspection or wariness, so that a more accurate rendering is “Noah, being wary, prepared an ark.” Thus we find that Noah was alert and awake to the approaching danger.

- (6) After the flood, Noah sent forth first a raven, then a dove. The raven, being black, may have symbolized the past, the world flooded with evil. The white dove, symbol of hope, pointed to the future reached by atonement and sacrifice. Noah (Gen. 8:20) then prepared an altar and sacrificed upon it, symbolizing the true sacrifice of the flesh or of mortal desire and human will. The sacrifice

* Scofield, Gen. 6:14 note.

upon the altar only symbolized the removal of sin; it did not accomplish its removal. The end of sin is only accomplished by the atonement, the mental and moral transformation that dissolves it out of consciousness and action. The sacrifice following the flood may be considered an expression of gratitude for deliverance.

We may summarize Noah's method of meeting a world-problem in the following steps.

1. Spiritual alertness to the approach of error.
2. Realization of the safety and salvation provided by God.
3. Taking the human footsteps to provide safety.
4. Purification and atonement of consciousness.
5. Realization of the covering provided by this atonement to prevent the seepage of error into consciousness.
6. Steadfastness in rising above the flood.
7. Patience and hope expressed as the flood subsides.
8. Sacrifice for past errors and humility in dropping the past and accepting God's promises for the future.
9. Gratitude for deliverance.

We may further summarize Noah's solution of the world-problem as the expression of the following:

1. Alertness
2. Perception
3. Protection
4. Humility
5. Guidance
6. Sacrifice
7. Purification
8. Atonement
9. Wisdom
10. Steadfastness

11. Patience
12. Faith
13. Hope
14. Realization
15. Gratitude

In Gen. 6:8 we read, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Why should Noah find favor with God? Surely it must have been because he had a special place in God's plans. This grace operated as a divine influence to uplift and sanctify him. Then let us add this all-important factor.

16. Grace

Jesus tells us of a disaster in which a group of people were lost. This wave of evil and its prevention are described as follows (Luke 13:4,5): "Those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish." Thus repentance from materiality is that quality indispensable to freedom from world evil. Let us add it to our list.

17. Repentance

Careful attention should be given to the expression of these qualities in human experience. They enabled Noah to surmount a flood of evil. They will do the same for us. Is not the whole solution of the problem of mortal existence contained in the reflection of good qualities?

Babel

In Genesis, chapter 11, we read of the moral decline of the descendants of Noah. Babel is the Hebrew word which in Greek is rendered Babylon. Babel stands for confusion. Babylon was the capital of the country of Chaldea called Shinar in Genesis.

The record states that there was one language and

one speech. If this unity had been based on an understanding of the one God, it would have lasted. Evidently this was not the case, as it didn't last. It must have been man-made. This reminds one of Japanese thought-control in World War II, which they believed made them invincible because they all thought alike. This points to the fact that first one must reflect God and then the unity will be God-based and agreement will be by individual guidance not imposed by human will. Second, the agreement of thought must be on Truth. To be agreed on error is to have no basis in Truth.

Following this false unity came mortal ambition to make a name by building a tower to heaven or to reach God by mortal means. Thus we have a united effort to achieve worldly renown by reaching a spiritual state by mortal methods. Desire for worldly renown is a false motive. Using material means is a false method. The end result was Babel, confusion.

The tower was also intended to be higher than any future flood might reach. This indicated a disbelief in God's promise to Noah that the world would never be inundated by a flood of water again.

The brief story of the tower of Babel has been considered by some to be a prophecy of events in the church. First, there was the unity of the Apostolic Church. Then worldly rather than spiritual methods were employed which developed into the Christian Church with a man-made unity. Then came the confusion of tongues and division into many sects.

The descendants of the three sons of Noah are popularly supposed to have peopled the world. The descendants of Ham (hot) constituted the Hamitic tribes of Egypt and Africa in general. The descendants of Shem (name) constituted the Semitic races of Syria (Aram), Chaldea (Arphaxad), Assyria (Asshur), Mercia (Elam), and Arabia (Joktan). The descendants of Japhet (enlargement) settled in the isles (i.e., the coasts) of the Gentiles (Gen. 10:15).

This included the coasts of the Mediterranean in Europe and Asia Minor. From here they spread northward over Europe and part of Asia.

The importance of Noah is attested by the validity attributed to prophecy and by the references made by later prophets about Noah. These statements constitute a validation of the story of Noah.

(7) In II Peter 1:21 we read, "Prophecy came not in olden time by the will of man—but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

(8) In Isaiah 54:9 we read, "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me—for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." This reference by Isaiah in quoting God's statement is a confirmation of the flood and a reminder of God's promise to Noah that there would never be another flood of water that would cover the earth. It is also a statement of the irrevocable nature of God's promises.

(9) In I Peter 3:20 we read, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." This implies that God held off the flood until Noah was ready. Viewed in the light of the fact that God who is good does not cause evil, it can be seen that the flood of error was held off by God's power brought to bear by Noah's unity with God until he was ready to surmount it.

The Scripture tells us that Noah lived 950 years. In Matthew, Jesus discussed the second coming of Christ. In order to show that it would be a long time in the future, he said (Matthew 24:37), "But as the days of Noe were, so shall the coming of the son of man be." This is also a confirmation of Noah's great age.

(11) In Luke 17:26,27 Jesus said, "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it also be in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives,

they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all." This confirms the fact that, as stated in Genesis, materialism occupied in the minds of the people and eventually became the flood that overwhelmed them.

Previous to the flood Noah had been interested in husbandry. Following the flood Noah planted a vineyard. We do not know if Noah knew of the effects of wine. He drank the wine and became drunk in his tent and was unclothed. His son Ham came in and saw him and went out and spread the story. However, his other two sons, Shem and Japhet covered him and awaited his recovery. As a consequence, Noah cursed Canaan and his descendants, but blessed the others. Canaan was the son of Ham and it was the land of Canaan which the Israelites under Joshua eventually conquered and settled. The Israelites were the descendants of Shem.

The action of the sons of Noah teaches us a valuable lesson. When another is found to have a fault, we should not spread it abroad and thus fasten it more firmly on the individual, but rather we should keep it quiet and endeavor to heal the problem and thus free the individual from it.

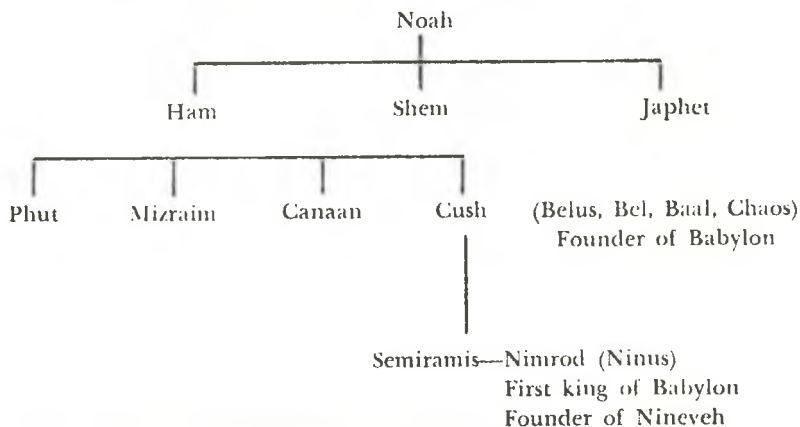
(12) Another son of Ham was Cush* (Gen. 10:6). A son of Cush was Nimrod the hunter (Gen 10:8-10). The tower of Babel was the beginning of Babylon in Chaldea (Shinar). Cush was the founder and Nimrod the first king. Cush and Nimrod were the leaders in the tower-building program and the falling away of mankind from the true way.

Cush was identical with Belus or Bel or Baal. Bel signified the Confounder. Cush or Bel confounded the people by their efforts to build the tower of Babel to heaven. Originally they were of one language but Cush or Bel confounded their language. Another form of Cush

* See Hislop, "The Two Babylons," 1948, published by Loizeaux Brothers, New York, for a general discussion of Babylonian worship.

(13) is Chaos. Chaos is both a state of confusion and the god of confusion. Ovid has Janus, "the god of gods" from whom all other gods had their origin, say of himself, "The ancients called me Chaos." The symbol of Janus was a club which, in Chaldean, means to scatter abroad. This enables us to understand the Bible reference to confounding their language and scattering them abroad (Gen. 11:7,8).

Nimrod, son of Cush, was popularly thought to have been the one under whose direction the tower of Babel was started. He was the first king of Babel or Babylon and also founded Nineveh. Nimrod means rebellion and he is identical with Ninus (the son).



Cush means black (he was a Negro).

Bel signifies Confounder.

Chaos is both a state of confusion and the god of confusion.

Chaos is Janus, the god of gods.

Symbol of Janus is a club, which means to scatter abroad.

Nimrod means rebellion. He was a hunter.

Ninus means the son.

Semiramis is the goddess of fortifications.

Belus (Baal) the male god.

Beltis (Astarte, Ishtar) the female god.

These descendants of Ham became the gods of the Chaldeans, and the Babylonish paganism spread throughout the East. It carried down through the centuries into Greece and Rome, and the various rites and deities were carried over practically intact into the Christian Church under new names.

The various forms of worship in Babylon spread throughout the world. Let us consider just a few of these.

1. Worship of mother and son

This appeared as worship of Beltis (Astarte, Ishtar) and Ninus. It was the same when it appeared as worship of Semiramis and Ninus, the latter serving as father and son. This worship of virgin mother and son was found long existent in China before Christians arrived.

2. Easter ceremonies

This is the worship of Astarte or Ishtar. In Britain on Beltane (from Bel), on the first of May, worship at Druidical stone circles consists of jumping through fire just as in Baal worship.

3. Sign of the cross

The mystic Tau (T) of the Chaldeans and Egyptians was used as a mark in baptism of those initiated into the mysteries in Chaldea. It was a symbol of authority. The Vestal Virgins of pagan Rome wore it suspended from their necklaces.

4. Lent

Cassianus, the monk of Marseilles, writing in the fifth century, said that "the observance of the forty days had no existence so long as the perfection of that primitive church remained inviolate." It was borrowed from the worship of the Babylonian goddess. Such a Lent was held in the spring by the Mexicans in honor of the sun. The Egyptian Lent of forty days was in commemoration of Adonis or Osiris.

5. Buns and eggs

Hot cross buns and dyed eggs were from Chaldean rites. The buns were used in the worship of the Queen of Heaven, the goddess Easter (Ishtar) in the days of Cecrops, founder of Athens, 1500 B.C. Much later Jeremiah takes note of this (Jer. 7:18): "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, so that they may provoke me to anger." The mystic egg of the Babylonians fell from heaven into the Euphrates. Out of it came Venus, i.e. Astarte, Ishtar or Easter.

6. Christmas and New Year's Day

The day of Jesus' birth is unknown. Chrysostom wrote in Antioch about 380 A.D., "It is not yet ten years since this day was made known to us." Hence no such festival of Christmas was ever heard of until the fourth century in a place right by the Holy Land. Tertullian wrote about 230 A.D., "By us who are strangers to Sabbaths (Jewish-Sabbaths), and new moons and festivals, once acceptable to God, the Saturnalia, the feast of January, the Brumalia, and Matronalia are now frequented; gifts are carried to and fro, New Year's Day presents are made with din, and sports and banquets are celebrated with uproar; oh, how much more faithful are the heathen to their religion, who take special care to adopt no solemnity from the Christians."

"Yule" is Chaldean for infant or little child. The 25th of December was Yule day or Child's day to the ancient Anglo-Saxons long before any contact with Christianity. The so-called Christians gradually adopted the Babylonian worship of mother, son, Easter, sign of the cross and innumerable other ceremonies.

How could Rome, a pagan nation be so quickly

taken over by Christianity? The adoption of Christianity by Constantine is not sufficient to account for this. The fact is that Christianity was taken over by paganism and adopted pagan ceremonies. This made it easy for pagans to adopt Christianity since it involved mainly a change of names for their gods and ceremonies. In destroying paganism the Church became pagan. This made it simple for pagans to adopt the new religion, but it was no longer the Christianity taught by Christ Jesus.

The fact that purification by water had failed to effect a permanent transformation for the better—this in no way lessened the marvelous accomplishment of Noah in overcoming the world-flood of evil.

From Japhet descended the Gentile or non-Israelite or foreign nations translated “heathen” in the Bible. The word had no religious connotation. From the descendants of Shem God will choose a portion and make a new covenant. This covenant began with Abraham.

(14) The division of thought which occurred at the building of the tower of Babel had its origin in the belief of human will. Each person had a different view based on human opinion. These views were so diverse that the people could not understand one another. This confusion was eventually corrected by the right method as shown by the disciples more than two thousand years later on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-18). At this time we find “they were all with accord in one place.” This unity of thought based on their unified knowledge of one God poured out such a blessing upon them that although all who spoke were Galileans, each one of those about them heard the wonderful truth of God in his native tongue. Nothing could stop the expression of truth when all were united in receiving it. This is the basis of true unity and it came about through the acceptance of one God and one Christ.