

# “THE ARK OF DELIVERANCE”

## GENESIS 6:13-22

Pastor Keith E. Gephart

### INTRODUCTION

God does not allow His children to go unwarned of coming judgment. His word speaks clearly and He gives us signs of the times. Here, God takes Noah into His confidence. He had a close walk with God—contrast the Babylonian flood stories, and even the new “Noah” movie.

#### I. THE DEMAND FOR THE ARK (6:13)

The “end of all flesh has come before Me.” [Destruction of all people—see v. 12, “all corrupted”]

They had rebelled against God.

“Before Me”—as in v. 11, in His sight and recognition

- He sees and passes His judgment or evaluation about the end of mankind.
- Expresses God’s purpose. He determines to end the human race.
- Not an arbitrary choice—God must do so—due to corruption: “Is come before.”
- Why? Earth is “filled with violence” (v. 11 also)—“because of them”—lit. “from their faces.”
- Man can only blame himself for His destruction. Now God Himself acts—“behold”=attention
- God is a God both of love and justice.
- “I am destroying”=about to destroy; ruin the earth as man has already done!
- Sweeping nature: “them”, the people, “with the earth”
- So devastating is this that the final judgment is compared to this flood (I Pet. 3:5-7).

There comes a time when God’s call ceases; then there is no escape, no more offer of grace, judgment falls.

#### II. THE DESTRUCTION DESCRIBED (17)

A. The Judge—emphasis on His action: “Behold I, even I.” (cf. Dt. 32:39-40)

- Spectacular nature of the flood and universal
- Not merely a local flood—that would not be hard to believe.
- “Bringing”—impending; I am about to.

B. What is judged—“Upon the Earth”

C. How it is judged—“The Flood of water”

- A unique word used only for Noah’s Flood—here and Ps. 29:10. No other flood like this one.
- General idea of destruction. “Water” is the destroying agent. [Cf. Gen. Flood; World that Perished]

D. Result of the judgment—destruction (cf. v. 13)

1. All flesh in which is the breath of life—man and beast, everything “under heaven.”
2. Everything that is “on the earth” perishes—not all aquatic animals
3. Entire Earth affected—cf. 9:11, 15
4. Everything will die! Has God’s Covenant failed?

#### III. THE DIRECTIONS FOR THE ARK (14-16)

The ark was “box shaped—designed to float—not to sail; squared ends and straight sides.

A. Its material—Gopher wood (may mean “wood of pitch”)

- Resinous wood, likely a type of evergreen.
- Possibly Cypress

B. Internal design—with “rooms” (literally “nests”—appropriate rooms for various animals)

C. Seaworthiness—“pitch it inside and out with pitch” [verb derived from the noun]

- Possibly from same root as our word for “atonement”=“to cover”

- The ark is protected by the atonement!;It will not leak or sink
  - This was probably a *resinous itch* rather than a *bituminous product*.
- D. Dimensions (15) [cubit=the common one of 18" —17.5; distance from the elbow to tip of middle finger]
1. Length—450 feet long
  2. Breadth—75 feet wide
  3. Height—45 feet high
  4. Volume of the ark: 1,396,000 cubic feet
  5. Deck area—3 floors, v. 16—95,700 sq. ft.
  6. Gross tonnage—13,960 tons
    - Not until 1858 was a comparable ship built [K. Brunel—the Great Eastern=692'x83x30, 19,000 tons—5 times the tonnage of any ship then afloat!]
    - Peter Janson of Holland built Danish barges called "fleuten" modeled after the ark.
    - Proved to have greater storage capacity than curved vessels—1/3 more carrying capacity.
    - Very seaworthy, almost impossible to capsize. Would have to be turned almost vertical.
    - If Moses had invented this story, how could he have thought of such a huge boat? How would he have known how large it would need to be?
- E. Window (below the roof by one cubit, likely all the way around the ark for ventilation and some light)
- F. Door in the side of the ark. (16)
- G. Three decks or stories (16)

#### IV. THE DELIVERANCE OF MAN AND ANIMALS (18-22)

##### A. Saving the Animals (19-20)

1. Two of every kind--male and female, of "every living thing of all flesh"—to keep them alive with you.
  - "Living things" are animals, not plants
  - "Flesh"—animal life, being weak and perishable. They need care to be preserved.
  - Male& female—to preserve the species by reproduction
  - Kept alive in the ark
2. Later, Noah told to have seven of every *clean* animal (7:1ff).
3. How could Noah get these animals to the ark and inside?
  - Earlier movie showed Noah having trouble getting them in orderly & by pairs.
  - More recent movie had this part right—by divine influence, came to Noah.
  - V. 19—"you shall bring" & v. 20—"shall come to you" to keep them alive.
  - Can't be explained that these animals merely sensed the calamity and came to Noah.
  - Why would only **two** come, and then **in pairs**?
  - Animals were not isolated in different latitudes and altitudes as at present so that some would need to travel thousands of miles.
  - Migratory instinct of animals—either first placed there, or activated in those certain animals at that time.
  - All such animals on the ark had such instincts according to their gene programming. Their descendants inherited them also after the flood so as to disperse, etc.
  - Scientists still do not understand the phenomenon of migration.
4. Specific animals preserved (20)
  - a. Birds—after their kind
  - b. Animals—i.e. wild (beasts) and domestic (cattle)
  - c. Creeping things (cf. Gen. 1 for these)
    - Note, only those animals which could not live through such a flood—mainly birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles—maybe some insects and worms.
    - Not even all mammals, reptiles, and amphibians would need to be on the ark.

- Moreover, the Biblical “kind” may have been much more limited than our “species”. Not all varieties were taken aboard—e.g. hundreds of varieties of pigeons all from same origin.
- Large animals probably represented by their young—no reproductive activity on the ark.
- Morris estimates about 75, 000 animals on the ark; **this is a generous estimate.**
- **50 box cars of a train could carry these, yet the ark had a capacity of 522 box cars!**

B. Supplying Food (21)

1. No miraculous supply—“take for yourself.”
2. “Some of all manner of edible things—food. Not all things are edible—which are customarily eaten.
3. Passengers given work to do while aboard the ark, lest they brood over the fate of mankind.
4. How could Noah and family care for so many animals?
  - a. Huge task merely disposing of the manure!
  - b. The phenomenon of hibernation—probably either active or latent in all “kinds”. Still not thoroughly understood by scientists.

C. Saving People (18)

1. Noah
2. Your sons—Shem, Ham, Japheth
3. Your wife
4. Your son’s wives—all of those “with you.”

D. Noah’s Obedience (22)—He did according to all that God had commanded him, so he did! (**stressed twice!**)

- God commands—he obeys! (cf. 7:5, 9, 16)
  - Thus, notice God’s intimate fellowship with Noah—7 times God spoke to Noah
  - Contrast Ps. 29—7 times the thunder of God’s wrath and judgment peal out against a disobedient world; cf. Rev.—th3 7 thunders there (Rev. 10:3-4).
1. Despite the enormity of the task!
  2. Noah acted by faith (**Heb. 11:7**)
  3. He was moved by godly fear—for the *salvation of his household*.
  4. Thereby, the world, by contrast, was condemned.
    - Noah built the ark—an external witness and testimony.
    - He was a preacher of righteousness—II Pet. 2:5.
    - He inherited the righteousness that is by faith.
  5. His obedience brought salvation to his house; so Christ’s obedience brings salvation to the many (Rom. 5:19).

## CONCLUSION

The “ark”—likely an Egyptian word meaning “chest, coffin”; thus a “chest” or “box”; only other use in the OT—for Moses’ “ark” of bulrushes. Moses committed to death, was put into his “coffin” by his mother, and sailed to life.

So does Noah, dying, he and his family come to new life after the Flood.

They enter the ark through the door—Christ is the door to salvation.

God shuts the door---security. The “pitch” is related to atonement, protected by Christ’s blood.

ENTER THE ARK BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

“**The Covenant**”—v. 18. God hasn’t forgotten his plan; first mention of “covenant” in OT.

Other covenants: Adam in the Garden; Adam after the Fall (Gen. 3:15).

God initiates covenants; begins with salvation, then has mutual obligations.

God made the covenant with Noah after the Flood (Chapter 9). Noah is promised a new beginning.

God “will make, establish” his covenant with Noah.

Noah’s family is also delivered—8 people (I Pet. 3:20). God is the only one who can determine who can be delivered.