

## 98-06-21a

For a scripture reading this morning, turn with me to Psalm 37. Psalm 37. The connection of the theme of this psalm to our study in Genesis 6, 7, and 8 is going to be clear as we read.

We'll read the first 20 verses of Psalm 37. This is a Psalm of David, as pretty much all of the first 50 psalms are. You can generally figure that if you're in Psalm 1 through 50, it is a Psalm of David.

There are others of David scattered through the book. But this discusses the heritage of the righteous in contrast with calamity that comes upon the wicked. It's one of the fundamental observations that is easy to make but hard to remember.

Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord and do good.

Dwell in the land and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.

He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him. Do not fret because of Him who prospers in His way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

Cease from anger and forsake wrath. Do not fret, it only causes harm. For evildoers shall be cut off.

But those who wait on the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall be no more. Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, but it shall be no more.

But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plots against the just, and gnashes at him with his teeth. The Lord laughs at him, for He sees that His day is coming.

The wicked have drawn the sword and have bent their bow to cast down the poor and needy, to slay those who are of upright conduct. Their sword shall enter their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked.

For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the Lord upholds the righteous. The Lord knows the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time.

And in the days of famine, they shall be satisfied. But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord, like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish. Into the smoke they shall vanish away.

This is a timeless theme in Scripture. God honors those who honor Him. Those who dishonor Him, to quote 1 Samuel, they are lightly esteemed.

And to be lightly esteemed by God is just about the worst thing that can happen to you. These things are illustrated so graphically, as we return to our study in Genesis chapter 7, where we have already observed the reason for the situation as we find it. We know why Noah is the one to whom God comes with the message of deliverance.

With the command for obedience. With the design for salvation. The design for deliverance and divine judgment.

And this picture is not only eternal judgment, eternal salvation, but also the deliverance that we have the opportunity to lay hold of each and every day. We know from the New Testament that Jesus Christ not only died to save us from the penalty for sin, to deliver us out of the lake of fire and into relationship with God, but He also died to deliver us out of this present evil age. And that daily deliverance is also pictured.

The principles are the same. God calls. We have the opportunity to respond in faith or to be apathetic and reject.

And even as believers, it is such a tragedy to be a believer, to be bought with the blood of Christ, to be a member of the body and bride of Christ and yet experience the same life and the same lack of fruitfulness that unbelievers experience. It's such a terrible thought that much of the church doesn't think it can happen. And you have the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.

The spurious doctrine that says that if you are in fact a believer, God is at work in you to will and to do His good purpose. And your life will be on an upward trend whether you want to or not. That's not the case.

In the same way that we have to decide to lay hold of God's grace at salvation, we have to decide to lay hold of God's grace in daily life. It's not automatic. The promises of God are not unconditional when it comes to provision, blessing, fruitfulness, exercise of spiritual gift, meaning and purpose and definition in life, inheritance in the eternal future.

These things depend on what we choose. God's grace is available just as it is to every member of the human race for salvation. But we have to choose.

And our choice is exceedingly important. We've seen that Noah made that choice before there was a crisis, before the pressure was on, before the statement of God's judgment had come, before the flood was on its way. Noah chose to walk with God.

And Noah chose to be blameless in his generation. It doesn't mean that he never sinned. He had a sinful nature like the rest of us do, a sinful nature like the rest of his generation has.

But as we have seen, Noah laid hold of three essential principles. And we saw this back in chapter 6 when it says that Noah was righteous, Noah was blameless, and Noah walked with God. Each of those requires knowledge of something.

It doesn't just happen. It isn't a happenstance that this was Noah's status. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord because something was true of him.

He was righteous. Where does righteousness come from? That's the book of Romans. That's, in many ways, the theme of Galatians.

Righteousness comes by faith. So Noah knew things about God. Noah understood principles of worship, principles of obedience, principles of refraining from the evil that surrounded him in the world.

And Noah lived in that way. Before God pronounced judgment, before he had any inkling that there was a coming crisis, Noah knew of God. Noah responded to that knowledge.

And Noah made the things of God the object of his faith. That made him righteous, just like Abraham will be a few generations forward in time. Abraham will believe God as a believer.

It's not the point of Abraham's salvation, is it, when it says Abraham believed God. This is the point at which many decades after his salvation, after he has left Ur, after he has responded to the promises of God, after he's built altars, after he has lived many years in the land of promise, God comes and says, you're going to have a son. Abraham believed that promise as a believer, and it was credited to him for righteousness.

It's such a shame that we misunderstand that concept in Genesis 16 and 17, and in Romans 4, about Abraham. We think that he's a big picture of salvation by faith. And he is.

But we miss the kind of salvation that he represents. It's deliverance. It's righteousness by faith as a believer that Abraham primarily represents.

And even earlier, Noah represents that same thing. Noah was righteous by faith. We've reviewed some of the promises of God.

There are promises that we can make the object of our faith. There are principles of the Word of God, principles of the way God operates, God's character. You know the way God is if you study His Word.

You know that He is compassionate. You know that He is infinitely forgiving. You know

that He is patient.

You know that He will suffer long because divine love has that as a characteristic. We talked about divine love Friday night. Where do all of those great characteristics in 1 Corinthians 13 come from? They're characteristics of God.

God suffers long. God is patient. God is kind.

God does not return evil for evil in our case because we're His children. And when we come to Him, when we respond to His grace, there is infinite forgiveness, infinite cleansing. And that leads to the second principle that we've observed about Noah.

It says he was blameless, just like David was blameless. And he says in the Psalms, I stand before God in my righteousness. How can he say that? He's a murderer.

He's an adulterer. He's hacked thousands of guys up in battle. He has, well, maybe hundreds of guys in battle.

I don't know exactly how many he killed. Thousands may be a bit much. But he has committed the sin of anger.

He has committed the sin of fear. He fled from the palace of Saul and went to the priests of Nob, lied to the priests, got the sword of Goliath and some showbread and left. And Saul kills all the priests at Nob, which is sort of cursing by association with David's failure and David's sin.

And yet David, after all these things, says, I stand before God in my righteousness. I stand before God blameless. How can he say that when he's such a big sinner? Because he knows the same thing that no one knew and the same thing that all believers who make progress in God's plan know.

It isn't the failures that you commit. It is your understanding of the purifying power of God, the cleansing power of God that we claim by faith. How are we purified? We saw these scriptures.

Isaiah 1.16 Wash yourselves. Remember, Noah built the ark out of wood. God didn't manufacture it for him.

Noah had to go out and build it. We wash ourselves. We have a responsibility to cleanse ourselves.

Where does that ability come from? Where is the means? It's all of grace, but it's something that we pick up and use. We don't just say, you know, I was saved. There are actually people who believe this.

Many in the church believe that because you're saved and Jesus died for sin, sin's not an

issue. Just don't worry about it. Just ignore your sins.

Go on. That's not what the Word of God says. It says wash yourselves and be clean.

Isaiah 1.16 In 1.18 of Isaiah, it tells us that God is the one who does the cleansing, but we have the command to wash ourselves. Jeremiah 4.4 Circumcise your hearts. We do that ourselves.

Acts 22.16 Wash away your sins is the command. 1 Corinthians 5.7 Paul says purge out the old leaven. Leaven, universally in scripture, is a picture of corruption.

And he says purge it out. You've got to identify it. You've got to throw it out the door.

2 Corinthians 7.1 Cleanse ourselves from filthiness. We do that. We identify it.

We separate from it by God's grace and in the strength that God provides. But we have to choose. 2 Timothy 2.21 This is my famous response to Romans 9. Everyone says, Well, God ordained everybody to either be a vessel of honor or a vessel of wrath in Romans 9. What if God has endured with great patience the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction so that he can reveal his glory to the vessels of honor and so forth.

And people say, See there, God's made some vessels of honor and some vessels of wrath. It's elections, predestination, and so forth. Well, you go over to 2 Timothy 2.21 where Paul, the very same author that wrote Romans in a similar context, gives a list of failures, a list of corruptions, a list of impurities that can happen to believers.

And he says, If a man will cleanse himself from these... If a man will cleanse himself from these... It doesn't say if God reaches down and cleanses him. If he cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel of honor. How do you get into the vessel of honor category? Cleanse yourself.

This is something Noah understood and that's why God can say in Scripture, Noah was blameless. Not that he never sinned, but he knew how to be washed. There's sort of an irony here that if we do not cleanse ourselves, if we do not wash ourselves with water, it says over in Hebrews, having your conscience sprinkled from evil.

If we don't wash ourselves, then God is going to wash. And we saw that verb last week. Washing with water.

God says, I'm going to wash with water the entire earth. They haven't washed themselves. They haven't purified themselves.

I'm going to wash them all away with a big bath. And this will cleanse the earth of this great impurity, this great evil that has grown. James 4.8 Cleanse your hands.

Purify your hearts. These are imperatives. 1 John 3.3 Every man that has the hope in him

purifies himself.

So, we understand righteousness. It comes by faith. To have faith, you have to know something so you can make it the object of faith.

To be blameless, we have to know how to be purified because none of us are sinless. None of us can ever escape sin in this life. It's going to overtake us.

We're going to be beset with it. But we've got to lay it aside. It says in Hebrews, laying aside every weight and the sin that so easily besets us.

We have to lay it aside. And that's the principle of purification. The third principle that we observed about Noah, he was righteous, he was blameless.

What else did he do? He walked with God. You can be cleansed. You can trust God.

But it's a process. There's a walk that takes place. We talked about this Friday night as well.

Walking is a process, not a point in time. To do that, we have to know where we're going. If you're going to walk, you have to have a destination.

You have to have some idea of why you're walking. This is one of the reasons why when we take walks in the evening, we don't go up here to the high school and just walk around. I see people doing this.

There's a track up there, a high school track, and it's open to the public. You can go up there and just walk around and around and around. Something about that, just, I can't do that.

There's no destination. It's just walking purely for the sake of walking. You have to ponder your path, Proverbs 4.26 says.

Ponder the path of your feet. Well, I like to go somewhere and see something as I'm walking. Walking is good for you, but hopefully you have some sort of a destination, some idea of where you're going.

Isaiah 2.3, God says, Learn my ways and walk in them. So what is the destination? They're the ways of God. Isaiah 38.16, By these men live.

By these men walk. Literally, halak in Hebrew. Romans 6.4, The worthy walk is the purpose of our new life in Christ.

The whole reason that God saved us, we're not finished. We tend to think that salvation is the big deal. There's such an emphasis on evangelism.

Get them saved out of the lake of fire. And then we kind of heave a big sigh of relief and

we don't worry too much. There's a purpose for salvation.

It's not just deliverance from the lake of fire. The emphasis of Scripture is not on the lake of fire. In fact, you look in vain in the Old Testament to even find it.

If that's the big emphasis, why does the bulk of Scripture not say anything about it? The purpose of our new life in Christ is the walk. We are saved for a purpose, just like recruiting in the military. You sign people up, put them in boot camp, give them a uniform for a purpose.

You don't say, Well, boy, we've met our recruiting quota for the month or for the year, so we're all done. They're all signed up. We've issued them their uniforms.

They've got their weapon and they're sitting there on the bench outside the recruiting station with their big pile of gear. That's not the objective. But to look around at the church today, you would think it was, spiritually speaking.

We have a purpose, and it is to walk. Romans 8.4 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 5.7 We walk by faith, not by sight.

This is what Noah is a big example of. Galatians 5.16 Walk by means of the Spirit. Ephesians 4.1 Walk worthy.

Colossians 1 The worthy walk is described. Ephesians 5.2 Walk in love. We have lots of information about our walk.

Why? Because that's what we're supposed to do. When you understand faith and you understand purification, to be blameless, that enables us to walk by God's grace. Ephesians 5.15 As I've probably mentioned before, this always reminds me of a study in Ephesians that I went through with a pastor up in Tulsa.

Because when he got to Ephesians 5.15 and it says walk circumspectly, his illustration was very meaningful to me because we lived out in the country at that time. We were way out in Rogers County and we had lots of cows and horses. Glenn Carnegie, when he taught Ephesians 5.15, walk circumspectly, he talked about what you encounter in a typical barnyard.

You've got little hazards out there that you don't want to step in. If you want to get through the barnyard without being soiled and smelling bad and being unable to come into the house, you've got to walk circumspectly. You've got to avoid the things that cause you impurity, that cause you to fail.

Walk circumspectly. 1 John 2.6 We are to walk as Christ walked. He walked by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

He walked in the power of the Spirit during his earthly life and that's what we are to do. So these three things characterize Noah. We've gone into that in quite a bit of detail in the past few weeks.

But this is why, and we tend to just go through the flood and lots of water and changes in the earth and before and after, two by two animals and so on, and we miss why Noah. Can we expect that daily deliverance from this present evil age from God? We can if we understand and practice the things that Noah understood and practiced. So we have come now to the command to build the ark.

Noah has done this in verse 22 of chapter 6. Thus Noah did. According to all that God commanded him, so he did. Noah didn't modify God's plan for the ark.

He didn't say, well, you know, we've got this big thing all covered with pitch. It's only got a little window in the top and this big door. What if I need to get out? I think I'm going to build a little hatch over here on the side.

I'm just going to modify the plan a little bit because I can see a practical need for this. Well, if he modifies the plan, it may not be seaworthy. Its center of flotation may be below the center of gravity or it may have a leak.

He does exactly what God says. No more, no less. Then we come to chapter 7. Then the Lord said to Noah, Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation.

Why does God repeat this statement about the righteousness of Noah? That's what qualifies him and his family to enter the ark. You will notice that his family is never declared righteous. Shem, Ham, Japheth, the four ladies, never said to be righteous.

God says, Noah, you and your immediate family come on into the ark because I have seen that you, and this is a singular you in Hebrew, you, Noah, are righteous. Big doctrine of blessing by association here. You can go to the New Testament where Paul talks about the situation where one spouse comes to Christ and the other does not.

You have this, which you might call unequally yoked together situation. He says if you are able to remain together, do so because the entire household is sanctified by that believing spouse. God will treat the whole household as though they are believers just because there is one believer there.

You see this first illustrated in Noah's case. Come into the ark, you and your household because I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. You shall take with you seven of every clean animal, male and his female, two each of the animals that are unclean, a male and his female.

By the way, this clean and unclean idea here we have observed before, but keep in mind

that because everyone is on a vegetarian diet at this point, the distinction between clean and unclean at this point is primarily in terms of sacrifice because there is no meat in the diet, at least not for those who are observant of God's dietary commands. Noah and his family are fruit and vegetable eaters. They are vegans.

They may possibly have partaken of dairy. I have learned a lot about the whole vegetarian thing here recently. You can be a pure vegan where it's plants and lentils and legumes and things like that.

Or you can also have some dairy and cheese or any combination of things. But this clean-unclean distinction is something that Noah knows. God doesn't have to say, Oh, by the way, here is the difference between clean and unclean.

There is information, quite a bit of information actually, about God's wishes and God's plan for man that was available to the pre-Flood generation that we do not have, at least not in its early form. Later revelation has included and fleshed it out, and so we don't have the record of everything that was taught to the earliest generations of mankind. But we know that there was teaching because we know that Cain was responsible for his failures, his inadequate relationship with God expressed in his inadequate sacrifice before God.

We know that Abel understood those principles. We know that the early generations, Enoch and Noah, had quite a bit of information that enabled them to walk with God. It hasn't been preserved for us.

It doesn't mean it didn't exist. They already knew the distinction between clean and unclean animals. Also, seven each in verse three of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth.

For after seven more days, I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made. Some years previous, Noah had received the command to build the ark and the information that God was going to judge the earth. So he does this.

A lot of time has passed. Years have passed. His sons have probably helped him out.

As I mentioned last time, this could possibly be measured in terms of decades, 40, 50, 60 years perhaps. But God comes seven days before the flood and speaks again to Noah. All this time, apparently, he's been working without any further information from God.

It's a big period to exercise faith. Your mind can play tricks on you after time. You say, well, I wonder... You know what happened to the Israelites in the desert.

They saw the Cecil B. DeMille thing happen with the Red Sea and they went through and saw the armies of Pharaoh drown and so forth. They see the pillar of cloud, the pillar of

fire. These mighty acts of deliverance that God reaped in Egypt with the plagues.

And yet, a few days into the desert, they haven't been out there two or three days and they've already forgotten God has brought us out here to die. Complete lack of faith. It's one of the reasons that generation never entered the land of promise.

Because even in the face of these mighty acts of God... Here, all Noah has is God's word. God says, Noah, I'm fixing to wash away everything on the earth here so build the ark. And then there's silence.

And Noah's faithful. Everything that God has said, Noah does. Now, probably, I would expect to be something of a relief to Noah.

God comes and says, it's near now. Your work has not been in vain. Seven more days, the flood is going to happen.

It's going to rain 40 days and 40 nights. God tells Noah that this is what's going to happen. And this is one of the ways that we figure out how many days each thing took place.

Because how does Noah know that the waters prevailed for 150 days if he sealed up inside the ark? Well, he knows that the rain is going to fall for 40 days and 40 nights because God tells him ahead of time. I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made. Once again in verse 5, you have the emphatic note, Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him.

Noah was 600 years old when the flood waters were on the earth. So Noah with his sons, his wife and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. This is the reality of an unseen thing.

Noah and his family enter the ark a week before any water is seen, don't they? But why do they go in? Because of the waters of the flood. Hebrews 11.1 Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This is an act of faith entering the ark when still as yet everything goes on as it always has, everything continues as it has from the beginning.

But they go in because of the waters of the flood, of clean animals, of animals that are unclean, of birds and everything that creeps on the earth, two by two, they went into the ark to Noah. You get the idea that perhaps this week it takes some time for all these animals to troop into the ark, but Noah goes in first, then the animals come in. You would think, well, why does Noah have to sit there in the ark for these seven days? Why can't Noah sleep in his tent outside while the animals all file in and then he can go in as the last thing? Because there's a principle here.

It's the same principle we saw in verse 1. The animals are delivered by association with

Noah. They come into the ark to Noah. And that's what it tells us in verse 9. Two by two, they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah.

It came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth. In the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month, the 17th day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened. Two sources of water from above and from below, just like back in the creation account of Genesis chapter 1 when God initially separated the water, where did He put it? He made a firmament between the waters.

He divided the waters from the waters. Waters above, waters below. Now these waters are like a big sandwich that's getting smashed together.

The waters above and the waters below are coming back together like they were before creation. Like they were in Genesis chapter 1. God is in a sense reversing everything that He's done up to this point. The rain was on the earth 40 days and 40 nights.

On the very same day, Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with him entered the ark. This has the idea of had entered the ark here in verse 13. And you say, well, if they're talking about the floodwaters that says on the very same day they entered, well, this is the very same day of the week.

It's been exactly a week. They and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every sort. You get the idea.

There weren't any left out. Ostriches, storks, kiwi birds, pelicans, whatever. They're all in there.

They went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh, in which is the breath of life. So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God... You get the idea by this repetition that this is an important point. Everything went in as God had commanded him, and the Lord shut him in.

The big emphasis here is that they're all in there with Noah. The righteousness that Noah possesses by faith, the righteousness that God has assigned him and granted him by faith, is the issue in the deliverance of everything on the earth. That righteousness is in the ark.

Anything that's going to be delivered has to be in the ark with that righteousness from God. All of the other animals, just as nice as animals, just as many feathers, just as beautiful plumage, just as graceful, just as alive, just as much breath of life, they're not in the ark with Noah. They're not preserved.

Why does the account belabor this thing with the animals? Isn't it enough to know they went in, they were preserved, they came out, they multiplied? Why does it belabor it? Why am I belaboring it? Because the Scripture here emphasizes that they're in there with Noah, like his family. They're associated with righteousness. What is it that Paul says over in Romans 8 about the whole creation groaning? Why is creation groaning? What is it waiting for? It's waiting for the redemption of the sons of God.

Because when the sons of God are ultimately sanctified and glorified, creation goes along with. Creation has to wait on us. Creation is associated with us.

And the whole creation is waiting for the redemption and the glorification of the sons of God. So don't think, if you want to put it down, this is the application of this big observation and this big bunch of verses here. What does that mean to us like tomorrow and the next day? Do not think that you are insignificant.

Do not think because you are trusting God for small things that it has no impact, that nobody sees it but you, that it doesn't make any difference except perhaps in some small way in your life. Don't think that your decisions are insignificant. You're just like an artillery shell.

You have a bursting radius. You have a radius of influence and of effect. And the righteousness that God assigns you, no matter what you trust Him for, you can trust Him when you dress.

And you say, you know, I don't think that this is necessarily flattering garb that I have just put on. It doesn't necessarily make me look svelte and like I could be on the cover of Cosmo or anything or on the cover of GQ. But, you know, it isn't external looks.

It's internal beauty. It's internal character and integrity that pleases God. When you make that little small decision, that is an act of faith.

You trust God that what matters is on the inside and not on the outside. You think, well, I just avoided the sin of subjectivity by worrying about what people think or whatever. You don't think it's any big deal.

It's a big deal because in that act, that small mundane everyday act of faith, you have done what the whole church is trying to do when it gets out and ministers and works and slaves and goes overseas and does, you know, paints and builds and cleans and does all the things that it does in overt ministry. That act of faith delivers. It delivers you.

It delivers people in your periphery. It pleases God. It reflects the glory of Jesus Christ.

It fulfills the plan of God. It's the reason Christ died so that you could make that little decision. And dozens of others like it every single day.

That's the ball game. That's why we're here. Why does God leave us here after salvation? If salvation is the big deal, then at the point that you accept Christ, it would be like translation.

You know, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, you've got it. You've achieved the objective and you're like Enoch. He was not, for God took you.

God leaves us here for years and decades after our salvation. Why? So we can learn to make these small decisions that enable God to declare us righteous by faith. And that righteousness has a big, big effect.

You are not insignificant. You are not unknown. You are not invisible.

And those small decisions are the big thing. When it talks about the last shall be first and the first shall be last, that your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you openly, that's what it's talking about. So don't think that it doesn't matter.

Don't think that because you're not up on the skyline that your decisions and your actions don't count. You, especially, who are faithful and listening to the teaching of the Word of God and who are seeking righteousness by faith and purification and walking with God are in a tiny minority. Hopefully, we are those who are on the narrow road that goes through the narrow gate that leads to life.

Jesus said, Few there be that find it. Well, it's kind of like being in the Marine Corps. Now that I'm out of the Reserve, my only hope is that there will be like a millennial Marine Corps that we can be in.

But what's the recruiting motto of the Marine Corps? The few, the proud, the Marines. Well, it's the smallest of the services. But in many ways, they get sent in first along with the Airborne and some other guys.

But if you understand these things, if it makes any difference to you at all, you're already in a tiny minority of the Church because most of us have been distracted, deflected, we're apathetic, we're indifferent, we figure it's all done because we're saved. If we can share it with a few other people, great. But we're basically just waiting for Christ to return.

Noah blended in in the eyes of the world until the day the judgment came. And then you find out what difference that righteousness makes. That's why there's so many verses here.

Why is this account expanded about the animals and so on? It's all related to Noah. It's all related to that righteousness that God assigns him by faith. You'll notice something else here.

Noah had to wait a week God said, go into the ark. He went into the ark and then he had to wait. This is a fruitful thing to meditate on because we know that deliverance in time, that accomplishing these things we've just talked about takes place by faith.

And many times we are like the Galatians. We start well. We see the issue.

We pursue the issue. We try to live by faith. You know, these things are fresh in our minds for a few days after Bible class.

We work on it. But time passes and everything kind of goes on as it did before. We don't find it.

Well, I got that principle of the Word of God just in time because here's the great crisis. Here's the great test that just hit me. The charge of the elephant is here.

And boy, it's a good thing I was in church last Sunday because there's the principle I'm going to apply it and be delivered and everything's going to be great. We hear these things. We recognize their importance while we're sitting here.

We go out and everything goes on the way it did before. Nothing changes. And it starts to slip and we start to lose our grip and lose our focus and lose our perspective.

And we, in a sense, walk back out of the ark. We say, well, you know, looking around, the sky hasn't changed. I don't see any great fountains of the deep being broken up.

And we sort of, you know, maybe we're distracted. Here's, looks like one of the little birds is about to get out. And we run out there and we say, oh, boy, what a pretty day.

Look, there's people out here. And we sort of wander out of the ark. It's important for us to be consistent and to wait on God.

Big principle of waiting in the Scriptures. Obviously, you could spend weeks on the principle of waiting. I would like to just give you a few reminders on what Scripture has to say about waiting.

Because Noah waits. He's going to wait before the flood. As we're going to see, he's going to have to wait after the flood.

How many days and nights does it rain? Pop quiz. How many days and nights is it going to rain on the earth? What's the big number of testing in the Bible? 40 days and 40 nights. How many days total are the waters going to prevail on the earth from the time the first water starts hitting until the flood waters have crested and begin to recede? How long is it? It's going to be 150 days.

It's going to be 150 days. Well, then the waters are going to recede. But Noah is going to be in the ark over a year.

He's going to be in there for about a year and 17 days total. So is there some waiting involved? There's waiting before deliverance. There's waiting during deliverance.

There's a big long period of waiting after the crisis is over. So this idea of waiting is important. Turn with me to Psalm 25.5. We're going to see several passages just in the Psalms.

We won't look through the whole Scripture. We'll concentrate at least on the Psalms and one or two passages in the Prophets. But look at Psalm 25.5. We'll observe just a couple of things about waiting.

David says in verse 4, Show me your ways, O Lord. Teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me for you are the God of my salvation.

You are the God of my deliverance. On you I wait all the day. If you just come to this with a fresh mind, you think, why does he introduce the idea of waiting? Does it mean that God doesn't deliver right away? Why does David have to wait on him? Why doesn't he go to him in truth and everything? Stuff just happens right off the bat.

If you think about this a little bit, it's an odd idea, to us at least, that you say, Show me your truths. Let me find your ways and walk in them and then I'm going to wait on you all day long. It's just an odd thing.

But there's a principle there that the whole idea of faith requires a wait. If you're going to have substance and things that you haven't seen, it requires a waiting period until they are seen. And that's the period for faith.

We have a big waiting period between salvation and being face to face with the Lord. And that's the period for faith. So the wait is the time for faith.

Noah is trusting God for that whole week just as he's trusted him during the construction of the ark. And we are going to get to wait to see the rest of the waiting passages until after our break. But we'll pause here and when we return we'll observe some other aspects of this idea of waiting on the Lord.

Let's pause and take our break.