

98-07-19b

We resume now in our extended analysis of our scripture reading this morning from 1 Peter chapter 3, which I have endeavored to make sort of a seamless transition from our scripture reading to our passage this morning, because the application that Peter makes of the episode of Noah and the flood is inspired. It is the New Testament application of Old Testament truth. It's valid for us.

It's given directly to the church through Peter. And our goal is to understand it. As we noted when you first read this, it seems somewhat of a non-sequitur to start with suffering for righteousness sake and end up with Jesus preaching to the spirits in prison and baptism by water that now saves us and so on.

But it reminds us of some central truths of our lives. We have been identified with Jesus Christ in His death and we are now identified with Christ in His resurrection. And Peter makes that point that we are delivered.

And in the New King James it's unfortunate because these things are separated. He says there is an anti-type which now saves us and then there's a big interruption. And then through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

If you have that separation you might just link it back together. You can draw a circle there because there is an anti-type which now saves us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And it's baptism.

What does baptism mean? Well, one of the big problems that we have and have had throughout the church age is never getting past our salvation. Never getting past our identification with Christ in His death. And you could equate this when you think about water baptism with... You know how it is.

We've all seen a baptism. Many of us have been baptized. Some of us have been sprinkled and dunked.

And some of us have even been effused. Lots of different modes of baptism. But the accurate means of baptism is to be immersed.

All kinds of controversy over that. But we'll just take that for granted and pass on by. Immersion is the means of baptism.

John immersed the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why He was coming up out of the water when the Holy Spirit descended. It's good enough for the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's good enough for me. It doesn't say as John was sprinkling the Lord the dove descended. It says as He came up out of the water.

That's definitive enough for me. So, you have the water baptism by immersion. What happens? Well, lots of things can happen.

I've seen some pretty comical water baptisms. But generally what's supposed to happen is you've got a baptizer and a baptizee. The baptizer, after setting the appropriate context and reminding us of what the truths are that are being illustrated, takes the individual and lays them backward down under the water.

And then what? Raises them back up. I've seen some baptisms where the baptizee outweighed the baptizer by a significant proportion. And that last part almost didn't happen.

There was some great struggling and turbulence in the water before the person actually came back to a vertical position. But that's the principle in baptism. You're laid down under the water and then you're raised back up.

You don't lay the person down in the water and leave them there. That's identification with Christ and His death and His burial. Well, if you stop there, I mean in practical terms, you can't stop there.

You're not allowed to stop there. Think of all the different symbols God could have used for identification with Christ. Why water? Because you can't leave somebody under the water.

You must raise them back up. The thing is not finished unless you raise them back up out of the water. You just can't stop.

They'll drown. We manage to stop spiritually because we get so caught up in our identification with Christ and His death and we never get past it. Reformed theology and Catholicism both can't get past the death of Christ.

We're hopeless. We're helpless. We're useless.

We're depraved. We're dead in trespasses and sins and it's the death of Christ. It's all about death.

The Catholics leave Christ on the cross. You get a crucifix and He's still there. It's symbolic of the constipation of theology that can't get past the death of Christ.

The death of Christ is a wonderful thing. It's like a lot of other things that we see in the Word of God. We're not dismissing or belittling the importance of something when we move on forward from it.

It is not to say that the death of Christ on the cross is not central and of supreme importance. Your doctrines of reconciliation, redemption, propitiation, expiation. The book of Hebrews goes in at length to dwell on the wonderful accomplishment that takes

place in the death of Christ.

But you've got to keep going. You can't go under the water and not come up. If Jesus Christ died on the cross and then we just say, Blessed be our Savior who died for us and there is no resurrection.

Go back and read 1 Corinthians 17. If there's no resurrection of Christ, there's no point. If Christ is not raised, you are yet in your sins, Paul says.

You say, wait a minute, I thought the death of Christ paid for sin. He is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Christ paid for sin with His death, so the resurrection, as wonderful as it is, how does that... But you go to Corinthians 17.

If Christ is not raised, you are yet in your sins. Your faith is futile because you can't stop with the death of Christ. It's only half finished.

Salvation is only half finished because the purpose for which Christ died is not just redemption and reconciliation and propitiation. It's not just to solve the sin problem. The whole reason the sin problem is solved is to accomplish something else in God's plan.

And you've got to pull that baptizee back up out of the water and stand them on their feet. And they've got to slog on out of the water and get on with life. Christ died, and the death He died, He died to sin.

But sin is not the ultimate issue in the universe. The ultimate issue in the universe is not sin. Christ's death took care of sin, but that's not the goal.

The goal is life with God. The goal is relationship with God. And God said, raise Him.

God resurrected Jesus Christ and brought Him back to life. That is the completion and the fulfillment. And just as we are identified with Christ in His death, we are also identified with Christ in His resurrection so that we can walk in newness of life.

You can't get stuck in death. So you see these things. Turn with me over to 1 Corinthians.

I think I said 17, but I believe it's 15. 1 Corinthians chapter 15. This entire chapter addresses the resurrection.

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, and in which you stand. It isn't just the gospel that got you saved from the lake of fire. This is the gospel in which you stand.

By which also you are delivered if. By which also you are saved if. This is one of those classic passages where we value our ability to distinguish the different ways in which

this word is used.

We just tend to think saved, delivered, that must mean lake of fire, salvation, I'm going to be with God forever. Not at all. This gospel, you received it, and you stand in it, and you're delivered by it if you hold fast.

Does your eternal security depend on holding fast? It does not. But your deliverance, your salvation in time, your life before God, and your fruitfulness, and your reward, your inheritance incorruptible and undefiled reserved in heaven for those who are held by the power of God through faith does depend on whether or not you hold fast, whether or not you persevere. It's a big, big deal because we tend to think, well, the big deal is just get saved.

That's why the whole church revolves around evangelism. The big deal is walking in newness of life. And Paul always moves forward from initial salvation to life in Christ.

He never stops. He never leaves you under the water. By which also you are saved.

By which also you are delivered in verse 2 of 1 Corinthians 15. If you hold fast the word which I preached to you unless you trusted in vain. Unless you trusted in Christ for nothing.

You say, well, how can it be for nothing when I'm not going to the lake of fire? Your faith is vain if you don't move on. If you get stuck at the cross, if you get stuck on the cross and you don't get forward to the resurrection and the living life to God, your faith is vain. Paul says, for intents and purposes you've missed the point.

We think, well, the only thing I care about is my eternal preservation. What God cares about is the fulfillment of His plan. And this is the means to an end.

Our salvation is not an end in itself. It's the means to an end in God's plan. And unless you want to have believed in vain, we've got to move forward.

And he goes on and says, I deliver to you first of all that which I also received. Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and He was buried and He rose again. The third day according to the scriptures.

He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. He was seen by over 500 brethren. Many of them are still alive at the time that Paul writes.

But some have fallen asleep. Last of all, He was seen by James, the apostles. Last of all, He was seen by me also.

This is one of the reasons that Paul's apostolic commission is valid. Because he was a witness of the resurrected Christ. He was seen by me also as by one born out of due time.

I'm the least of the apostles, not worthy to be called an apostle. I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am.

His grace toward me was not in vain. Remember up there in verse 2? You can believe and it's in vain. You can be saved and it's in vain.

If your life doesn't go on and bear fruit. But he says His grace toward me was not in vain. I have labored abundantly more than the other apostles.

Not I, but the grace of God which is with me. Therefore, whether it is I or they, so we preach and so you believe. Now, if Christ is preached in verse 12 that He has been raised from the dead.

How does someone among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? Paul is shocked by the fact that believers have missed the whole point of the resurrection. Some of them don't even believe there is a resurrection. If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.

And if Christ is not risen in verse 14, our preaching is empty and your faith is empty. There is no point to the gospel. Even if Christ died for sin.

Even if you are saved from the lake of fire through the death of Christ. It's all pointless if there is no resurrection. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ.

Whom He did not raise up if in fact the dead do not rise. If the dead do not rise in verse 16, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile.

You are still in your sins. Those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable.

It's the future hope. It's the hope of the resurrection. It's the hope of inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled that makes this life worth living.

The resurrection is central. We as believers need to come to a greater and greater understanding of the power of the resurrection. This is Paul's prayer for himself.

He says, I pray that I may come to know Christ and the power of His resurrection. And he is the apostle that wrote these inspired scriptures. He says, I need to understand more about the power of the resurrection.

Christ is risen from the dead and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. What does he conclude from all of this? Look at verse 34. Awake to righteousness and do not sin.

He says, if you have believed in vain, you are asleep even while you are alive. Awake to

righteousness and do not sin. Some do not have the knowledge of God.

I speak this to your shame. Look at verse 50. This I say, brethren, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

He goes on in the early 50s here. Verse 53, this corruptible must put on incorruption. This mortal must put on immortality.

Then death will be swallowed up in victory. And then verse 58. Therefore, my brethren, in the light of all of these truths, be steadfast, be immovable, be always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain.

Remember that? Believing in vain. The grace of God did not come to me in vain. Knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

This is what gives our lives meaning. Now, back to Genesis chapter 8. What does all of that have to do with Noah and the ark? We've seen that God remembered Noah. The flood waters receded.

Verse 14 of Genesis 8. In the second month, on the 27th day of the month, the earth was dried. One other little chronological note here is if you look at these months and days, you have exactly one solar year. If these months are lunar months, from the time that the flood waters came until the time that the earth is dry and God speaks to Noah, you have 354 days is a lunar year, a year of 12 lunar months.

365 days is one year and 11 days. So you have the second month on the 17th of the month is when the flood began. You have the second month on the 27th day of the month.

The earth is dried. There are some details you can go into about how the Hebrews include days. They count time slightly differently than we do.

It makes 11 days to go from the 17th to the 27th in the Hebrew mind. So you have 354 days to 365 days. It makes exactly one solar year.

Then in verse 15, God spoke to Noah saying, Go out of the ark. Think about this now in the light of what Peter has said over in 1 Peter 3. There is an anti-type of baptism. The water deluges the earth.

Noah and those who are with him in the ark, this water covers them up but they come back up out of it and survive through it. The water is a picture of death. The water in fact produces death all over the planet except for those in the ark.

They experience a kind of resurrection. And this is the day of resurrection when God speaks to Noah saying, Go out of the ark. The death represented by the water is past.

And they emerge from the ark with language that reminds us of the days of creation. Go out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons and your sons' wives. Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you, birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth so that they may abound on the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.

You can go back to Genesis 1.22 and see very similar language. This is a rebirth. This is a new birth for creation that comes from the old.

It is a regeneration, if you will. There's been a giant baptism of the earth and life begins anew. It is a powerful picture of regeneration, isn't it? And Noah went out.

That little phrase in verse 18, Noah went out, is very significant. Noah didn't stay in the ark. Noah didn't say this is the vessel of my deliverance.

It's holy. I'm going to stay here and remain here. It's built according to the divine design.

It was the instrument of my salvation. I'm going to stay here. I'm going to remain in the ark for the rest of my life.

Noah goes forth because the ark has served its purpose to deliver him into new life. And now he goes out of the ark. And he goes out and the first thing he does is worship.

In verse 20, he's going to build an altar. But keep in mind what we've seen in Romans and in Corinthians and in 1 Peter. We're saved for a purpose.

We're saved to go forth. We don't get stuck at the point of the death of Christ. It's the resurrection.

It's the new life in Christ that we are called to exploit. We don't go back and dwell on death. We don't go back and dwell on the initial point of our deliverance.

It serves a purpose. So Noah went out and his sons and his wife and his son's wives with him. Once again, you have in this early part of the exodus from the ark here, emphasis on blessing by association.

God speaks to Noah. It doesn't say God spoke to those who were in the ark. He speaks to Noah.

It is Noah who goes forth and other people go with him. Noah goes forth and the animals go with him. God's plan centers on the faithful.

That's the focus. These others are delivered, but who is remembered? What was the name of Noah's wife? What was the name of any one of Noah's daughters-in-law? We don't know. And if it wasn't for the genealogical needs of the origins of the races on the earth, we wouldn't know Noah's sons' names either.

We know Noah's name because he is the focus. It's Noah's faith. It's Noah's righteousness that makes everything possible here.

We find that this is the case at large in God's plan. In the eternal future, the inheritance and the blessing and the reward and the reflection of God's glory centers on the faithful. Will there be others who are delivered? Are there others who are regenerate and who experience new life? Yes, there are.

But where does the focus center? It's on those who are faithful, those who are righteous, those who take that new life and do something with it. And that's the reminder we have here in the mention of Noah. The animals, creeping things, birds, and whatever creeps according to their families go out of the ark in verse 19.

Then Noah built an altar to the Lord. He took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and he offered burnt offerings on the altar. His first act in his new life is worship.

We offer sacrifices too, don't we? What are our sacrifices? How do we worship God through sacrifice? Well, we immediately think of Romans chapter 12, don't we? Remember Romans chapter 12? I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. Do not be conformed to this world. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Our study in Colossians on Friday night, we saw how important it is and the reason that Paul prays so intensively that believers come to a full knowledge of the will of God. How do you know what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God? You have to go after it. We offer ourselves a living sacrifice.

Noah offers sacrifice. This is the olah sacrifice, the whole burnt offering that he offers. This was the sacrifice that was to be offered twice daily in Israel according to Exodus chapter 29, verse 38 and following, in the morning and in the evening.

When you rise up and when you sit down. The Israelites were encouraged to meditate on the word of God. That was their spiritual sacrifice.

Their physical sacrifice, likewise, was morning and evening. The whole burnt offering. Also, at a time when new life comes into the world, there was a sacrifice.

Childbirth was the occasion for an olah sacrifice. In Leviticus chapter 12, verses 6 through 8. Giving birth to new life, the olah sacrifice is offered. This is what Noah does on the occasion of this regeneration, the emerging from the ark.

Any time there was defilement through bodily discharge, the olah was to be offered. This is Leviticus 15, verses 14 and 15, and again in verses 29 and 30 of Leviticus 15. When

you were defiled, the whole burnt offering was offered.

This was an acknowledgment of the need for cleansing. The earth has been purged. Noah acknowledges in the offering of this sacrifice that he himself needs that cleansing.

This has been a pattern in Noah's life. That's why he's blameless and why he's righteous before God. When a Nazarite defiled themselves, they were to offer the olah, the whole burnt offering.

This is Numbers chapter 6, verses 10 and 11. The olah sacrifice also commemorates expiation, the satisfaction of God's righteousness with regard to sin. You have this throughout Leviticus.

Leviticus chapter 1 and verse 4. Leviticus chapter 9 and verse 7 and 14, verse 20. The earth has been cleansed. God's justice has been satisfied as the wicked imaginations and the evil hearts have been wiped from the earth.

So the acknowledgment, the commemoration is symbolized in this olah offering that Noah offers. He took of every clean animal, every clean bird, offered these burnt offerings on the altar. This is the first mention of an altar in Scripture.

In Genesis 8, 20. Noah built the altar. He offers the burnt offerings on the altar.

Noah built the ark, didn't he? And it was the working out of his own deliverance as a believer. Now he builds an altar. We are to construct the altar in our souls on which we offer the sacrifices of God, the sacrifices of thanksgiving, which is based on our acknowledgement and recognition of God's plan and the way it works in our lives.

The olah is a freewill offering. It indicates joy, thanksgiving. Leviticus 22, 17-25.

We might turn there. Leviticus 22, 17. Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the children of Israel and say to them, whatever man of the house of Israel or of the strangers in Israel who offers his sacrifice for any of his vows or for any of his freewill offerings, which they offer to the Lord as a burnt offering, you shall offer of your own freewill a male without blemish from the cattle, from the sheep, or from the goats.

If it has a defect, you shall not offer it for it shall not be acceptable on your behalf. Whoever offers a sacrifice of a peace offering to the Lord to fulfill his vow or a freewill offering from the cattle or the sheep, it must be perfect to be accepted. There shall be no defect in it.

Blind, broken, maimed, ulcerated, eczema, scabs, you shall not offer to the Lord nor make any offering by fire of them on the altar to the Lord. It goes on to give all of those regulations. Again, in verse 29, when you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord, offer it of your own freewill.

On the same day, it shall be eaten. You shall leave none of it until morning. I am the Lord.

Therefore, you shall keep my commandments and perform them. I am the Lord. You shall not profane my holy name, but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel.

I am the Lord who sanctifies you. You see that reciprocal idea of sanctification. God says when you offer this offering out of your freewill, I sanctify you.

Peter says, sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. I am the God. I am the Lord.

I am the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am the Lord. Notice he brings him out of Egypt, which is a picture of regeneration, to be their God.

There's life after deliverance from Egypt. So all of these things are illustrated and wrapped together in Noah's emergence from the ark. He comes forth, and the first thing he does is build an altar.

He acknowledges the God of his salvation, and this is a freewill offering. It's an offering of dedication. It's associated with vows later in Israel.

I will obey the Lord. I will keep His commandments. I acknowledge His deliverance.

It has the idea of thanksgiving and of sanctification for a purpose. Notice verse 21 of Genesis 8. The Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in his heart, I will never again curse the ground for man's sake.

Although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night shall not cease. These two verses are fascinating for a couple of reasons.

First of all, the sweet smelling savor, this is the first reference to the picture of God smelling a sweet smell and being satisfied. Noah's obedience is what is pictured here. It isn't the fact that an actual animal is burning.

If you've ever burned a steak, you know that the meat smells good while it's cooking, but if you burn the whole thing and it's consumed by fire, it has sort of a bitter, unpleasant smell. It's not the physical smoke of the offering that's being spoken of here. The sweet aroma that is pleasing in God's nostrils here is Noah's desire to worship, Noah's dedication of himself, Noah's acknowledgement of God and His grace.

When Noah builds the altar, when Noah offers the burnt offerings, the Lord smells a soothing aroma. And it is at that point, God had a lot of time while the floodwaters were receding to think and say, you know, I don't believe I'll do this again. I've wiped everything out and it was a pretty comprehensive judgment.

I don't think I'll do that anymore. The point at which God says this. And who is God talking to when He makes this statement? Does God come to Noah and say this? God says this to Himself as it were.

The Lord said in His heart, you'll remember back before the flood, God speaks to Himself before He speaks to Noah. And you have that same pattern here. The Lord said in His heart, I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

There is this comprehensive judgment of death that God has put on the ground and on every living thing. God says I've done it once. I'll never do it again.

What does that remind us of? Especially in the light of what we saw in the first session over in Peter and Romans and Hebrews. There's one death. Christ died once for sin.

And He dies no more. There's one judgment. And it's never going to happen again.

It isn't that God was... There's all of this terrible commentary where people say, well, you know, God decided that this judgment by flood doesn't really work very well because man is still evil from his youth up. So, it's sort of like, well, God tried out the flood judgment and He said, well, I've still got people and they're still going to be evil, so there's no point in doing this again. It's like God tried it and it failed.

That's not it at all. The flood is a picture of judgment once for sin. Noah's deliverance through it is a picture of death, burial, and resurrection through that.

Just as baptism pictures the same thing. That's the link that Peter makes. He said there's an antitype in water baptism to what actually happened in the days of the flood.

You have the judgment of death, but you have the preservation through faith, the declaration of righteousness by faith, and Noah in the ark is preserved, and there's regeneration on the other side. And there's never again a flood. That judgment only happens once.

Christ has died once for sin. It happens so many times in the New Testament Scriptures where it says Christ has died once. Why does it emphasize once? It's just like the flood.

It's comprehensive. It's never going to come again. And this is one of the things that illuminates our understanding of the great white throne judgment at the end of time.

Sin has already been judged. There's not going to be a second flood. The lake of fire is not another flood that judges man for sin.

The basis of that judgment has to be something different because there's only one flood, there's only one death for sin, and Christ has already died that death. There's no reason

to be judged in the lake of fire because Christ has already borne our judgment for sin. The lake of fire judgment comes on those who reject relationship with God.

In this age, it's specifically rejection of Christ. But in every age, God approaches us. God calls us.

God asks us to seek and to find Him. God makes that opportunity available. And it's rejection of God's offer of relationship with Himself.

God says, just like in Romans 1, if God makes the offer and when they know Him as God, they don't glorify Him, they're not thankful, they're empty in their imagination, then they're going into the darkness. God says, if you don't want relationship with Me, fine. Here's eternity without relationship with Me, and that's the lake of fire.

So when Noah emerges, builds the altar, and God smells the soothing aroma of Noah's sacrifice, it's at that point that God says, I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of his heart is evil from his youth. I'm not going to keep having floods. I'm not going to keep inflicting death for sin.

Nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. Then it's fascinating in verse 22 because our understanding of the pre-flood earth is the canopy of water that was separated during creation week and that created an entirely different environment on the earth than we now have. It accounts for the long lives and the different climate that supported different kinds of life that perished in the generations after the flood.

The dinosaurs and other forms of life that used to prosper before the flood did not prosper after the flood. Lifespans are shortened. Different types of animals eventually die out because the post-flood earth isn't conducive to their life.

Many of them existed for generations and are referred to in Job and so forth, but they eventually disappear. And it is after the flood that you have the first mention of seasons. You have the lights in the sky that are for measuring time, for signs and for seasons.

But here, the actual seed time and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, are mentioned. Summer and winter as climatic conditions and it's my belief, based on these scriptures, that the earth is greatly traumatized at the time of the flood. It's knocked off of its perfect rotation.

The earth's axis wobbles now and this is why you have summer and winter. We have much less protection from solar radiation and the effects of sunlight on the earth are radically different now, post-flood. And so, these cycles of seasons are greatly pronounced.

Think about this. In the Garden of Eden, man's diet is entirely fruit. Today, how long is the fruit-bearing season for a tree, a fruit tree? It's just for a little while in the summer.

And it's very hard to preserve fruit year-round. We know how to do it by cooking and pouring in tons of sugar and so forth. But God doesn't say, you'll eat of the trees in the summer when they're bearing and then you need to make some preserves for the other three seasons of the year.

The trees in the garden bear fruit year-round because you have a wonderful climate for fruit-bearing year-round. After the fall, when they go forth and grow cereal grains, there's no indication that this isn't a year-round pursuit, that there are times when you can't plant and harvest. You can do it all the time.

You can have constantly growing crops and just harvest different portions of the field as time goes on until it regrows and produces more grain. It isn't until after the flood that you have these notes of pronounced summer and winter seed time and harvest. Day and night are much more pronounced because you had the lesser light by night that's kind of like the faces of clocks and dashboards and things where you can have a light indirectly that illuminates the entire dashboard.

Have you ever wondered about this? You don't see the little light bulbs that shine on your dashboard but you can read everything on it. Why is that? Well, you've got plastic and a light bulb at the side and because you've got a translucent material, light hitting that is spread evenly all across your dashboard or the face of your clock or whatever. Well, in the pre-flood earth, you have a translucent covering of water around the earth and the sun, even when it's on the backside and the moon when it's out there, shedding light on this is going to produce a wonderful even lesser light.

You're not going to have these strong harsh shadows. You're not going to have the black sky at night. There's no mention made of the individual stars before the flood.

It mentions their creation but it doesn't mention that they're visible. It says there's a greater light by day and a lesser light by night. But these things, you have this wonderful translucent covering that made things greatly different.

It must have been a great shock to Noah and his family when they came out of the ark and saw the harsh shadows being cast by the sunlight and the blackness of night that God mentions here. Day and night shall not cease while the earth remains. What is the point here? Let me give you a couple of passages before we close on God's smelling of a sweet-smelling savor.

Leviticus 26, verse 31. God says in a judgment passage when He's talking about destroying them and cutting down their incense altars and things for idolatry, He says, I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas. When you offer sacrifices to Me, they will not be acceptable.

There are similar references to God's smelling sweet aromas in 1 Samuel 26, verse 19 and in Amos 5, verse 21. I'll leave those for your personal investigation. But as we think about all the things we've covered this morning, you have this picture of judgment on the earth.

Noah's experiences reflect the future. We've seen the illustration of Enoch representing the church and Noah as the remnant of Israel that survives the judgment of God during the 70th week of Daniel. He survives the judgment of God in the Great Tribulation.

We also see that this is an illustration that Peter references to preservation. Even in death, there is new life, regeneration, which is also pictured in baptism. Noah leaves the ark.

We recognize and value our salvation in Christ. We are identified with Christ in His death. But our call and our encouragement through the Scriptures is to also see ourselves as identified with Christ in His life, the life that He lives to God.

We are to reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God. We, in a sense, have come through the flood experience as Noah does. We conduct ourselves the way Noah did.

He comes out and worships God, and his worship is pleasing in God's nostrils. It's a sweet-smelling savor. And God says, there's never going to be a need.

When God looks at Noah, He says, I never need to judge the earth again. The judgment has been accomplished. And there are those who recognize that and who are living a new life.

I don't have to do it anymore. It's done once. Christ died once for sin, and that's sufficient.

Our calling and our focus now is to live in the light of that new life that He has given us. Not to dwell on the past, not to dwell on sin, not to constantly be returning back to death, but to concentrate on the life that we have and the future that lies before us. We have a great hope before us.

God is going to make a covenant. He's going to confirm a covenant with Noah and with his sons as we begin chapter 9 of Genesis next time. And it is a forward-looking covenant.

God doesn't make any mention of the flood in this covenant. He doesn't direct Noah's attention backward to the flood. He says, this is the way things are going to be now.

In the light of that, in the light of your new life, in the light of this regeneration, this is the way things are going to be. We're going to see some wonderful truths in that connection. But we are delivered by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We are not to let anyone drag us back into death by their opinions, by their judgment. If we suffer for the sake of righteousness, happy are we because we live in the new life that Jesus Christ has provided for us. Our call is to live that life, to seize hold of that future hope by faith and patience so that we inherit the promises.

Some of Noah's descendants are going to miss that calling. They're not going to get destroyed by a flood, but they're going to miss the inheritance. We don't want to make that mistake.

We'll resume by starting Genesis chapter 9 next time. Let's close in prayer. We thank you, Father, for the privilege of studying your word.

We thank you for the gift of your spirit that makes it understandable and meaningful to us. We pray that he will be able to take the things that we have seen this morning and make them meaningful and a source of application in our lives. We pray that we will, in fact, be delivered through the resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ, into the new life to which we have been called.

We pray that in all things we will be pleasing in your sight and that our Savior will be glorified. We ask these things in his name. Amen.