



The Pattern of Noah's Ark



A New Beginning (Part 14) by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, as we continue to explore together our exciting and inspiring theme for this week: A New Beginning.

Up to this point we've seen two facts of tremendous and universal importance. First of all, we all need a new beginning. Second, God offers a new beginning to each of us.

But God offers us this new beginning upon one basis only: faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

As a result of faith in Him and in His death and in His resurrection, we pass out of an old, evil inheritance of sin and death into a new inheritance of hope and eternal life.

Paul says of this in Titus 3:7:

"So that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life." (NIV)

We're justified by God's grace. We're reckoned righteous with Christ's righteousness. God made Him, Jesus, who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. So being justified in that way made righteous, acquitted we become heirs having the hope of eternal life. We pass out of the evil inheritance into the good inheritance. We have a future. We have a hope. We have something to look forward to.

I quoted in my talk yesterday at the close the words of Paul in Colossians chapter 1:

"Christ in you, the hope of glory." (NIV)

I said beside those two statements Ephesians 2:12, "without Christ," "without God," "without hope." And then Colossians 1:27:

"Christ in you, the hope of glory." (NIV)

And here Paul says so that:

“Having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.” (NIV)

And then again in a parallel passage in second Timothy chapter 1 verses 9 and 10 Paul says:

“This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, [you remember we dwelt on that God planned all this before the ages ever started, but He revealed it in our day through Jesus Christ. So Paul continues...] but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus.” (NIV)

I've emphasize all through, that word "appearing." Jesus Christ actually appeared on the scene of time on the stage of human history God came in the person of Jesus. He appeared. He wasn't left just a theory something in the realm of theology or philosophy. But He appeared a man of flesh and blood like you and me. Through His death and resurrection He destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

Now, in my talk today, I'm going to turn back to the Old Testament to what I consider to be a very vivid illustration of this transition from an old life to a new life from an old inheritance to a new inheritance, from an inheritance of sin to an inheritance of righteousness, from an inheritance without hope to an inheritance of hope. The illustration that I have in mind, that I'm going to use is provided by the Ark that Noah constructed before the flood.

Let me just offer a few general comments on interpreting some of the figures or pictures in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament there were two main Arks. One was a big Ark. The other was a little one. The big Ark was the Ark that Noah built, that held Noah and his family and all the animals. The little Ark was constructed according to the instructions given by Moses. And it was placed in the third compartment of the tabernacle the Holy of Holies. It was completely overlaid with gold. Now I want you to understand that each of these Arks both the big Ark and the little Ark is a picture of Jesus Christ and what He can mean in your life and mine. But you need to see them this way the big Ark represents you in Christ; the little Ark represents Christ in you. Both these relationships are spoken about many times in the New Testament. The New Testament speaks about us as believers "being in Christ," but it also speaks about "Christ being in us." So I want you to think now when you read about the big Ark of Noah that's you in Christ. But the little Ark that was put inside the Tabernacle of Moses and the Holy of Holies that represents Christ in you.

Now today, I want to focus briefly on the former Ark the big Ark; the Ark that Noah constructed; the Ark that provided safety and shelter salvation for Noah and his family and all the animals that God instructed him to bring in with him into that Ark that protected them from floods, the raging waters that came upon the ungodly world, and destroyed that world, and that salvation. It's very dramatic to consider, that the deeper the waters were upon the ungodly, the higher they raised the Ark up toward God. And that's how it is. That which is judgement for the ungodly is used of God to bring the godly closer to Himself.

Now as we view this Ark and its construction and how it served to save Noah and his family there are three successive phases. I want to point them out to you and then in greater detail in my talk tomorrow my closing talk I'm going to show you how these three phases are a beautiful vivid illustration of the salvation that God has provided for us in the person of Jesus.

First of all, once the Ark was built it was complete and perfect from the time of its construction onward. In the world of manufacturing today, we're used to hearing announcements from, say automobile manufacturers, that a certain car had to be withdrawn because faults had been discovered in it. Or that it's put out for trial and then taken in for modification. The Ark of Noah was not like that. It was instructed according to Divine specifications. It was complete, perfect, faultless, it needed no additions, no amendments, no repairs from the moment it was finished. But in order for Noah and his family to benefit from the Ark, there had to be a specific moment in their lives, a specific moment in time, when they themselves entered into the Ark. Had they merely stood outside and looked at their handiwork and said, "That's a beautiful Ark. It's really going to float on these flood waters," it would have been no good to them. So, first of all the Ark was perfect from the moment it was constructed, but in order for Noah and his family to benefit from the Ark, they had at a certain given moment to enter into it. Otherwise, they would have seen its perfection, but not benefited from it.

Now, once Noah and his family had entered the Ark, then from that moment onward it was continuously providing them with salvation. Whether they were awake, or whether they slept, whether they were consciously thinking about what the Ark was doing for them or not, all the time they were in it, it was between them and the waters that had brought destruction on the ungodly world out of which they had been saved. And in that Ark, they were taken through the waters and eventually in God's time and appointed place they were deposited on a mountain the mount of Ararat and then they emerged from the Ark into a new world. They had a

completely new start.

Now, the New Testament tells us in the first epistle of Peter and elsewhere that Christ is the Ark and that we enter into Him by faith and that in Christ we pass through the waters and Peter says that's a picture of baptism in water for the Christian believer and that having passed through the waters which is passing through the judgement of God, but not being touched by the judgement of God, we then come out into a new world a completely new start.

So, I want you to think about those three phases of the Ark, because in my talk tomorrow to close this theme, I'm going to use them as an illustration. First of all, from the moment that the Ark was built, it was perfect. It was complete. Nothing had to be added to it. It was all that was ever going to be needed for salvation of Noah and his family. But then in order for Noah and his family to benefit from the Ark, there had to come a moment when by decision of their will and by a simple act they passed out of the world the outside world into the Ark. And from that moment onward they were in the protection of the Ark. And then as the waters rose and the Ark began to float, they were continually protected in the Ark from the waters that were God's judgement on the ungodly. So we have the three phases the Ark perfect from the beginning, the moment of entering into it, then the continuous process of being preserved in it. Now keep that in mind. We're coming back to it tomorrow.

Time is up for today. But tomorrow I'll be back with you. I'll be explaining just how this picture of Noah's Ark illustrates the three phases of salvation that God has provided for us through Christ.

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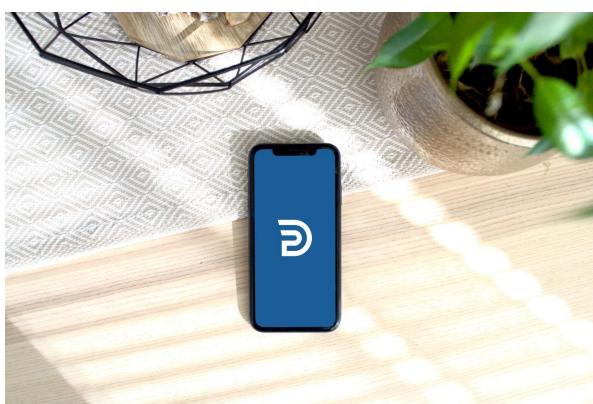
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