

Hymns: 15 It Is Well With My Soul 8 Great is Thy Faithfulness
Psalm 40:1-8; 51:1-17

Good morning. The MS *Allure of the Seas* is the largest cruise ship currently in operation. This member of the Royal Caribbean fleet first set sail December 1, 2010. With a length of about 1200 feet and a width of approximately 200 feet, it accommodates up to 6300 passengers and 2400 crew members.

While Noah's ark was a bit smaller than today's large cruise ships, amazingly the ratio of length to width of the ark **matches** that of that largest cruise ship and ratio of length to height is similar. Noah had just eight people to care for themselves along with a menagerie of animals. He had something of a cross between a farm and a zoo on board with him. Some estimate the animal count to have been in the range of 16,000. So instead of the three-to-one passenger to crew ratio of modern cruise ships where 80-hour work weeks are common, his passenger-to-crew ratio was 2000 to one. Obviously, Noah's family had much to keep them busy during their year on the ark.

Review

Before we jump into today's study, let's do a brief review. We're continuing our journey of understanding the Bible by looking at *dispensations*. So far, we've covered dispensations one and two.

The first, called *innocence*, spans the time from the creation of Adam through his fall and God's curse.

The next dispensation called *conscience* was the first test of man operating with the knowledge of good and evil. It covers the time from man's banishment from the Garden of Eden to the end of the worldwide flood.

We'll pick up our story there today.

Human Government

Gen.8

[14] *And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.*

Assuming the dating used is based on the Hebrew calendar, this was the 27th day of May – late spring. I'm sure the people and animals after a year on the ark were anxious to set foot on the earth, breathe the fresh, clean air, see the flowers in bloom, and feel the warm sunshine.

[15] *And God spake unto Noah, saying,*

[16] *Go forth [from] the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.*

[17] *Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and **be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.***

Don't miss that command from God: *be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth* and the obedience of Noah.

[18] And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

[19] Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

What follows is the first **explicit** reference in the Bible to an offering of an animal that involved the death of the animal.

Bible scholars will be quick to point to the **coats of skins** with which God clothed Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21)

They will likely also cite the **offering from his flocks that Abel brought** before the Lord. (4:4)

Each of these instances predate the flood.

We will look at them in a minute.

For now, let's move on.

*[20] And Noah [built] an **altar** []to the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the **altar**.*

We need to stop here. In verse twenty, we see the word *altar* used. What is an altar? It's a structure, usually a raised, flat surface on which offerings or sacrifices are placed. In our churches we've seen these tables on the floor in front of the pulpit where the offering plates and communion elements are often placed.

The Jews erected altars to make **blood** and **burnt** sacrifices. Typically these were made of stone or metal. This one of Noah is the **first mention** of the word in the Bible.

At the temple, the Jews had two altars:

1. Brazen Altar or Altar of Offering - outside for burnt sacrifices
2. Altar of Incense in the holy place

After preserving these animals for over a year on the ark, Noah offered one of every ceremonially clean animal to the LORD. Remember, the ark started with seven pairs of each type of clean animal. We have no idea whether any animals reproduced or to what extent they did while on the ark. In a normal environment of course they would have. Regardless, this burnt offering of animals by Noah amounted to a massive slaughter. Lots of **blood** flowed that day.

[21] And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart,

Next we have a promise from God:

I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth;

neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

[22] *While the earth remaineth,
seedtime and harvest, and
cold and heat, and
summer and winter, and
day and night*

shall not cease.

Based on this promise from God, we can rest assured we will never have another universal flood upon the earth.

Gen.9

[1] *And God **blessed Noah and his sons**, and said unto them,*

***Be fruitful, and
multiply, and
replenish the earth.***

God's
plan for and
command to
man was for him to fill the earth with people.

Up until this point, animals and men lived in harmony with one another. Let's see how dramatically and suddenly that changed.

[2] *And*

***the fear of you and
the dread of you***

shall be

***upon every beast of the earth, and
upon every fowl of the air,
upon all that moveth upon the earth, and
upon all the fishes of the sea;***

into your hand are they delivered.

In the Garden of Eden, we had man and all of the animals eating plants for food. There was no need for animals to fear one another or man because there were **no predators**. We do not know

for sure whether some animals became predators directly after the fall. All we have is an indirect reference to them being cursed as God said the serpent was cursed “above every beast of the field” (Genesis 3:14) and the statement in Romans 8:22:

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

These statements do not tell us directly *when* some animals became predators. This is important. We **do** know that in the future kingdom when Christ shall reign in peace on the earth the animals will **revert back to eating plant life** (rather than predators eating prey):

Let's take a look at this in Isaiah 11 and Isaiah 65:

Isaiah 11

*[6] The **wolf also shall dwell with the lamb**, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.*

*[7] And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and **the lion shall eat straw like the ox.***

Isaiah 65

*[20] There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for **the child shall die an hundred years old**; ...*

We've got hundred-year-old children here.

*[22] They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of **a tree** are the days of my people, ...*

Scientists have studied this and have found some trees thousands of years old. In the future time of peace to which these verses refer, the human lifespan will again be long.

So we can see that the animal kingdom will revert back to eating plants for food rather than eating one another. At that same time, guess what? The **lifespan of mankind will jump back up** to what it was probably after the fall when Adam was living and people (including Noah) lived about a thousand years – as old as trees.

Now moving back to Genesis chapter 9:

*[3] **Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you;***

even as the green herb have I given you all things.

Let's stop here and *digest* what we've just learned. While they were on the ark, the given food for people was plant life and not animals. It is likely, and it is my belief that the animals were not given to eat each other at that time either (1:29-30). The big change for animals *just occurred* as God pronounced them as food for people and that they should fear people. I believe this is where predators first started and this is also where blood sacrifice began.

Now let's look at the two Genesis passages cited by Bible scholars regarding this topic and quickly consider each one.

The first was that God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skins. (Genesis 3:3) Where did He get the coats of skins if he didn't kill an animal and take them? There are many ways to explain this, but let's take a break and start with something fun first.

I'm going to give you a list of words and phrases and you stop me when you recognize their source. Here we go:

Marty and Doc

1.21 gigawatts mispronounced as **jigowatts** in the movie

88 mph

DeLorean

flux capacitor

Mr. Fusion Home Energy Reactor

plutonium

Hill Valley Courthouse clock tower

Biff

Marty McFlye

George McFlye

Lorraine Baines

Enchantment Under the Sea dance

Dr. Emmet Brown

That should have rung a bell and brought to mind a classic science fiction time travel movie named *Back to the Future*. Hold that thought of time travel. We're going to address the *coats of skins* question now.

Genesis 3

[21] *Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God **make** coats of skins, and clothed them.*

Here are some possible answers to our question:

1. The verse said God *made* them. We could just take God at his word rather than to put words into the Bible that are not there. What does *made* mean? The definition of that word is rather broad, but consider:

Genesis 1:31

*And God saw every thing that he had **made** [the same word speaking of creation], and, behold, it was very good.*

One answer would be that God spoke them into existence. Boom! You have coats of skins.

2. Time travel – Science fiction is loaded with that sort of thing, but it's not fiction in the Bible. It's no sweat for God get these skins from a different era and bring them back. But you say the Bible is not science fiction. That is correct, but time travel is not fiction. It's in the Bible. The Apostle John was an eye witness to the future in Revelation, and Jesus testified of personal time travel:

John 8

[56] Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

[57] Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

[58] Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

3. Finally, we can go at this question a different way. You tell me where
 - the fishes and bread came from when Jesus fed the
 1. 5000 (John 6:5-15)
 2. 4000 (Mark 8:1-9)
 - tell me where oil and meal Elijah provided for the widow and her son (I Kings 17:7-16)
 - tell me oil that Elisha provided for the widow and her sons (II Kings 4:1-7)

and I'll tell you where the coats of skins came from.

So I hope that's enough reasons for you not to be thrown by the coats of skins. Now, let's move on to the second passage.

Genesis 4

*[4] And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his **offering**:*

*[5] But unto Cain and to his **offering** he had not respect.*

Let's move on to Hebrews 11:4 which speaks of this also since it calls Abel's offering a *sacrifice*.

[4] By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent [or greater] sacrifice than Cain...

It's enlightening to consider what is **not said** about Abel's offering. There is no mention of:

1. blood

2. fire or burning
3. killing
4. altar
5. or even covenant

Abel offered a **greater gift**, that is he gave up more than, did Cain. Note that by stating it this way, it equates *the type* of Cain's offering to Abel's (**both** were sacrifices) but distinguishes that of Abel as being the greater *quality* of the two. But that isn't even the point of the verse. The point is that Abel's offering was a reflection of what was going on in his heart. Abel had faith, Cain did not.

Finally, the word *sacrifice* used in Hebrews 11:4 can be used to mean giving up something as a parent *sacrifices* his time or resources for his children. (See *living sacrifice* Romans 12:1; *sacrifice of praise* Hebrews 13:15,16; *spiritual sacrifices* I Peter 2:5 – all the same word)

I hope that helps. We will go with this massive burnt offering on the altar by Noah as being the first. Now notice all of the uses of the word *blood* in the next three verses:

[4] But **flesh** with the life thereof, which is the **blood** thereof, shall ye not eat.

[5] And surely your **blood** of your lives will I require;
at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man;
at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

[6] Whoso sheddeth man's **blood**, by man shall his **blood** be shed:
for in the image of God made he man.

To enforce this law regarding killing of man, man needed government. Hence we have this dispensation called that of human government. We have to stop here and pick up there next time. But before we close, let's consider how we may apply this study.

Application

Noah obeyed God and trusted him. God honored his faith by rescuing him and sustaining him through the storm. As you travel through storms of life the trial can be difficult. Will you trust God to bring you to new life? God provided His only Son as a blood sacrifice that we might live and step off of our ship of life into a glorious new world of life and light.

Benediction

*Unto him that loved us,
and washed us from our sins in his own blood,
And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father;
to him be glory and dominion
for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 1:5b-6)*

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