

Catford Lectures 2007-2008

Part 3

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[00:00:00] Now let us read together from the Book of Genesis, Chapter 8, and verse 1.

And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged. The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained. And the waters returned from off the earth continually, and after the end of the hundred and fifty days, the waters were abated. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. [00:01:06] And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen. And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made, and he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also, he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground. But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark. And he stayed yet another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. And the dove came into him in the evening, and lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off. So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

[00:02:05] And he stayed yet another seven days, and sent forth the dove, which returned not again unto him any more. And it came to pass, in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried, dried up from off the earth.

And Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. Verse fifteen, And God spoke unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark. Verse twenty, And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour, and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again cast the ground any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his use.

[00:03:07] Neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have done. While the earth

remaineth sea-toned and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

And then two verses from the New Testament, first in 1 Peter 3, or two passages rather, short passages.

Peter's first epistle, chapter three, verse eighteen.

For Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. We were put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which he also went and preached unto the spirits in prison, [00:04:09] which sometimes were disobedient. When once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a-preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved by water.

The like figure whereunto even baptism does also now save us.

Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone to heaven and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

And then from 2 Corinthians, second epistle to the Corinthians, chapter five.

[00:05:04] For now I just read verse seventeen.

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, or a new creation.

Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.

There are perhaps at least four different ways in which we can read this very well-known story of Noah.

The first one, obviously, is the literal way.

If you look at it that way, then Noah was a man of faith. He received the revelation from God, he built the ark, and he saved his family. And only he and his family escaped the great flood. [00:06:02] And if you look at it in this literal way, as many people do, and I have no doubt that it was a literal historical event, this also has great implications for other questions like, for example, geology and the radiation, and many questions about the history of this earth.

We then have another way of looking at the same story, which is also very well-known, and I would call that the gospel application. If you look at it this way, the message is that the world is doomed, God has to judge the world, and Noah is the creature of righteousness, and he condemns the world around him by building the ark, and he is saved.

We then have a quite different way of looking at the same story again, [00:07:03] and I would call that the prophetic meaning of the story. Looking at it from the perspective of prophecy, you would say, well, Noah and his family, they are a picture of the Jewish remnant. And Noah's story was quite different from Enoch's, of course. Enoch was taken away, raptured before the flood, just like the

church.

Anyone here who belongs to the church will be raptured before the tribulation period. But Noah had to go through the flood, he wasn't taken away before the flood. And so there will be people, believers, in the tribulation, but they will be Jewish believers, they will be the Jewish remnant, and they will be taken through that difficult time, and then they arrive, you might say, on this new and cleansed earth in the millennium. [00:08:01] Now the fourth explanation, and that's the one I would like to say a few words about, with the Lord's help, we could perhaps call the spiritual application or interpretation of that story.

And if you look at it from this way, you would say, well, God has given us this story of Noah in order to give us an example of spiritual realities that concern us, to give us instructions about our salvation, about the fact that we are in Christ, about the meaning of this term we came across in 2 Corinthians, the new creation. And perhaps you can try and just look at a few details in this chapter, and perceive this thought of the spiritual meaning of that story for us.

[00:09:02] Now it says in Tech.VIII, verse 1, this short but moving phrase, and God remembered Noah.

I think if you had been in the ark for 150 days, floating on these waters, you might have wondered at some stage, well, actually, has God forgotten us? Or is God actually remembering us? And you find this phrase here, and God remembered, despite of any contrary appearance, God had Noah in mind, and everyone in the ark.

It was actually, I can only mention this as a footnote, but there is a man in the Bible who has a name just like that, and God remembers, that's Zechariah.

[00:10:01] And his wife, of course, was called Elizabeth, which means the covenant of God.

And if you take the two together, it means God remembers his covenant. And then they had a son who was called John, and John means favorite of God. Now John, of course, was the one who then announced that the Lord Jesus would come. Now here you have God remembers, and actually the story of Noah started very similar to the translation of the name John. Favor. He had found favor in the eyes of God.

Now by the way, it says here God, it doesn't say Jehovah. If you read through the first few chapters of Genesis, you find that sometimes it says God, sometimes it says Jehovah. And some people have drawn the conclusion, well there must have been two writers, and they call one the Jehovahist and one the Elohist, because God is Elohim. There's of course nothing like that. [00:11:02] There's one writer, that's God. It's only one book, not a combination of two different reports.

And it's interesting that every time it says God, there's a good reason for that, and every time it says Jehovah or Lord, there's a good reason for that. Here, for example, it says God remembered every living thing, and the cattle, all that was in the ark. Now, it's a question of God and his creation.

The animals are mentioned. When it is a question of relationship, then a different name is used, and it's a matter of Jehovah. Perhaps we'll see that a little further down. Now, it says here in verse 1, everything that was with him in the ark.

Perhaps we need to stop there for a moment or two, because the ark, I would say, is a wonderful type, a wonderful picture of the Lord Jesus, [00:12:06] for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the ark was the one and only way of salvation that God had given.

The most intelligent, the greatest genius of mankind, in that time before the flood came, could not come up with one viable way of escape.

And the ark is the one and only way.

And how true that is of the Lord, that there is salvation in no other name but only in his name. Now, the ark, of course, was made of wood. And we've often looked at the meaning of wood, that it speaks of manhood. And the Lord Jesus, in his grace, became man in order to bring salvation. It was, of course, gopher wood.

I think there's some uncertainty around what exactly gopher was. [00:13:02] But two things are interesting. One is that the word gopher is very similar to the word for atonement.

And the second is that most likely it is the cypress tree from which you gain the pitch that was used to pitch the ark.

Now, which takes me to the next point. The ark was pitched from within and without. And the word pitch is the same word as atonement.

Now, if you read Leviticus and it says, and this shall make atonement for him, that word is exactly the same word as pitch. And how true it is that the Lord has brought atonement. Now, you could probably find other features of the ark. For example, its sheer size. If you look at the measurements of the ark, a tremendous vessel, perhaps like the largest ocean liners today, [00:14:02] but then in rectangular shape. There was an enormous amount of space in there and everybody who wanted to come could come. And so it is with the Lord that anyone who wants to come can come and will be received.

Perhaps just one more point about the ark.

Noah, of course, had to go into the ark. And when he did that, he was out of sight. We couldn't see him anymore. Well, that's very true of the Christian position. We are in Christ. We read this in 2 Corinthians 5.

When someone is in Christ, he is a new creation or creature. And also in Romans 8, for those who are in Christ Jesus, there is no combination. The position of the believer today in Christ. And that means insecurity.

[00:15:02] Now, it says here in verse 2, and the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped and the rain from heaven was restrained. Let me start perhaps with the windows of heaven. The windows of heaven seem to me to speak of unimaginable quantities.

The first time they occur is in connection with the flood when the windows of heaven opened. And by the way, just in passing, on the second day of creation, it said that God made a division, a firmament, that was between the waters below and the waters above. I don't think that the waters above were just clouds. There were tremendous quantities of waters above.

There was a different climate before the flood. We read in Genesis 2 that it had not rained. Now, we don't know how exactly this was, [00:16:02] but we know that there were tremendous quantities of waters. And then you can imagine what happened when these windows of heaven were opened. But they are also mentioned in connection with blessings. On one occasion, actually, by a mocker, when Elisha said in 2 Kings 7, this time tomorrow there will be enough bread for everyone. And this captain said, now how is that going to go? If God opened windows in heaven, perhaps even then there wouldn't be enough bread for us. Well, he was wrong.

He saw that he didn't benefit. But the point is, windows of heaven, unimaginable quantities. In Malachi 3, the Lord says, prove me, prove me whether I'm not going to bless you, and I'm going to open the windows of heaven for blessing. But I think the windows of heaven here speak of the wrath of God. Because what came out of the windows of heaven at the time of the flood [00:17:03] was the judgment of God.

You remember that in the Psalms, the Lord says, all thy waves and billows have passed over me. You know, there you have it again, the ark exposed to the waters, and all the billows pass over the Lord.

You can also just read a verse from another Psalm, 88, where it says in verse 7, Thy wrath lies hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves.

Unimaginable quantities, and this time, in this case, unimaginable quantities of wrath and judgment of God.

But there's something very comforting here. You know, when the Psalmist says in those two Psalms, 42 and 88, [00:18:04] all thy waves have passed over me, you know what that means?

If all waves have passed over the Lord, that means that no wave is left for me.

And that is illustrated so nicely in this ark, which protected those in it from this judgment. Now the fountains of the deep, perhaps you think of Psalm 42 again, deep calleth unto deep. But perhaps you also think of the power of darkness, which was also manifest at the cross. The Lord says in Luke 22, You know, when I was teaching in the temple, you never came and took me. But now is your hour, and the power of darkness.

And how he must have felt that power of darkness at the cross. But you know, here in our verse, it's all negative. Here, actually, the fountains are stopped, the windows are stopped, or closed, [00:19:03] and even the reign of heaven was restrained. And perhaps that's the nicest for us, that not only is the window of judgment closed, and the fountain of powers of darkness closed for us, but even the reign. You might say there isn't a drop of judgment left for the believer. Now it says then that the waters returned from the earth continually, and after 150 days the waters were abated.

And then it says in verse 4, And the ark rested in the seventeenth day of the month upon the mountains of Ararat.

I don't know about your geography, but I might just mention for completeness, Ararat is, you might say, at the border of Turkey and Armenia.

It's a very high mountain, over 16,000 feet.

[00:20:04] Now, God led it in such a way that the ark landed on that high mountain. But it's a very nice picture again, and perhaps I can read another verse to you from the Psalms, and this time it's in Psalm 40, which may help us to see a spiritual meaning in this fact, the ark rested.

Psalm 40, verse 2, He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. Now if it is true that the Lord went into the deepest depths and was exposed to the wrath of God on the cross, it is also true that his goings were established, that his food was placed upon a rock, namely in resurrection. Now, this little word here, rest, [00:21:04] is quite interesting, the ark rested.

It's exactly the same word that is used in Genesis 2, where it says, and the Lord put man into the garden, to till the garden.

In Genesis 2, it's of course a matter of the first creation. God had created everything, and then he places man there, as a responsible being, and man is at the center, in responsibility, before God, first creation. Genesis 8 is quite different.

Something is placed again, but this time it's the ark. Man is not visible.

The ark is placed on the high mountain, and there the ark rests.

A picture of what happens in new creation. You know, the world before the flood wasn't a very nice world to live in for a believer. [00:22:03] If you read Genesis 6, you find that it was quite horrible. The Lord spoke about it, the days of Noah. But you know, after the flood, there was basically a new earth.

The earth was cleansed. And actually, Peter uses the expression twice, or an expression in that direction, in the second epistle. He once says, the old world, referring to the time before the flood, and once he says, the then world, or the world that then was. And I think that also pulls the idea of having two creations, an old creation and a new creation, an old world and a new world, and it seems that the starting point for the new creation is actually the resurrection of Christ. And that comes out in both of the passages we read in the New Testament, 1 Peter 3 and 2 Corinthians 5, the death and resurrection of Christ [00:23:01] as foundation for this new creation. Perhaps we can come back to that a little later. Now, the world has decreased further, verse 5, and now the top of the mountains were seen.

If anybody thinks that this was just a local flood, perhaps that verse is enough. If after so and so many days the tops of the mountains come out, it sounds like a pretty global flood to me. In any case, Noah then starts on this very interesting experiment. Perhaps that's something for the children, because now we're going to talk about two animals. And Noah does something very interesting with those two animals. He first takes the raven, and remember the ark had no window at the side.

So Noah was in this ark, and he couldn't really see what was going on outside. He probably felt that the ark wasn't moving anymore. [00:24:01] It says it rested.

And now he takes the first of these birds, the raven, and lets the raven out. And nothing happens.

The raven doesn't come back. And there's a good reason for that. The raven is an unclean bird, and the raven loves it out there. There's lots of water, there is death, there are probably carcasses, and it's a wonderful environment for a raven. And the raven is quite happy and stays out there and doesn't come back at all. But then it says when Noah took the dove, it says that he sent it in order to see whether the waters were dried up from the earth.

And the thing that happens is that in the evening, the dove is back.

It seems that the dove is quite different, and the dove didn't like it out there. And he sends the dove again.

[00:25:02] Now why is this?

Why did the dove not like it? Well, the dove is a picture of the Holy Spirit. You know, in John 1 it says that this was the sign given to John. He upon whom he should see the Holy Spirit descend like a dove and rest upon him, he would be the one he was announcing.

You know, suppose we all have a raven within us, and we all have a dove within us, just saying that on a practical note, and the raven within us says, actually this world is a wonderful place. There is so much to keep our minds occupied, there are so many interesting things, so many new things, and it's all so fascinating and exciting. But you know, what the raven doesn't realize is that this world is actually under the judgment of God. And the more we enjoy that world, [00:26:02] the more worrying it really is, because it means that we are more characterized by that raven within us, the flesh, the old nature. But we also have something in us that has quite a different nature, it's more like the dove, the new nature, and actually the Holy Spirit who wants to give us the power to act according to those desires of the new nature. And that's a challenging question for us, perhaps. My favorite pastimes, or the things I do, the things I think about, are these sort of raven things, these things that are characterized by the Holy Spirit. But there's something very interesting here, when the dove comes back the second time, in verse 11, it says, and lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off.

You know, it wasn't an olive leaf that had been floating in the water for ages, it was fresh.

It was an olive leaf that had been just plucked off. [00:27:04] And what does that mean? That means there was life. That means that there was a tree that was actually bringing fresh leaves, fresh twigs, and the dove comes back with such a twig. Basically, the dove gives the testimony of life after death.

Life after and beyond the judgment flood that God had sent.

And you know, that's exactly what the Holy Spirit did. In the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit, chapter 2, descends and comes for the first time to dwell in men on the earth.

Of course, he remained on the Lord. But he then dwelt in the church and in believers. And what was the witness of the Holy Spirit? You could go to Acts 2, listen to Peter, and Peter says, I want to talk about David. And when David said, [00:28:02] thou shalt not allow thy son to see corruption, he actually wasn't talking about himself, he was talking about Christ. And he talks about the resurrection of Christ. And you go on to chapter 3, where no man had been healed, and it says again that they gave witness to the resurrection of Christ.

It says, you actually nailed him to the cross, but God has raised him. And you can continue.

In chapter 4, it says, let's just read that verse actually. In the book of Acts, chapter 4, verse 33, it says, And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Now let me ask you, what power was that? That was the power of the Holy Spirit. It was, if you like, it was the dove with the fresh olive leaf plucked off, [00:29:01] bringing the testimony of resurrection.

And Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

Now that's interesting, it's not only the dove flying around with that olive branch, but it tells Noah something. And Noah now has a firm knowledge.

Noah knows that the judgment waters are gone. And you know, it's exactly the same for us, if you read Romans 4 in the end, it says two things about Christ in the last verse. Christ was delivered for our offenses, and he was raised for our justification.

And then it says now we have peace with God. You see?

That's the witness of the dove, Christ is risen, which is our justification, and which gives us peace.

[00:30:02] Now I need to rush on a little.

It says in verse 12, He sent forth the dove, which returned not again unto him any more. And we've alluded to this, but that's wonderful as well, that the dove did not only rest on the person of the Lord when he was here, but the Lord accomplished a work that was so great, that after his work, the Holy Spirit can actually rest on, or even dwell in people who were dreadful sinners like you and me, on the basis of that accomplished work.

It's interesting that in verse 13, it speaks about the first month and even the first day of the month. And what happens on that day is that the face of the ground was dry.

[00:31:02] It seems to me that the point is made by the date that this was a completely new beginning. Remember in Exodus 12, when God commanded the Passover to be celebrated, it says this month shall be the first month for you. And here you have the first day of the first month. It seems a new beginning, a new creation.

Now God finally says to Noah that he should go out of the ark. Perhaps you admire his patience that he didn't leave the ark before, just to check things out, but he waited until God spoke to him, which is very good.

And then the first thing you read about Noah is that he built an altar.

You might say, well, this is not the first sacrifice. There certainly was a sacrifice in the case of Adam and Eve, when God clothed them.

There was a sacrifice in the next chapter 4, when Abel bought off the firstlings of the flock. And now you have a sacrifice bought by Noah. [00:32:04] And you know the three sacrifices there, they're not exactly the same. The main point with the first one is covering.

It's atonement.

The main point with Abel's sacrifice is a slightly different one. It's the question of how you can approach God. And Abel's way was quite different from Cain's. Now here it's neither atonement nor approach. Here it is, just read part of verse 21, the Lord, by the way it's the Lord here, not God, the Lord smelled a sweet savour.

It is the savour of rest, the savour of acceptance. So you have atonement, approach, and now with Noah on the new earth, or you might say in the new creation, [00:33:02] it's acceptance.

But although you had offerings before, there are two things that occur here for the first time. One is the altar, and the other is the expression burnt offering. The burnt offering is that which ascends to God, that which is particularly for His pleasure, that which is entirely reserved for God, because it all goes up to Him.

But what about the altar? I'm sure that Abel had an altar, but it doesn't speak of it.

The Lord gives the explanation, I think, in Matthew 23, where He says, actually what is greater, the gift or the altar? The altar is that which sanctifies the gift.

So the altar is a picture of the Lord, of the value of His person.

And what gives value to the sacrifice of the Lord [00:34:04] is the worth and dignity of His person.

Perhaps to put it simply, if somebody else had died on the cross, had been treated by men in exactly the way in which the Lord was treated by them, would that have been anything similar in value? Would God have accepted us on that basis? Well, certainly not. What gave value to the sacrifice of Christ was His person.

And so you have here the altar in connection with the burnt offering and the acceptance.

And the Lord smelled a sweet savour, a savour of rest.

It's very interesting to me, this thought of rest in the story of Noah. You know, it started with his father, really. He said, let's call him Noah because in him we will receive rest.

[00:35:03] Now some have thought that that's because Noah later on had a vineyard and he found out how to make wine and that would give people rest from their troubles. Well, that's certainly not what it meant. But essentially his father Lamech prophesied and he said, in Noah, mankind will be transported to a new earth where rest will be found.

Now you then found the rest again in this chapter where the ark rested.

Then you found the dove that first didn't rest and then did rest.

And now finally you find the reason or the solid basis for the rest and that is that God rests. God rests because of the value of the work of the Lord Jesus.

[00:36:03] And the Lord said in his heart, I will not again cast the ground anymore for man's sake.

Did you know that God had a heart?

Actually I think it was here that a brother recently spoke to us about God's arm and various other human features are ascribed to God.

Well, God has a heart.

Of course you understand how this is meant, that God feels.

And actually two chapters earlier, in chapter 6, it says that when God looked at the world and he saw, that's verse 5, he saw the wickedness of man, that it was great in the earth and that every imagination of his thoughts, the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually, it says it repented the Lord that he made man and it grieved him at his heart.

What a contrast.

[00:37:02] When God looks at man as he is, he is grieved in his heart. Now, quite different, it says the Lord says in his heart, I will no longer curse the ground for man's sake.

The imagination of man's heart is evil.

Now, you need to help me here. Did I read this wrong?

Shouldn't it say that God says I will curse the ground again because the imagination of man's heart is evil? Striking, isn't it?

Can you help me with this one? It's just the opposite. The Lord says I will not curse again the ground for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. How does that work then? First God says man is so bad, I have to bring judgment. And now God says man is so bad, [00:38:01] I won't judge again.

Well, the difference is that now there's the sacrifice. What God says here is basically, if I paraphrase it, God says now I'm not looking at man anymore. In dealing with this creation, in maintaining it, in preserving frost and heat and winter and summer and seed and harvest, what I do is I look at the sacrifice.

And you know, that takes us back again to this theme of the new creation.

In the new creation, everything depends on God.

Man is out of sight.

Man is basically in the ark, shut in by God and all depends on God.

All depends on the sacrifice of Christ and that is the basis for blessing. And that has some very practical implications for our daily lives.

[00:39:01] And I'd like to use just two or three minutes to show you a man who practically lived in the new creation.

If you turn with me again to 2 Corinthians 5.

Let me perhaps preface this by a little remark. So if I asked you, what is the new creation, perhaps most of you would have said, well, we read about this in Revelation, don't we? And I saw a new heaven and a new earth and the first heaven and the first earth were no more. And you say, well, that is new creation. Well, what we read in 2 Corinthians 5 is that if there is any man in Christ, he is a new creation or a new creature.

[00:40:01] So how does that fit together? Well, you know, when the eternal state arrives and this earth is put away, you might say it is the completion, it is the consummation, if you like, of God's new creation. And then everything will be perfect and there will be only blessing. But you know, the good news, or perhaps the better news even, is that the new creation has already started. Everyone here in this room who believes in the Lord is a new creation.

Now let's just look at what that means practically. If you look at verse 13, it says, for whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.

Now Paul says, we are a bit strange, we are sometimes quite different from everyone else, we are not subject to the same influences, [00:41:02] we don't react to the same principles, but the reason is, it's for your sake and for God's sake. You see, he wasn't human in his thinking, he was governed by God's thinking. And the reason is, the love of Christ constrains us, that's verse 14, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then all were dead.

You know, that's new creation again, why? Well, A, because it is beyond death, it says Christ died, and he did that, or the fact that he did proves that we were all dead.

And after the death, there's only one motivation for us, which is no longer human, brother Rusty spoke about the difference of human kindness and the kindness that God wants us to show, he says it's the love of Christ that constrains us.

[00:42:01] Now what happens then, verse 15, in that he died for all, they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.

Now here we have new creation again. The Lord died, and it says expressly, the Lord rose.

The conclusion is, that we have died, and that we have risen, and now live for him, just as Noah was in the ark, and if the ark was exposed to the waters of death, then he was in the ark, but then the ark rested, and Noah was on the new earth.

Verse 16, Wherefore henceforth we know no man after the flesh, yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, henceforth we know him no more.

You know, in the old creation, everything is natural. Everything depends on whether it's your brother or your friend. [00:43:02] In the new creation, you know people in a different way. You know that they are a brother or sister in Christ. And even Christ we don't know as the disciples at the time knew him,

as the man who was walking here on the earth. We know him differently. We know him as we sang, as the leader of a chosen race, because he's the one who is risen from the dead, and who is beyond death and judgment. And that really takes us then to verse 17, this great statement, For if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation.

The old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.

You know, in the Lord Jesus, we have been transferred, you might say, from that which is natural to that which is spiritual. Basically we have been transferred from man, if you like, to God. In the new creation, everything is about God [00:44:02] and it's not about man.

Verse 18, And all things are of God, who has reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. You see, the same applies in Paul's relationship with unbelievers.

He doesn't see them in his natural relationship, that they were perhaps his relatives or what have you. He says, we have the ministry of reconciliation. And his feelings, whether towards Christ, whether towards believers, or whether towards unbelievers, were just governed by this fact, Christ died and Christ is risen.

Therefore, verse 20, we are ambassadors for Christ and the reason is given again in verse 21, For he has made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

[00:45:06] The ark was exposed to the waters of judgment and therefore we are on the new earth. We are the righteousness of God in him.

I think Paul actually lived that way. If you heard Paul preach, you wouldn't see Paul, you would see Christ.

He would just judge everything that was natural, everything that was according to human thinking and all he wanted to do is bring Christ before people, whether believers or unbelievers. And perhaps I can just say in closing that as you read into chapter 9 of Genesis, there are three interesting things that happen that seem to be related to this idea of the new creation. Now the first one is that people from that point onwards [00:46:02] were allowed to eat meat before they just ate the herbs, the vegetables. Now the principle is there is food, there is nourishment, there is life out of death. And you know almost every meal that you have at home gives testimony to that fact.

You have some meat, it means that there is food for you that is available to you because of death. And you know that's true of us spiritually that we receive food and nourishment out of occupation with the death of the Lord Jesus. And the second thing that happens is that God gives the soul to Noah and he says, you have to judge that which is against my mind.

And take that as a picture again, that is the picture of self-judgment and that has to do with the new creation as well. We have to judge that which is human. [00:47:02] Man hasn't changed.

You know God says he's still evil. You might say there is still the raven there but God says here is the sword. And what we have to do when we discover the raven in ourselves is well we have to take the

sword. We have to exercise self-judgment.

And the reason for that is really one thing. The reason is that God wants us to enjoy those blessings. He wants us to be in fellowship and communion with himself. And just very briefly, the third thing that happens is God says and if there is a cloud that comes on the earth, above the earth, I will put my bow into the clouds.

And he says this bow will remind you that I will not bring that judgment again.

And this rainbow is one of my favorites.

[00:48:01] The rainbow is something very nice not only to look at but the principle behind it. The rainbow means there are two things coming together. One is the water and we have seen the water as a picture of judgment. Another thing is the sun, the rooms, the lights of the sunshine. And the two meet and what you see is the rainbow.

You see that the light is refracted into these different colors which are all in the white light but they now become visible.

And that's exactly what happened on Calvary. That's what happened in that judgment when on the one hand there was the water of God and Christ was judged for our sins and on the other hand the love of God was there and became visible.

And as a result you now have a display of these different colors you might say, the different features of the character of God which we can see in the first way at the cross. [00:49:03] That God is love, that God is righteous, that God wants to forgive, receive the grace of God and so you could continue. Wonderful, I thought just to mention these in passing that there are three things that come to us as results of that new creation.

I think I'd better stop here. I don't want to be too unkind to the children. If we can sing one more hymn, number 254.

Death and judgment are behind us, grace and glory are before. All the billows rolled o'er Jesus, there they spent their utmost power. 254