The Story of Hope #5
No Emergency Exit
Genesis Chapters 4-9
Story of Hope Section 10
Nate Ingvoldstad
10.01.17

"What happens when there is no rice?" We asked this question during our early years on Barangonan. The answer was always, "we eat korot." It wasn't until a rice shortage hit the island that we found out just what this korot was. It was more than just an emergency food staple, it was salvation from starvation.   The only drawback to korot is that you have to know exactly how to prepare it, or it is poisonous. Stories had circulated that during World War II many Japanese soldiers died from eating the unprepared korot. They did not know that the root the Filipinos were picking had to be prepared in a way that made it edible. Not preparing korot in exactly the right way is disastrous. For those who followed the process to detoxify korot, it was salvation; but for those who didn't, it was deadly.

As we continue our story we come to a section today that gives us insight into how God rescues. In the same way that the korot is a salvation from starvation for those living on Barangonan, the ark that God provided was a salvation to Noah, and his family. The themes that are woven through the fabric of this part of the story are **God, Man, Sin, Death, Christ, and Faith.**

Last week, our story ended with Adam and Eve naked and ashamed. Sin had entered the world and they were dealing with the drastic effects of life separated from God. We learned that this separation would not end with Adam and Eve only, but would be passed on through their descendants. Although created to live forever, mankind would now physically and spiritually die. If it were any other story it would have simply ended there, but God in His goodness and never ending love promised that one day a **Rescuer** would come. The son of promise, He would be a descendant of the woman and He would strike a death blow to the snake. The Rescuer was and is the hope for mankind.

In Genesis 4, we read of the birth of Cain and Abel. Could one of these boys be the rescuer? The thought must have throbbed in the mind of Eve, but rather than getting better, sin begins to fester in the heart of mankind. Brother kills brother and instead of being ashamed as his father was, Cain acts with indignance towards God. The spiral of sin had begun and its trajectory was downward. Cain's descendant, Lamech boasts that if Cain's revenge is sevenfold then his is seventy-sevenfold. Man moved from being ashamed of sin to reveling in it.

At this point it seems as if Satan takes full aim at God's plan of sending the rescuer through one of Eve's descendants. Cain has been corrupted, Able has been murdered but mankind lives on. So with the hatred of God in their hearts, a portion of the fallen angels appear to produce offspring with mortal women. The result is a polluted race characterized by abuse, strife, and opposition to God.

Beginning in verse 5 of chapter 6, we read that God is saddened by the wickedness in the heart of mankind. The world He created good has now plunged into a violent and utterly deplorable condition. Grieved, God decides to blot mankind off of the face of the earth,

cleansing His world of this satanic attack. What was God doing? Was there still hope for a rescuer in the midst of all this chaos?

Into the scene steps Noah and his family. A man who, contrary to the times, still walked with God and because of his faith, was righteous before God. Noah is told of the plan to wipe the earth clean with a worldwide flood. God then reveals a very specific plan to rescue Noah and his family, along with two of every kind of animal. In obedient faith, Noah responds to God's command by building a massive ark. Once finished, Noah enters and God closes the door. Those outside the ark were doomed to judgement, while the eight who passed through the door rested in the safety of the ark.

As we reflect on this section of God's story there are many truths that float to the surface. Here are three.

God Punishes Evil, but Rescues the Righteous. Noah is a character in stark contrast to those of his time. We don't know how many people were in the world when Noah was alive, but we do know that only eight believed God and entered the ark. In the midst of all the evil and chaos God knew who was trusting in the rescuer and God came to the aid of those eight. In the same way that God is swift to rescue the righteous, He also punishes evil with the same force. Those who are like Cain and act with indignance toward God will be subject to His wrath.

God Closed the Door. The ark had one door, and Genesis 7:16 is clear that it was God who closed the door of the ark. There were no back doors, or fire escapes where one could sneak in the ark. There was one opening and it was only through this opening that man or beast could enter. Man was given a season of choice, but that season had an end. As the author of life, God decided when to close the door, and when He did it was final. The same is true for our lives. We are given a season of time in this world to choose to respond as Noah did in obedient faith, or to act as Cain and Lamech did in arrogant defiance. The question is not if the door will close, but rather when.

Salvation is found in God's Way. What color of hair did Noah have? Was he a tall man? Can you picture him in your head from a description in the Bible? There are areas in God's story that just aren't specific. We don't know what Noah looked like, but we do know what the ark looked like. When the Bible is specific in detail it's as if a red flag is being waved in our faces saying, "Hey, pay attention to this!". What detail the author of Genesis gives us about the ark! The point for us in this story is that God's directions were the specific way that Noah and his family were to find their salvation from the great flood. There was no room for improvisation, or building a different boat. God's way was specific. Noah had to put his faith not only in God, but he had to put his faith in God's way. He had to trust that this ark that God provided would rescue him and his family from impending doom.