

1 **The Year of the Ark**

- Are You Overwhelmed by Life's Problems?

2 **Flood Warnings**

- There is a flood coming and it has already arrived.
- It's not like any flood we have seen before.
- It is a flood of arks!
- All around the world, people are building replicas of Noah's Ark.
- In fact, Noah's Ark theme parks and attractions are bobbing up around the world at a surprising rate.

3 **"Ark van Noach"**

- In the Netherlands, you can now visit "Ark van Noach."
- This is a full-sized ark model that actually floats.
- Built by a construction company owner named Johan Huibers, it cost \$1.3 million and weighs 3,000 tons.

4 **Hong Kong**

- In Hong Kong, another full-sized replica of Noah's ark exists at "Noah's Ark Park and Resort."
- It stands alongside a solar telescope, a set of gardens and evangelistic displays.
- Unfortunately, its Christian benefactors are on trial facing bribery and corruption charges.

5 **God's Ark of Safety**

- In Frostburg, Maryland, you can see "God's Ark of Safety."
- It was started by Church of the Brethren pastor Richard Greene in 1974, after he had a series of visions that inspired him to build Noah's ark next to Interstate 68.
- He's been working on it ever since.

6 **Other Arks**

- In addition, there is a two-thirds-sized replica of the ark standing in Florenceville, New Brunswick (although it's probably not seaworthy) ...
- Noah's Ark Park includes plans for a full-sized ark in Broomfield, Colorado.
- The government of Yerevan, Armenia, wants to host an ark theme park within view of Mount Ararat, and
- The Cornerstone Church in San Antonio includes a \$5 million ark complete with animatronic animals.

7 **Ark Encounter**

- But the granddaddy of them all is going to be right here in Williamstown, Kentucky.
- Not far from the Creation Museum, a group called "Answers in Genesis" wants to build a \$73 million theme park with a full-scale ark and a zoo.

- The project is called "Ark Encounter" and will also feature a Tower of Babel, a 'first-century' village, and a boat ride down the Nile.

8 Flood Warnings

- We are drawn to arks because we naturally fear the destructive power of a flood and the trouble associated with them.
- Psalm 29 speaks of "mighty waters" that can drench, drown and destroy us (v. 3).
- Other psalms include talk of
 - "deep waters" where "the flood sweeps over me" (Psalm 69:2),
 - waters that "roar and foam" (Psalm 46:3), and
 - a desperate appeal to God for help, because "the waters have come up to my neck" and "I sink in deep mire" (Psalm 69:1-2).

9 Flood Warnings

- Sometimes life overwhelms us, with personal and professional problems that feel like a flood of mighty waters.
- We feel overpowered by difficulties rushing toward us, whether they be emotional, financial, relational or vocational.
- We find ourselves gasping for breath, with the waters coming up to our necks and our feet in deep mire.
- Flailing around in the flood, we desperately need an ark.

10 We Need an Ark

- It's not like we need an ark that's at a Theme Park or Attraction.
- We need an ark of safety that is spiritual, not physical.
- A vessel to carry us across the waves to a harbor of peace and safety.
- We need an ark for our soul and spirit.
- We need help and where can we find it?

11 Good News

- The LORD is an ARK for His people.
 - God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. (Psa 46:1 NIV)
 - The LORD is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear? (Psa 27:1 NIV)
 - The LORD is the stronghold of my life — of whom shall I be afraid? (Psa 27:1 NIV)

- For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock. (Psa 27:5 NIV)

12 Good News

- If God is our vessel of protection and a place for us to find safe harbor, what should we do?
 - Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always. (Psa 105:4 NIV)
 - You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. (Jer 29:13 NIV)
 - Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you. (Psa 9:10 NIV)
 - Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. (Is 55:6 NIV)
 - For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. (Luke 11:10 NIV)

13 Seeking vs. Fretting

- With all these scriptures encouraging us to seek the Lord, you would think everyone who finds themselves in need would be praying and making sure their relationship with God is solid.
- However, what we often find is not peace that comes by seeking the Lord, but fretting.
- According to Isaiah, [the LORD] will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. (Is 26:3 NIV)
- Even in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul says, Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:6–7 NIV)

14 What is Fretting?

- Fretting is simply the outward expression of worry, dissatisfaction, or annoyance.
- It is often expressed by complaining, grumbling, whining, fussing, and griping.
- However, unchecked, it can become toxic where one becomes bitter, hurtful, resentful, and cruel.
- It has the power to not only corrupt one's soul, but destroy any and all relationships—including our relationship with God.
- People who fret and are tormented by anxiety will often say and do things that hurt even those they love and care about deeply.
- This is why the Bible says, Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret — it leads only to evil. (Psa 37:8 NIV)

15 Antidote for Fretting

- Seek God's face and pour out your heart to him.
 - Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall. (Psa 55:22 NIV)
 - Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. (1 Pet 5:7 NIV)
- However, don't let your busyness or lack of focus keep you from spending quality time with God.
- Ten minutes, one hour, or an afternoon of spending time with God will often solve more problems than weeks or months of worrying and fretting.
- Moreover, when we earnestly seek the Lord, we get something else, which is the cure for all worry and anxiety—nipping fretting in the bud, and that is peace that guards our hearts and minds.

16 **The Peace of God**

- When we earnestly pray and find that release where we know that all our problems are now in God's hands, the urge to shoot ourselves in the foot by saying or doing something hurtful or wrong is usually gone.
- Instead of frustrating others by our frustrations, we're pleasant, helpful, and a source of inspiration for others.
- In fact, when we have learned to give our problems to the Lord, we have less problems to worry about. Why? Because we stopped creating problems for ourselves by fretting.
- In other words, when we stop creating our own troubles, we stop being our own worse enemy.
- Oh, what a happy day that will be when we get rid of the biggest troublemaker in our lives—ourselves. (A verse that should be in the Bible)

17 **The Power of Peace**

- When trouble comes most of us think we're not going to be happy until that trouble or problem is taken out of the way or solved.
- The truth of the matter is that we don't have to be held hostage to that kind of thinking.
- Our problems are not our problems, neither is our problem our attitudes. Our problem is our unbelief that causes us not to earnestly seek God and find His peace, which will change our attitudes and help us not to do evil, so that we will inherit God's promises.
- God can give us the strength to wait for Him by giving us peace—as we earnestly seek Him with all our hearts and all our souls.
- Then as we wait for God, we won't create more problems for ourselves by giving in to worry and fretting.

18 **Wait and Do not Fret**

- I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." (Lam 3:24 NIV)
- Do not say, "I'll pay you back for this wrong!" Wait for the LORD, and he will deliver you. (Prov 20:22 NIV)
- Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret . . . (Psa 37:7 NIV)

- Wait for the LORD and keep his way. (Psa 37:34 NIV)

19 **Get in the Ark**

- On an earth that threatens to drown us, we each need an ark -- but not the kind being built here in Kentucky, Colorado and Maryland. Instead, we need —
 - an ark which comes from connecting with God through prayer, and receiving his strength and peace;
 - an ark which always includes the church, a community of support and accountability;
 - an ark which has Jesus at the helm, sailing above the waters and steering us in the right direction.
- In a threatening and stormy world, let us learn to put our trust in the Lord and not fret.

20 **Conclusion**

- Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him. You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. (Psa 32:6–7 NIV)
- The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD; he is their stronghold in time of trouble. The LORD helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in him. (Psa 37:39–40 NIV)