



FAITH matters

September 4, 2023

Imagine the surprise reaction of Noah's neighbors when he started building an ark! How would YOU feel if someone down the street from you started constructing a boat longer than a football field in their back yard? When Noah finished building, he started to let the animals come on board two by two. Ostriches and horses and camels...one male and one female of every kind of animal filed past Noah. Then, all of a sudden, Noah saw one male gorilla coming up the ramp all by himself. So Noah asked, "What are you doing here? Where is your mate?" And the gorilla answered, "I was hoping to meet her on the ark. I've always heard that a cruise was a good place to meet women." It is hard to figure the number of square feet needed to house two Bengal tigers or two African elephants. It is hard NOT to picture the hold of the ark filled with squawking, grunting, growling birds and beasts and a smell to end all smells! And we shall always contemplate this eternal question, "Why didn't Noah swat BOTH mosquitos?"

It is hard to understand why God who found everything wonderfully good at the end of creation now wants to ditch it and start over. What kind of a God is this? We are told that what is wrong is that Creation has refused to be God's Creation. Creation has refused to honor God as God. Sin and corruption have spread like prairie fire. Paul says in his letter to the Romans: In various ways "creation has exchanged the truth about God for a lie, worshiping and serving the creature rather than the Creator." This is a harsh indictment! It means the death of the whole world. God destroys the creation which has refused to be his faithful, obedient

creation.

The good news is that the story of Noah is not that of an angry tyrant, but is centered in the grief of God, whose heart knows our hearts. God is not angered, but is grieved. The story affirms that

God is decisively impacted by the suffering, hurt and circumstances of his creation. The story of Noah is not about the world assaulted and a God who stands remote. It is about the hurt God endures because of and for the sake of God's wayward creation.

What does Noah's story say to us today? It says that left to its own devices, humankind is hopeless. But the good news is that hope for the future is not based on possibility thinking or human actualization. Hope for the future is not based on what WE do. Hope depends on a move from God. Hope depends on God's promise that He will stay with, endure and sustain his world. God will not let the rebellion of humankind sway Him from his grand dreams for creation. So let us make decisions based on that hope. Let us work to make the world God created a loving and beautiful place. Let us live in that hope!

~Written by Rev. Pam Pendexter

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