

Diary of a Young Camel

April 5. I met a bearded old man at the watering hole today who must have been 600 years old! He said a great flood was coming and all living creatures would die but if I followed him I would find shelter and safety. Though mom and dad warned me never to go with strangers and though there wasn't a cloud in the sky, the twinkle in his eye and the authority in his voice made me more afraid *not* to follow him than to follow him.

April 6. Sunny skies. The old man led me to his camp where he has assembled badgers, owls, elephants, caterpillars, pigs, zebras and dodo birds. It's a zoo! Every animal has a mate. He put me in a pen with a pretty female camel. This may turn out better than I thought.

April 8 -15. Travelling north. The old man keeps reminding us of the coming destruction and the safety that has been provided for us. Beautiful weather.

April 16. We made quite a spectacle when we arrived at the old man's village. Neighbors gawked and some mocked him asking if he wanted to borrow one of their umbrellas. Not a cloud in the sky. When we got to his house we discovered that he and his sons had built a humongous boat in his backyard!

April 20 - May 15. Blue skies. Other animals keep joining us. The old man attracts some rather strange creatures! The boat is finished and appears to be seaworthy. I think I'm in love.

May 16-26. Clouds! Dark and threatening. It took a week to get all of us into the boat. Our accommodations are cramped and smelly. But the storm on the outside makes tolerable the smells on the inside. The old man is very concerned about our welfare. For some reason, he seems to love us.

May 27. Someone slammed the door shut!

May 28 - July 8. Rain! The noise is deafening. On several occasions we've heard screaming outside and fists pounding on the door. People out there wish they were in here. This makes the old man cry.

July 9. We're moving! The boat is apparently floating. Strange: the water that is destroying the world is carrying us to safety!



Why this story of a camel in Noah's Ark? Because I could find no better way to illustrate the meaning of baptism! While my story is imaginary, the words of the New Testament are not. Listen as Peter refers to Noah and the flood to help us grasp the reality to which baptism points.

You know, even though God waited patiently all the days that Noah built his ship, only a few were saved then, eight to be exact - saved from the water by the water. The waters of baptism do that for you, not by washing away dirt from your skin but by presenting you through Jesus' resurrection before God with a clear conscience (1 Peter 3:20-21. The Message).

All aboard!

Pastor Stan Key