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The word for this lesson is hubris, which means "excessive pride or self confidence; arrogance" (www.dictionary.com). The topic this week is about Noah's ark and the tower of Babel. Specifically we will be looking at the hubris of the people in Noah's day and in the time of the tower, as opposed to the humility required to follow Christ. This humility is the root of the protection those who humble themselves receive from the tragedies of living in the world. So pride and humility are at the heart of this lesson.

In lesson 05 we learned about the pride or hubris of Cain, versus the humility and service of Enoch. Because of Enoch's willingness to become a servant of Christ, he was given blessings beyond our wildest imaginations. This lesson takes those same comparisons between Cain and Enoch and applies them to all of mankind. We will see in the end that the results are the same for an individual as they are for a whole society.

The spiritual state of man in Noah's day

The Lord called Noah to preach repentance to the people. The failure to repent would result in complete annihilation by the prophesied flood. Noah preached to the people, but in their vanity and pride they came to him, looked him in the eye (I added that part for affect) and said this:

> 21 And also, after that they had heard him, they came up before him, saying: Behold, we are the sons of God; have we not taken unto ourselves the daughters of men? And are we not eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage? And our wives bear unto us children, and the same are mighty men, which are like unto men of old, men of great renown. And they hearkened not unto the words of Noah.

In other words, they were saying to Noah, 'Did not God command us to multiply and replenish, or fill the earth? Did He not command that we get married and have children? Have we not done all these things? Are not our children growing up to be great and wonderful men, just like those who were the sons of Adam in bygone centuries? Are we not as good or as great as they?'

They completely missed the point, whether deliberately or through ignorance. Noah wanted them to turn from their arrogance and sense of self importance and humble themselves before God. He wanted them to follow Christ and learn to be His servants so they could be saved and have eternal life. But men's focus was all on themselves and their own sense of self importance. They just laughed at Noah. Those referred to in the Bible as giants actually did their level best to kill Noah, but the Spirit of God was with him and they were not able to harm him.

The Lord had specifically lengthened out the days of men to give them time to repent. The average person, before the flood, lived many hundreds of years. Many lived more than 900 years. You can commit a lot of sin in 900 years. Just think about how much damage people today can do in far less than 80 years. These people had gotten to the point where every thought and intent of their hearts had become tainted by evil. They no longer had any righteous thoughts. They no longer had any righteous desires. They wanted nothing to do with Noah and his religion. They were above that nonsense. His religious beliefs were an offense to them.

An example of like-minded wickedness

In the Book of Mormon, shortly before the Savior was born, Samuel, the Lamanite, came to Zarahemla to preach repentance to the people. They kicked him out of the city. On his way home the voice of the Lord told him to return and tell the people whatsoever the Lord put into his heart to say. Samuel couldn't get back into the city, because they wouldn't let him in the gate, so he climbed upon the wall and preached to the people from there.

Following are the main verses of his chastisement of the people. He spells out the very kind of wickedness Noah was dealing with just before the flood. The people of Zarahemla were so wicked that if they had lived in Noah's day, they would have died in the deluge. If you want to take my word for it and skip to the next section, go ahead. If you want to take the time to read Samuel's words, here they are:

> 12 Yea, wo unto this great city of Zarahemla; for behold, it is because of those who are righteous that it is saved; yea, wo unto this great city, for I perceive, saith the Lord, that there are many, yea, even the more part of this great city, that will harden their hearts against me, saith the Lord.
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> 13 But blessed are they who will repent, for them will I spare. But behold, if it were not for the righteous who are in this great city, behold, I would cause that fire should come down out of heaven and destroy it.
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> 14 But behold, it is for the righteous' sake that it is spared. But behold, the time cometh, saith the Lord, that when ye shall cast out the righteous from among you, then shall ye be ripe for destruction; yea, wo be unto this great city, because of the wickedness and abominations which are in her.
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> 15 Yea, and wo be unto the city of Gideon, for the wickedness and abominations which are in her.
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> 16 Yea, and wo be unto all the cities which are in the land round about, which are possessed by the Nephites, because of the wickedness and abominations which are in them.
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> 17 And behold, a curse shall come upon the land, saith the Lord of Hosts, because of the people's sake who are upon the land, yea, because of their wickedness and their abominations.
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> 18 And it shall come to pass, saith the Lord of Hosts, yea, our great and true God, that whoso shall hide up treasures in the earth shall find them again no more, because of the great curse of the land, save he be a righteous man and shall hide it up unto the Lord.
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> 19 For I will, saith the Lord, that they shall hide up their treasures unto me; and cursed be they who hide not up their treasures unto me; for none hideth up their treasures unto me save it be the righteous; and he that hideth not up his treasures unto me, cursed is he, and also the treasure, and none shall redeem it because of the curse of the land.
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> 20 And the day shall come that they shall hide up their treasures, because they have set their hearts upon riches; and because they have set their hearts upon their riches, and will hide up their treasures when they shall flee before their enemies; because they will not

hide them up unto me, cursed be they and also their treasures; and in that day shall they be smitten, saith the Lord.

21 Behold ye, the people of this great city, and hearken unto my words; yea, hearken unto the words which the Lord saith; for behold, he saith that ye are cursed because of your riches, and also are your riches cursed because ye have set your hearts upon them, and have not hearkened unto the words of him who gave them unto you.

22 Ye do not remember the Lord your God in the things with which he hath blessed you, but ye do always remember your riches, not to thank the Lord your God for them; yea, your hearts are not drawn out unto the Lord, but they do swell with great pride, unto boasting, and unto great swelling, envyings, strifes, malice, persecutions, and murders, and all manner of iniquities.

23 For this cause hath the Lord God caused that a curse should come upon the land, and also upon your riches, and this because of your iniquities.

24 Yea, wo unto this people, because of this time which has arrived, that ye do cast out the prophets, and do mock them, and cast stones at them, and do slay them, and do all manner of iniquity unto them, even as they did of old time.

25 And now when ye talk, ye say: If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets; we would not have stoned them, and cast them out.

26 Behold ye are worse than they; for as the Lord liveth, if a prophet come among you and declareth unto you the word of the Lord, which testifieth of your sins and iniquities, ye are angry with him, and cast him out and seek all manner of ways to destroy him; yea, you will say that he is a false prophet, and that he is a sinner, and of the devil, because he testifieth that your deeds are evil.

27 But behold, if a man shall come among you and shall say: Do this, and there is no iniquity; do that and ye shall not suffer; yea, he will say: Walk after the pride of your own hearts; yea, walk after the pride of your eyes, and do whatsoever your heart desireth—and if a man shall come among you and say this, ye will receive him, and say that he is a prophet.

28 Yea, ye will lift him up, and ye will give unto him of your substance; ye will give unto him of your gold, and of your silver, and ye will clothe him with costly apparel; and because he speaketh flattering words unto you, and he saith that all is well, then ye will not find fault with him.

29 O ye wicked and ye perverse generation; ye hardened and ye stiffnecked people, how long will ye suppose that the Lord will suffer you? Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves

> to be led by foolish and blind guides? Yea, how long will ye choose darkness rather than light?

The Nephites were suffering from the same spiritual disease as the people in the time of Noah, hubris - excessive pride, arrogance, and insolence.

The tower

One would think that the example of those who died in the flood would be enough to remind any people that they had better not tick off the Lord. Alas, it seems to be an eternal truth that every generation must learn these lessons for themselves. The family of Noah split up after the flood and began to repopulate the earth. But not too many generations later we find them banding together in pride and arrogance to build a city and a tower that would make such a name for themselves that the earth would never forget them.

The Lord understands the power of uniting His offspring in a single cause. In Genesis 11 we are told that because everyone spoke the same language, there was nothing they could not accomplish, if they put their collective mind to it. This includes works of evil. So the Lord had to confuse their language and He scattered them to different parts of the world.

This is what causes so much division among the nations of the earth. By not being able to understand each other's speech, it is far easier for Satan to sew discord and mistrust between people. Now the only thing that will bring the nations of the earth together is for everyone to develop Christlike love and trust for one another. When that happens, the power of unity among God's children will produce wonders the likes of which we cannot currently fathom. This will be a Millennial blessing.

Our arks

Noah was a righteous man. His works were righteous. When the Lord commanded him to do something, he trusted God enough that he was willing to do whatever was commanded of him. Think about what it took to build something the size of the ark. Noah was surrounded by land, yet he was building a boat that was half the size of a modern-day cruise ship that holds more than a thousand people. Imagine the mocking that took place by Noah's community. And Noah was 600 years old.

Despite all the apparent evidences against him, he followed the Spirit and did as he was instructed, even though the skies were clear and bright. This was his and his family's salvation. We also have been given arks to build in our day. But in our day our arks are institutions. We have home and family, Church, seminary, church meetings, temples, etc. All of these things are mocked and discounted by the world. They are all out of fashion in our day, and becoming more out of fashion by the year.

Final Thoughts

Just as we are all Adam and Eve to our posterity, we are also Noah to our posterity. Are we teaching our families to cling to the Lord like Noah did? Where else were his children supposed to go to be taught the saving truths of the gospel of Christ? If we slack off in teaching our children and family members the importance of following all that the Lord has taught us in the latter days then the world will step in and teach our loved ones for us.

Do we really want our families and loved ones to be taught the doctrines and beliefs of those who will be burned at Christ's coming? We each need to treat our time on earth like Noah treated his days before the flood. We each have a finite amount of time allotted to us to rise to the challenges the Lord places before us. When our time has expired, we must go home to that God who sent us here to be tested. Each of us will have to be able to say in that day we are called home that we are ready to board the ark. In other words, we have done all the Lord has commanded and required of us to be saved. If we can't, do we really want to have to admit the only obvious alternative?

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The Saving of His House

Week 06