

A CRUISE ON THE SHIP OF ZION

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps all of us have been invited or have taken a cruise on a ship going to some special place in the world. My only such a cruise came in 1953 when Uncle Sam sent me on a ship to Japan, and after 16 months in Korea, brought me back on a ship to Seattle. Each cruise lasted 2 to 3 weeks, and though it was an experience, the trips were not extremely pleasant. The first was sad, for it included leaving for a world of conflict. The return was more pleasant for it was a journey home after the war.

The Bible is filled with many stories of ships and journeys. Think of Jonah on a ship to Tarshish. Think of Jesus taking short trips across the beautiful Sea of Galilee to go places to teach His word. Think of Paul on his journey to Rome where he was to be imprisoned.

We have many illustrations of the Christian life. (1) We function as members of a spiritual body. (2) We labor as workers in the Lord's vineyard. (3) We fight in the war against Satan and evil. (4) We are on a voyage to heavenly Zion. Now, under the figure of a voyage, let's consider what is involved in this journey.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, our journey involves PLANNING AND PREPARATION.

- A. In any earthly journey, planning is made up of **4 w's**: WHERE we want to go, WHEN we want to go, WHAT we need to do to get ready, and WHY we want to make such a journey.
- B. In our heavenly journey to Zion, we find out what to do to get ready to go—where we shall drink of the river of life, eat of the tree of life and enjoy the presence of Christ and loved ones forever and ever.

II. 2nd, we must make our RESERVATIONS FOR THE VOYAGE.

- A. We cannot prepare by believing **only** that there is a voyage available, and that by doing so, we are automatically ON the trip.
 - 1. We have to pay the price for the voyage.
 - 2. We have to meet all the necessary requirements FOR the trip.
- B. Once we have made the reservations, we are ready to ENTER the ship to Zion.

III. 3rd, we must ENTER THE SHIP OR GET ON BOARD. Cf Mark 4:1

- A. We are on board when we get **"into"** the ship as described in our guide book.
- B. There are certain requirements made for all passengers.
 - 1. We must believe, but not ONLY believe. Heb. 11:6; John 1:12; Jas. 2:24
 - 2. We must repent of our sins and acknowledge Jesus, the son of God, as the Master of the ship that will take us to Zion.
 - a. In Acts 2, on the day of Pentecost, we have the first gospel sermon where reservations were made available to the Jews who wanted to go to Zion.
 - 1) The word "saved" or "salvation" is mentioned 3 times in the chapter. v. 21, 40, 47
 - 2) Within these verses, we see what they were required to do to **have** this "salvation", and be ON the ship to Zion. v. 36-38, 40-41, 47...
 - b. If **we** want to be on this one ship, we have to enter the same way they did, for all who want to take the voyage until the end of time, must pay the

3. Once we have met these requirements, we have gotten **into** the ship. Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Cor. 12:13

IV. 4th, once we are ON board, we must ABIDE IN THE SHIP.

A. When Paul was on the ship to Rome, there were many difficulties.

1. They were cast upon a foreign island, where he was bitten by a poisonous viper, but it did him no harm, as the Lord was with him.
2. Once they met some stormy waters. (Acts 27:13-44, Summarize)

B. Once we are on the ship to Zion, we must ABIDE IN THE SHIP. 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Tim. 4:6-8; John 15:4-6, 9

1. We would NOT abide in the ship if we turn to the law of Moses for our justification. Gal. 5:4
2. We would NOT abide in the ship if we forsake Christ for the things of the world. 2Tim. 4:10; 1 John 2:15-17
3. We would NOT abide in the ship if we forsake Christ for earthly riches. 1 Tim. 6:9-10, 17-19
4. We would NOT abide in the ship if we forsake Christ for the sinful pleasures of life. Luke 8:14

V. Finally, we shall reach that HEAVENLY CITY OF ZION.

A. It is the land of promise. Tit. 1:2

1. It is the place prepared by God. Heb. 11:16
2. There we can sing, "I've reached the land of love divine, and all it's riches freely mine. Here shine undimmed one blissful day, For all my night has passed away. O Beulah Land, sweet Beulah Land, as on thy highest mount I stand, I look away across the sea, where mansions are prepared for me, And view the shining glory shore, My heav'n my home for ever more."

B. Years ago we sang the song entitled "THE GLORY PORT". "As the storm clouds gather 'round me, and the shifting scenes of earth roll by. There's a light that's shining for me, in that Port of love beyond the sky. I'm sailing to the port, to the port of love beyond the sky; I'm sailing to the port, and I know I'll reach it by and by"

1. We can now say, "I've reached the port."
2. We can hear Jesus say, "Enter ye into the joys of your Lord."

CONCLUSION

I. Are you on this journey?

A. Is there a husband or father present who would like to take this journey to eternity?

B. Is there a wife or mother or a child present who has not yet gotten on board?

II. Whatever your lost situation may be, won't you come to Jesus right now, as we stand together and sing?

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