

Noah – The First to See a Rainbow

The Bible says that during the flood in Noah's time, the rain fell for 40 days and 40 nights. For 150 days the waters were at full height covering all the mountains. Then it began to go down from off the top of the mountains. Noah didn't see trees for ten months, and he was in the ark with all those animals for a total of 1 year and 10 days. He must have been very busy caring for all the animals for a full year. However, I think God made Noah's job a little easier by causing many of the animals to hibernate – go into a long sleep. It would be a lot easier caring for a sleeping lion, than a hungry roaring lion.

Don't believe artists drawing of the Noah's ark that show a row of windows along its side with animal heads looking out. Heads of cows, giraffes, sheep, turkeys and cats were not looking out side windows. There was only one window in the ark and it was in the roof. That window was covered over when the rains came down, but it was lifted off when the sun began to shine again.

Noah firstly sent out a raven, a large black bird. It never came back. Probably it fed on the carcasses of dead things floating on the water. Then he sent out a dove to see if there was any dry land, but it returned with nothing. Doves don't eat raw meat from dead things. Then seven days later, he sent a second dove out and it came back with an olive leaf, plucked from a new branch. Then Noah knew that the water was going down and life was returning to the earth.

Finally, God gave to Noah the command to go forth from the ark. That must have been a happy day as the few people and all the animals went out skipping into the sunshine and the fresh air.

God's judgment was over. All the wicked people were gone from the earth. They had perished in the flood that covered the whole wide world. So, the world was safe again and Noah and his family knew that God was good.

To offer thanks to God Noah built an altar to worship Him. He sacrificed clean animals and birds unto God as a thank offering. God was really pleased at the love and obedience in Noah's heart.

Right away at that time promised Noah that he would not curse the ground anymore. He promised that, **“While the earth remaineth there would be seedtime, and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer an winter, and day and night shall not cease’ (Genesis 8:22).**

Do you think God has kept his word? Did you get any apples this year? Do you eat vegetables, corn, lettuce and fruit each week? That is possible because God has kept his promise of seed time and harvest time, that was firstly given to Noah.

I'm sure that Noah, his wife, their three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, along with their wives, worried about that ridiculous rain that brought such a terrible judgment upon the world. They must have been asking, What if that rain comes again and keeps on raining for another forty days and forty nights? How are we going to live in a world that is constantly under God's judgment?

They may have wondered, is that who God is. Is He such a God who will snap his fingers and send destruction upon the earth?

The Bible is very clear that God is not only able to judge sin. He is able to pardon sin totally and show great mercy to those who are guilty. Our God is a merciful God who loves His own people and will always bless them despite their failures and sins.

The answer to that big question about God's true nature is in the beautiful rainbow that first appeared to Noah and his family. God promised Noah that he would never again destroy the world by a flood, and to prove it God put a rainbow in the sky.

I'm sure you have seen a rainbow on a rainy day when the sun is shining at the same time as the rain is coming down. You will see the arch of the rainbow in the sky. It goes up from the ground into the clouds and down again to the ground.

A rainbow has seven beautiful colours. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. [You can remember them as Roy G. BIV.]

That rainbow is God's covenant. It is His sure promise that He will never again judge the world by a flood. It is a symbol of God's mercy. It reminds us and it reminds God of His promises to always deal in mercy.

That rainbow is around the throne of God in heaven. When John the apostle was given to look into heaven he saw, **“a rainbow round about the throne”** of God (Rev. 4:3). So, every day God sees that rainbow and He is reminded of His promise to His people to never to deal in judgment, but to save His people from wrath.

God's way of fulfilling that promise was to send His Son to be our Saviour. The Lord Jesus is our covenant Saviour. He was promised by God to save us from our sins. On the cross of Calvary, the Lord Jesus bore the wrath of God due to our sin,

so that God would pardon us from breaking His law. God totally forgives us and deals with us in mercy when we trust in God's Son as our only Saviour.

So the rainbow was God's covenant that was fulfilled by the Lord Jesus who reconciles sinners to God. If you have the Lord Jesus as your Saviour you can claim the rainbow for your eternal salvation. You can be sure that God will always treat you in mercy and never again in wrath.

The devil wants to destroy the symbol of the rainbow by twisting its meaning. The Bible is clear that God gave put the rainbow in the sky a sign to Noah of God's unfailing mercy that he would never destroy the world again by a flood. Christians can rejoice in the rainbow every time they see it, for only God can put it in the sky. No man can make a rainbow in the sky, but God does and it reminds us that our God will never fail to show mercy. We also know it appears around the throne of God in heaven. God can never forget it and we can always rest in God's mercy to us as we trust in the Lord Jesus as our Saviour.