

Subject: A New Beginning with God

Scripture: Genesis 8:1-22

Genesis 8 is part of the story of Noah and the flood that begins in Genesis 6. This chapter is about the end of the flood and a new beginning for Noah and his family. It was a new beginning with God and because of God.

1. God remembered Noah and his family (vs. 1)

In the beginning of the story of Noah we read in Genesis 6:8, “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” This is an act of God’s grace—God remembered Noah. This verse refers to God’s faithfulness and kindness. Sometimes when we go through a storm, even after the storm passes and is over, we may feel like God has forgotten us and life is at a standstill. God has not forgotten you. God remembers His people.

When the Bible says that God “remembers” someone, it means that He takes action on behalf of someone. This is a common expression in the Bible: God remembered Abraham and saved Lot; God remembered Rachel and Hannah and enabled them to have children; God remembered the Jews and delivered them out of Egypt. To “remember” means that God is going to fulfill His commitment to help someone. We can be assured that God never forgets His people or His promises to them. He is the faithful God and because He is faithful He will always remember.

2. God restrained the flood waters (vs. 2-3)

God was not only powerful enough to send the flood; He was powerful enough to stop it. The source of the water from beneath the earth and above the earth was stopped, the rain was restrained or held back. God made a wind to pass over the earth (vs. 1). In the beginning God spoke and things were created. God could have spoken and immediately dried up the waters, but now we see God working in a different way that we call providence. God uses things to accomplish His purpose. When the Jews crossed the Red Sea, God sent a wind to part the waters and make it dry land. Then God sent the wind and caused the waters to drown the Egyptian army. God uses all things to accomplish His purpose.

***Exodus 14:21-22** ²¹ And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. ²² And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.*

***Exodus 15:10** Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters.*

***Psalms 148:8** Fire, and hail; snow, and vapor; stormy wind fulfilling his word.*

3. The ark rested and the waters receded (vs. 4-5)

In these verses we have evidence of the waters receding. Where did all that water go? Some of it went back to the seas. Some formed lakes and rivers. And some went back under the ground, just like it was before the flood. Warren Wiersbe said the Governor of Nebraska made him an Admiral of the Nebraska Navy. He asked a Nebraska resident why Nebraska

had a navy and he explained that the state is sitting on an ocean of water which explains the extensive farm irrigation system as you drive on Interstate 80.

4. Noah waited until the waters dried up (vs. 6-14)

It took a long time for the waters to dry up. Noah sent two birds out to see if there was dry land. It was like an air force sent on an intelligence mission. Noah sent a raven and a dove, two very different kinds of birds. The raven was a scavenger bird and he would land anywhere, but not the dove. It was a particular and careful bird. Noah knew it was dry when the dove returned with an olive leaf.

Noah is a great example of patience. He waited because he had a long-term commitment to do God's will. For 120 years he worked on the ark. Then for over a year he stayed on board the ark until God caused the dry land to appear. Noah and his family were in the ark a total of 378 days (see Gen. 7:11 and 8:14). The only thing we can compare to Noah's long-term commitment to God is our whole life.

5. Noah and his family left the ark (vs. 15-19)

God told Noah when to board the ark and He told him when to leave. God told Noah "Come into the ark," and God told him "Go forth from the ark." That means God was with Noah the whole time. Just like Noah, God guides our steps and tells us what to do and when to do it.

Psalms 37:23 *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.*

Noah escaped God's judgment and walked into a brand new world. In some ways this is a picture of the life of all believers.

Psalms 73:24 *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me into glory.*

6. Noah built an altar and worshiped the Lord (vs. 20)

When Noah left the ark the first thing he did was worship the God who saved him. This was not the first time we read about worship or sacrifice, but it is the first mention of an altar. Now we know why God told Noah to take seven of every kind of clean animal. Worship is the normal desire of a saved person. If we have been saved from God's wrath by trusting in Christ, if we know there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1), then we will want to worship and thank God for His grace, love, patience, and faithfulness. If someone doesn't want to worship he has every reason to doubt if he is saved. Before we leave this part of the story, notice that Noah took the initiative to worship. He was the spiritual leader of his family. It's a sad day when men have to be coaxed and motivated to worship God with their wife and children.

7. God accepted Noah's sacrifice and made a promise (vs. 21-22)

Noah's offering was an act of gratitude and it was an act of atonement for sin. It was pleasing or soothing (it satisfied God's wrath against sin). The Lord was pleased with Noah's offering. It was literally "a smell of satisfaction." In the OT every sacrifice was to provide a pleasing aroma and it was accepted by God if it was done in faith and obedience to His will.

This satisfaction with Noah's offering is like the NT description of Christ's sacrifice for us.

Ephesians 5:2 *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor.*

The final verses of this chapter focus on God's promise that included three things: 1) no more curse on the ground; 2) no more worldwide flood; 3) no interruption of the cycle of seasons and days. As always, God has kept His promise. He never wavers in His faithfulness, and man never wavers in his sinfulness (vs. 21). Human nature is still the same, and God is still the same. This chapter ends on that note.

In closing, let's remember the example of Noah. He did four things that we all should do:

- 1) He walked with the Lord (Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.)
- 2) He worked for the Lord (Noah believed God, was moved with fear and built the ark.)
- 3) He waited on the Lord (Noah waited for 120 years until the flood came and then waited over a year on the ark.)
- 4) He worshiped the Lord (Noah had a grateful heart that caused him to worship God.)