

**Genesis 8:1-22**  
*Noah Exits the Ark*

Up to this point in the Genesis account, Noah has shown remarkable obedience to the Lord

- He is a righteous man who is blameless in his generation
- He is a man who walks with God (6:9)

But we also know that Noah is a sinner

- He is not perfect
- He does not obey perfectly at all times

In spite of the fact that Noah is a sinner, he displays a remarkable heart for the Lord

- He is treated as a fool when out of obedience he builds an Ark
- He is rejected as a preacher when out of obedience he proclaims that Divine judgment is coming

I think about Noah's life since I am a preacher

- I have been here at CBC for a little over three years

But I try to put myself in Noah's shoes

- Preaching for 100 years while building a wooden Ark
- Reaching out to others who mock and ridicule you
- Weeping over those who reject God's message

Noah is a great example of one who was faithful to the Lord

- He would never be invited to speak at most pastor's conferences
  - o From an outside perspective, he must be doing something wrong
  - o He only had seven "followers"
- The reality is quite the opposite sometimes
  - o Noah was doing quite a few things right

We pick up the story where we left off last week

- Noah and his family and the animals are onboard the Ark, floating on the waters
- They have been spared from God's wrath
- But what would happen to them next?

**Read Genesis 8:1-22**

This morning, I want us to study four (4) actions that God takes toward Noah and those with him in the Ark

- God remembers the inhabitants of the Ark (8:1a)
- God removes the water from the Earth (8:1b-12)
- God repeats the blessing of reproduction (8:13-19)
- God receives the sacrifice of the animals (8:20-22)

## **I. God remembers the inhabitants of the Ark (8:1a)**

But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark

When we last studied the life of Noah, he and his family and the animals were still inside the Ark

- What would happen to them?
- How long would they remain in the Ark?

This morning, we will see the Flood come to an end

- We will also see Noah and all the inhabitants of the Ark leave the Ark and once again dwell on the Earth

The first few words of this chapter are somewhat puzzling at first glance, “**but God remembered**”

- Had God forgotten about Noah?
- How do we reconcile this with the reality of God’s complete and perfect knowledge?

Two of the most precious words in the Bible are “**but God**”

- These two words indicate that God is in control
- Nothing slips by God – He knows everything

When all seems bleak and dim, God reminds us of His faithfulness

- This is what we see in this verse

God had not forgotten Noah

- That is not the meaning of the Hebrew word “**remembered**”

When the Bible speaks of God remembering something, it is oftentimes spoken of in covenant terminology

- It is God’s promise to act in behalf of those whom He loves
- That is what we see here in Genesis 8

God is faithful to His promise to Noah

- After warning Noah that a Flood was coming, God told Noah, “**But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark – you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you.**” (6:18)

God had entered into a covenant with Noah

- He would not forget him
- God would use this man and his family to repopulate the Earth after the Flood

Thus God intervenes in behalf of Noah and his family

- He intervenes by removing the water from the Earth

## **II. God removes the water from the Earth (8:1b-12)**

and God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the water subsided.

You will notice that verses two and three have many references to God’s intervention

- “**God caused a wind to pass over the earth**” (emphasis mine)
- “**the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were closed**” (emphasis mine)
- “**the rain from the sky was restrained**” (emphasis mine)

There are no humans on the Earth who survived the Flood

- If help will be found, it will have to come from God Himself

God causes a wind to pass over the Earth

- This would help to move the huge body of water
- The result of this was that “**the water subsided**”

<sup>2</sup> Also the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were closed, and the rain from the sky was restrained; <sup>3</sup> and the water receded steadily from the earth, and at the end of one hundred and fifty days the water decreased.

The second thing that God did was to close the sources of water above and below

- “**the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were closed**”

Notice that they didn’t close themselves

- They “**were closed**”
- By God Himself

It appears that it has been five months – 150 days – since these two sources of water were opened

- Back in 7:11, we read, “**In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened**”
- But now God was closing them and moving the water from the face of the Earth

The waters were prevailing on the Earth for 150 days (7:24)

- Now they were being receding from the face of the Earth

The environment after the Flood was drastically different than before the Flood

- The water canopy that existed before the Flood protected the inhabitants of the Earth from the harmful solar rays, sharp temperature variations, and other weather-related issues<sup>1</sup>

Of course, this water canopy poured out water for weeks on the face of the Earth

- This was where a large part of the water came from

<sup>4</sup> And in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat.

There have been various attempts to find Noah’s Ark over the years

- If it is ever found, it will be one of the greatest discoveries in history
- It would be interesting to see how unbelieving scholars and historians would respond

But whether or not the Ark is found does not change the truthfulness of the Biblical account

- We live by faith, not by sight

Sure, it would be nice if the Ark was found

- But our faith is not built upon scientific discovery
- Our faith is built upon the truthfulness of God as revealed in His Word

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<sup>1</sup> Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 206.

So why hasn't the Ark been found?

- Part of the answer lies in the fact that the Text refers to “**the mountains of Ararat**”

God did not choose to specify one particular mountain

- Rather, He revealed a general area where the Ark rested
- This is the area around modern-day eastern Turkey, southern Russia, and northwestern Iran<sup>2</sup>

A number of scholars have attempted to make trips over to this part of the world to see if they can discover the Ark

- However, their attempts have been unsuccessful

Mt. Ararat is over 17,000 feet in elevation<sup>3</sup>

- It is incredible that the Flood waters exceeded this mountain range!

Various computer studies have shown that the geographical center of the Earth's land areas is a very short distance from Mt. Ararat<sup>4</sup>

- From this central point, mankind and animals would be able to spread out all over the face of the Earth

<sup>5</sup> And the water decreased steadily until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains became visible.

After nearly eight months since the Flood, the tops of the mountains became visible

- Imagine the volume of water that is spoken of here

Noah and the inhabitants of the Ark must remain inside for almost 2½ months before they can exit

- “**For Noah, as the waters go down his hopes go up**”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Then it came about at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made; <sup>7</sup> and he sent out a raven, and it flew here and there until the water was dried up from the earth.

Noah finally opens the window in the top of the Ark

Understand that Noah could see very little – if anything – of what was taking place outside the Ark

- His limited perspective came from this little window

In order for him to see what was going on outside the Ark, he had to do one of two things

- Either he had to open the window or door of the Ark
- Or he had to use other means to determine the status of the Earth

So Noah sends out two birds

- A raven
- And a dove

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<sup>2</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary, Genesis 1-15*, 185.

<sup>3</sup> Derek Kidner, *Tyndale OT Commentaries, Genesis*, 92.

<sup>4</sup> Morris, 215.

<sup>5</sup> Victor P. Hamilton, *NICOT, Genesis 1-17*, 301.

He sends out the raven first

- The raven is a scavenger that can live off of the carcasses of dead animals
- In the case of the Flood, there would have been a plenteous food supply for him to eat

This is the reason why the raven never returns to the Ark

- The Text says that “**it flew here and there until the water was dried up from the earth**”
- The raven found a continuous food supply and did not need to return to the Ark

**<sup>8</sup> Then he sent out a dove from him, to see if the water was abated from the face of the land; <sup>9</sup> but the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, so she returned to him into the ark; for the water was on the surface of all the earth. Then he put out his hand and took her, and brought her into the ark to himself.**

After the raven failed to return, Noah sent out a dove

- This was a clean bird – unlike the raven

Doves don't eat the flesh of dead animals

- They eat seed which requires vegetation
- The problem is that the Flood destroyed all of the vegetation

Thus, the dove's first flight was a failure

- There was no “**resting place**”
- There was only water

Doves will not land on wet ground

- They like to land on dry ground

Noah cared for this dove, thus “**he put out his hand and took her, and brought her into the ark to himself**”

- This shows the tender, compassionate side of Noah
- He cared for the animals that were on board with him

**<sup>10</sup> So he waited yet another seven days; and again he sent out the dove from the ark. <sup>11</sup> And the dove came to him toward evening; and behold, in her beak was a freshly picked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the water was abated from the earth.**

Noah waited one week before allowing the dove to fly on her second mission

- This time, the dove returned with a “**freshly picked olive leaf**” in her beak

The olive tree can even grow underwater

- But its leaves above water would have indicated growth<sup>6</sup>

With this discovery, Noah knew that the water was beginning to decline from the Earth

- But there was still a great amount of water
- If the dove would have found a place to rest, she would not have come back to Noah

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<sup>6</sup> Wenham, 187.

<sup>12</sup> Then he waited yet another seven days, and sent out the dove; but she did not return to him again.

Noah waited yet another week before sending the dove on her third flight

- This time the dove did not return

For Noah, this meant that the dove had found a place to rest

- Therefore, more and more land was becoming visible
- The waters continued to decrease from the Earth

### **III. God repeats the blessing of reproduction (8:13-19)**

Now it came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first of the month, the water was dried up from the earth. Then Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the surface of the ground was dried up. <sup>14</sup> And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.

On the first day of the new year, Noah removed the “covering” of the Ark

- When I read that, I wondered why he didn’t open the door in the side of the Ark

It hit me that had he done so, he would have run the risk of allowing water to come aboard the Ark

- More importantly, God had not told him to exit the Ark yet
- Noah was a man who walked with God; thus, he patiently waited for God’s command

When Noah removed this covering of the Ark, he had his first glimpse of the post-Flood Earth

- He noticed that “**the surface of the ground was dried up**”

Undoubtedly, there were still some puddles of water on the Earth because it was over a month and a half before he left the Ark

- In the 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 27<sup>th</sup> day, “**the earth was dry**”

<sup>15</sup> Then God spoke to Noah, saying, <sup>16</sup> “Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. <sup>17</sup> Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you, birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.”

God finally speaks to Noah and tells him

- To leave the Ark with his family
- To bring the animals out of the Ark

God had told him when to enter the Ark (7:1)

- Now God is telling him when to leave the ark

Noah has been waiting for God to tell him when to leave

- “**Noah did not move a foot...without the command of God**”<sup>7</sup>

God’s timing is always perfect – never early and never late<sup>8</sup>

- Believe me, that is easier stated than lived out

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<sup>7</sup> John Calvin, quoted in Kenneth A. Mathews, *NAC, Genesis 1-11:26*, 390.

<sup>8</sup> W.H. Griffith-Thomas, *Genesis: A Devotional Commentary*, 84.

## Noah trusted God

- God cared enough to spare Noah and his family from the Flood
- God would make it very clear as to when they were to leave the Ark

Notice that God never speaks to Noah's wife or sons or daughters-in-law

- God always deals directly with Noah<sup>9</sup>

The process of reproduction is reinstated

- This reminds us of what God originally told Adam and Eve, “**Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth**” (1:22)

Humanly speaking, the future of humanity would come from Noah's family

- There is no mention of Noah and his wife having any more children after the Flood
- Thus it would be through the three sons of Noah that all of humanity would be born post-Flood

Every animal and bird that we see around us owes its existence to the Ark

- The only exception to this is the amphibious reptiles and fish that survived the Flood waters

<sup>18</sup> So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. <sup>19</sup> Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by their families from the ark.

As we have seen time and time again, Noah is obedient to God's commands

- He didn't take matters into his own hands
- Rather, he patiently waited for God to direct him

Noah and his family were the last to enter the Ark (7:7, 13)

- Thus it makes sense that they would be the first to exit the Ark

The animals entered the Ark in an organized manner (7:14-15)

- So they leave the Ark according to their species

So much of this chapter reminds us of events that took place in chapter one

- The waters covering the Earth
- Land emerging out of the waters
- Foliage and vegetation growing
- Mankind indwelling the Earth<sup>10</sup>

God is, in essence, beginning a new creation

- He is beginning anew with a remnant

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<sup>9</sup> Kidner, 92.

<sup>10</sup> Allen P. Ross, *Creation & Blessing*, 196.

#### IV. God receives the sacrifice of the animals (8:20-22)

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

Let's be honest at this point in the story

- If you were Noah, what would your first reaction be after exiting the Ark?
  - o Perhaps you might ask, "Where am I going to build a house?"
  - o Perhaps your belly might be rumbling and you wonder where your next meal will come from
  - o Perhaps you might strike out on an expedition to survey the area around you
- Noah did none of those

The Text says very simply, "Noah built an altar to the LORD"

- Amazing, isn't it?

This is the first mention of "altar" in the Bible<sup>11</sup>

- Sacrifices had been offered since the days of Cain and Abel

It could be that God met individuals at the entrance to the Garden of Eden in order to accept sacrifices

- Genesis 4:3 specifically states, "So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground"

But after the Flood, Eden would have been destroyed<sup>12</sup>

- Sacrifices are now offered with the idea of God in heaven
- Hence, the idea of sacrifices arising to heaven

The first thing that Noah wants to do after being on that Ark for over a year is to worship God!

- This sounds very much like the perspective of Job who, after learning that he lost his oxen, donkeys, sheep, camels, servants, and children, did something remarkable – "Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped" (1:20)

Is your first reaction to such a monumental event one of worship?

- Do you wait for a right time to worship or do you view the worship of God as being of primary importance?

We get the picture that Noah couldn't wait to get off of that Ark so that he could offer God a sacrifice

- This was no small sacrifice, either

The Text informs us that he "took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar"

- Did you catch that?
- He took of "every" clean animal and "every" clean bird

Can you begin to imagine how many different species of animals and birds this would be?

- Can you imagine how long it would take to offer these as a sacrifice?

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<sup>11</sup> C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. 1*, 95.

<sup>12</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, 95.



God had told Noah to bring seven of each clean animal and clean bird

- It makes sense that this 7<sup>th</sup> animal would be the one offered up in sacrifice to God
- That would leave three pairs of the clean animals and clean birds

Let's keep in mind that these "clean" animals and birds were fit for food

- Having just landed in a desolate location, it would have been very tempting for Noah to be rather frugal with these animals
- He was getting rid of food which was a precious commodity!

But none of this was on Noah's mind

- He was singularly focused on the worship of God
- And he wasn't concerned with the cost or the time involved

Noah offered these animals as "burnt offerings"

- This was by no means obligatory – it was totally voluntary
- God had not told Noah to do this

So why would Noah go to so much time and effort to offer one from each of the clean animals and clean birds?

- Noah wanted to express his thanksgiving to God for sparing them<sup>13</sup>
- Noah knew that due to his sinfulness, the way to approach God was through sacrifice
- Noah expressed his submission to God – as God spoke, Noah obeyed

In a burnt offering, the whole animal would be offered to the Lord

- This symbolized the worshipper's total surrender and dedication to the Lord

The people of God were to be a worshipping community<sup>14</sup>

- Noah acts as their representative, offering praise to God for His mighty acts of grace, mercy, and power

God's deliverance of Noah and his family is a vivid portrait of salvation

- God spares sinful men and women from His wrath for His own purposes and glory
- None deserves to be spared

<sup>21</sup> And the LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.

What a refreshing passage that we find here at the close of Genesis 8

- Noah offers a sacrifice
- God accepts that sacrifice

The language of God smelling a sacrifice is obviously an Old Testament principle

- It denotes God's desire to accept the sacrifice

The prophet Amos tells his audience what God thinks of their religious activities, "I hate, I reject your festivals, nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. <sup>22</sup> Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept *them*; and I will not *even* look at the peace offerings of your fatlings" (5:21-22)

- This is clearly an example of God's rejection of a person's sacrifice

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<sup>13</sup> Leon J. Wood, *A Shorter Commentary on Genesis*, 49.

<sup>14</sup> Ross, 197.

Of course, we have already seen God reject Cain and his offering (Gen 4:5)

- God saw something in Cain's heart that caused God to reject his offering

We are allowed to hear God speak once again – His own words

- He doesn't speak to Noah
- Rather, the Text says that “**the LORD said to Himself**”

This isn't the first time that we encounter God speaking to Himself

- “**Then the LORD said, ‘My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years’**” (6:3)
- “**And the LORD said, ‘I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them’**” (6:7)

Here in 8:21, God says, “**I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done**”

God is not promising that He will remove the curse back in Genesis 3

- No, the curse is still alive and well inside the hearts of these eight (8) individuals

What God is promising is that the curse – the consequences – of the Fall would never take place again

- This was a one-time event, never to be repeated again

There would be local floods

- But never again would there be a universal Flood on the Earth
- This obviously highlights the mercy and grace of God

God affirms that sin is still in the heart of mankind, even from his infancy

- Our children begin to manifest this depravity and sinfulness at a very early age
- This is why we must shepherd our children according to God's Word
  - o Teaching them what God expects
  - o Praying that God would change their hearts
  - o Showing our children the consequences of their actions

**<sup>22</sup> While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”**

God's promise would endure as long as the Earth remains

- This does not nullify the reality of a future, final judgment

The apostle Peter tells us, “**But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up**” (2 Pet 3:10)

But God was promising that there would be a consistency of the Earth's rotation and orbital revolution<sup>15</sup>

- If God were to alter these in the smallest of degrees, life as we know it on Earth would cease to exist

Of course, God knows this and is gracious to promise order and symmetry among the seasons of life

- This provision is evidence of God's providential blessing

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<sup>15</sup> Morris, 218.

Notice that there is no mention of “Mother Earth” or “Mother Nature”<sup>16</sup>

- The Earth is sustained by God and God alone

Man’s nature didn’t change just because of the Flood<sup>17</sup>

- Only God can change the human heart
  - o Not baptism
  - o Not membership
  - o Not moral reform
  - o Not politics
  - o Not Bible reading
  - o Not prayer

Man is helpless to save himself apart from God’s grace

- The reason why God saves sinners is because we can’t save ourselves
- He has pity and shows mercy on us

This Flood left waters on the Earth for over a year

- That is a long time for water to stay on the surface of the Earth
- Undoubtedly, it changed the face of the Earth drastically

But there is coming a future judgment that will cause the Flood to seem insignificant

- The judgment of hell will be one of eternal magnitude
- Sinners will separated from God forever and ever
  - o No end
  - o No release of pain
  - o No reprieve

God promised that there would never again be a universal Flood on the Earth

- But that does not imply that God will never judge the world again

As we know from the NT, God will bring forth judgment on the Earth in the form of fire

- Like the Flood, this will be punishment for sin
- Also like the Flood, this will be a worldwide, universal punishment

The only individuals who will escape this wrath of God are those who have been shown grace and mercy

- We don’t deserve to be rescued
- We deserve to be judged severely for our sinful nature and actions

**“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8)**

- Our only hope is that Christ took the punishment that we rightly deserved
- Otherwise, we have no hope

But Christ has come to take away the curse of sin

- He came to be a Substitute for sinners

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<sup>16</sup> Mathews, 397.

<sup>17</sup> Wenham, 191.

That's right

- You and I deserve God's wrath – separation from Him forever
- But Jesus Christ came to this Earth and became the Sacrifice for sin that God demanded

God reveals in His Word that He treated Christ as if He had committed every sin ever committed by every person who would trust in Him (2 Cor 5:21)

- Then God extends forgiveness to sinners
- The result is that we are accepted into God's family with full benefits and privileges

Noah proclaimed the message of deliverance for over 100 years before entering the Ark

- But one day the door was shut
- There was no time for repentance after that

Friend, the Bible says that you need to repent of your sins

- “God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, <sup>31</sup> because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:30b-31)

Christians, I challenge you to examine your hearts this morning

- Are you obedient to the Lord?
- Does worship have a prominent place in your life?
- Is your life an example for others to emulate?