

# Genesis 8.1-9.17 / FBC / 10.04.20

---

## Introduction

- † **[1: animals]** Have you ever had to wait on God? Maybe you are right now, waiting patiently, as you seek his blessing. Sometimes we look for things that are not promised, but we wait, hoping for God's blessing on that issue.
- It can be easier if we know God has promised something. But sometimes that promise can make it even harder to be patient. For example, because we know Jesus is coming back to end suffering and restore the earth to what it was created to be, we yearn for that day all the more.
  - If you have suffered a lot in life, it can be hard to patiently endure. But I hope you can draw encouragement from Noah. Noah was a righteous man of faith, and God chose him for deliverance when the rest of the world faced destruction... but did Noah have an easy life? No.
  - Even before we start the story about the ark and the flood, Noah and his family must have felt pretty alone, right? They were honorable worshippers of God, when everyone they knew was pursuing lust, violence, materialism, selfishness, and self-glorification.
  - Then God told Noah to build the ark, so for over 100 years, those non-believers must have been ruthless in their mockery of Noah, as he invested all his time and resources into building the monstrously big ark. You think it is hard to share the gospel today? Noah had zero recorded success in 120 years.
- † I am not the most patient person. I have grown, but this is the aspect of the fruit of the Spirit that provides early warning when my life is out of whack. I am especially impatient with God. When I am waiting for a development in the church, my life, or myself, I often wonder why I have to wait so long to see results. Come on God! It's hard to remember God always is working his plan.
- Before I got my first job as a pastor, LeeAnn and I were waiting on God for direction. One week, I fasted and prayed for five days, hoping to become more sensitive and discerning to God's voice. I did hear from God: I heard "You are not ready!" While I impatiently was waiting on God, he patiently was working to get me ready, and to get the church ready. I had no idea what God was doing outside of my sight; that is why we patiently wait on God with faith and hope.
- † Today we will find Noah was locked in the ark for a year, possibly without hearing from God during that time, as the storms and seas carried them away. We will find again that this is a man of patient obedience, willing to wait on God for the blessing, willing to do whatever God commands him to do.
- Open your Bible to Genesis 8. We will break our reading into parts today, but some of the passages are too long to put on the slides, so you will want the text in front of you.

---

**[2: map]** Genesis 8.1-5 NET: But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and domestic animals that were with him in the ark. God caused a wind to blow over the earth and the waters receded. The fountains of the deep and the floodgates of heaven were closed, and the rain stopped falling from the sky. The waters kept receding steadily from the earth, so that they had gone down by the end of the 150 days. On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ark came to rest on one of the mountains of Ararat. The waters kept on receding until the tenth month. On the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains became visible.

- † In Genesis 7.11, we read that the flood began on the seventeenth day of the second month of Noah's 600<sup>th</sup> year. The ark came to rest on solid land five months [150 days] later.
  - The Ark came to rest on one of the mountains of Ararat. Ararat is mentioned four times in the Bible. It was located in what is now eastern Turkey, southern Armenia, and northwestern Iran.
  - I find it amusing that so many think we will find the ark today. I am not sure why we should expect something made out of wood to still be intact after thousands of years. Maybe...
- † Look at v.1 again. The Hebrew word for wind [רוּחַ] is the same as that for Spirit. The idea here seems to be that God used a steady and mighty wind to facilitate the evaporation process, but it puts the reader in mind of the start of creation in Genesis 1.2, when the Holy Spirit was hovering over the waters, bringing order to the chaos.
- † The phrase "God remembered" is interesting. Obviously, God – who knows everything at all times – never forgets. But the Bible declares God remembered several times, and this always indicates that God will bless someone – usually by showing mercy and delivering someone from judgment – so that God can fulfill his covenant commitments.

**[3: dove] Genesis 8.6-9 NET: At the end of forty days, Noah opened the window he had made in the ark and sent out a raven; it kept flying back and forth until the waters had dried up on the earth. Then Noah sent out a dove to see if the waters had receded from the surface of the ground. The dove could not find a resting place for its feet because water still covered the surface of the entire earth, and so it returned to Noah in the ark. He stretched out his hand, took the dove, and brought it back into the ark.**

- † This is a tender moment; we have been moving right along in the plot, but then there is this pause for extra detail; I think this is included to show us that Noah was living as God's representative, caring for the animals in God's name, tenderly caring for them as God was tenderly caring for him.

**Genesis 8.10-14 NET: He waited seven more days and then sent out the dove again from the ark. When the dove returned to him in the evening, there was a freshly plucked olive leaf in its beak! Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. He waited another seven days and sent the dove out again, but it did not return to him this time. In Noah's six hundred and first year, in the first day of the first month, the waters had dried up from the earth, and Noah removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry. And by the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was dry.**

- † Obviously, more than one miracle is in play here. Whatever else God has going on, particularly with the receding waters, he also has preserved or restarted plant life on the land. Most plants could not survive naturally for several months under water.
  - So there is something supernatural here: God could have preserved them, God could have preserved their seeds which immediately began to sprout when the water receded, or God could have placed fully grown trees near the ark, as he did in the Garden of Eden.
- † The flood started on the seventeenth day of the second month of Noah's 600<sup>th</sup> year; now the Earth was dry on the twenty-seventh day of the second month of his 601<sup>st</sup> year, just over a full year later.

- † In v.13, Noah could finally see the ground, but he remained in the ark until the land was completely dry and safe. He had not heard from God that it was time to exit, so he waited. To me, Noah shows incredible patience and faith!
  - There is no indication in the text that Noah had heard from God since being sealed up in the ark! He was locked in the ark for a full year, possibly without hearing from God in all that time, and yet he waited in the ark even after he could see dry land.
  - I have trouble waiting for the light to turn green! I bet some of you sin by speeding on I-75 because you cannot wait another two minutes to get to Sarasota. Noah exhibited patience and faith. Perhaps this was not that difficult for the fellow who constructed the ark in the first place.

**[4: exit] Genesis 8.15-18 NET: Then God spoke to Noah and said, “Come out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons’ wives with you. Bring out with you all the living creatures that are with you. Bring out every living thing, including the birds, animals, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. Let them increase and be fruitful and multiply on the earth!” Noah went out along with his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives.**

- † This is the same pattern we have seen in chapters 6 and 7, throughout the narrative about Noah: God speaks, Noah does what he says. Noah is a man of few words, apparently. Some men are like that, aren’t they? Men of action who get the work done, men who say only what is necessary and profitable. That’s all right. The question is are you like Noah in the more important way, are you like Noah who jumped to obey whenever God spoke.
  - Actually, we don’t know, maybe Noah was a chatty fellow like me, but the narrator definitely is showing us that Noah did not need to discuss things in order to act in faith: God spoke, Noah acted. It was that simple. It should be for us too!
- † This is a new beginning, not just for Noah and his family, it is a restart of the human experience. There are only eight people left on Earth, God has killed all the rest in the flood. Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives, now restart the human race; they restart civilization, culture.
  - God promises to bless them with fertility to multiply, to reproduce, indicating a restart of God’s original plan to populate the earth with his image bearers. Noah and his family could set things right now, seeking to reflect God’s character, represent God, rule as God’s stewards over nature, and reproduce the image of God throughout the earth.

**[5: sacrifice] Genesis 8.19-20: Every living creature, every creeping thing, every bird, and everything that moves on the earth went out of the ark in their groups. Noah built an altar to the LORD. He then took some of every kind of clean animal and clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.**

- † What is Noah’s response to his deliverance? His first action was to worship – to express submission to God, dependence on God, and devotion for God – through sacrifice.
  - God initiated animal sacrifice with Adam and Eve, and it was handed down through the generations. So Noah built an altar and sacrificed one of every clean land animal and bird.
  - I assume he planned for this and kept one of each species on the boat; if they all left the ark, I cannot see too many of them hanging around for their turn on the altar!

- Why would Noah sacrifice so many animals? I'm not sure. Perhaps this was part of what God had revealed to him all along. In Genesis 7.2, God told Noah to take "seven seven" of every clean animal; most modern translations interpret this as seven pairs, but perhaps it meant three mating pairs and one left over for sacrifice.
  - The magnitude of this sacrifice probably reflects the magnitude of the worship due to God, the thanks due from Noah, and the damage of sin in mankind. Even Noah, described as godly, righteous, blameless, the head of the only family God delivered through the storm, the new Adam to restart the human race, even Noah had corruption inside and had committed sins.
- † Noah got off the boat and proceeded to worship. Does that sound like the way you live? I am sure when God delivers you through something terrifying, you are ready to thank and praise him, but is worship your first inclination when you get out of bed? Does worship at least make it into your morning routine, after you use the bathroom and get some coffee?
- As a child I somewhere learned to pray at night, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep; if I die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." This terrified me! I thought I was more vulnerable to death in the night and vulnerable of going to Hell too. Delivered through each night, I did awaken with thanksgiving, with celebration on my heart!
  - Now I wake up in "task mode." It doesn't matter whether it is 7.30 or 3.30, my brain kicks into gear, thinking of all the stresses in my life, all the things I have to do. So it takes discipline for me to slow down, put life aside, make time for prayer, Bible study, worship.
  - I need to get started on the task list, I need to get going, I never feel comfortable with delaying the start, that makes me feel even more stressed, and sometimes I don't even want to worship. But all that makes my sacrifice to worship even more valuable, makes it even more of a statement about my submission, my acknowledgment of dependence, my devotion to God as priority in my life. I encourage you to make such a sacrifice of worship each day.
- † **[6: peanuts]** Let's pause here to read this Peanuts comic strip. Lucy says, "Boy, look at it rain... what if it floods the whole world?" Linus answers, "It will never do that... in the ninth chapter of Genesis, God promised Noah that would never happen again, and the sign of the promise is the rainbow." Lucy smiles and says, "You've taken a great load off my mind..." Linus retorts, "Sound theology has a way of doing that!" If you learn the truth, it can change how you think, how you feel, how you experience life, how you choose to live.

**Genesis 8.21-22: And the LORD smelled the soothing aroma and said to himself, "I will never again curse the ground because of humankind, even though the inclination of their minds is evil from childhood on. I will never again destroy everything that lives, as I have just done. While the earth continues to exist, planting time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night will not cease."**

- † God has cursed the earth twice now. Part of God's judgment for the sin Adam and Eve committed in the Garden of Eden was to curse the ground to be less fertile and more weedy. That curse was part of a larger judgment which remains in effect even today. But here God declares he will never bring such widespread death and destruction over the whole Earth as he has just done.
- While the earth endures, the days, the seasons, the harvests will continue as God set them up to do at creation. The Great Tribulation will be awful, but it will not be as universally deadly and destructive as this flood. There will be a final judgment when Christ returns, and the earth will

be remade, but there will not be another flood that wipes out everyone. Nor will we be destroyed by an asteroid, nor will aliens harvest us all; in case you were worried.

- God takes this pledge despite recognizing people's ongoing corruption. Even with just eight people left, led by the righteous Noah, God knows "the inclination of their minds is evil from childhood on." That's a sad commentary about our corruption and the power of sin.
- Despite being born again and empowered by the Holy Spirit, you and I still struggle with sin; we struggle against our corrupted inherited human natures, our weak flesh, our worldly thinking. God knows this, so you should admit to yourself and feel free to confess your sinfulness to God.
- Despite knowing of these human failings, God renewed his covenant for people to be his image-bearers. Back in 6.18, God told Noah he would confirm this covenant with Noah, and now he does so, even adding to the promise.

**[7: covenant plate]** Genesis 9.1-7: Then God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Every living creature of the earth and every bird of the sky will be terrified of you. Everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea are under your authority. You may eat any moving thing that lives. As I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. But you must not eat meat with its life (that is, its blood) in it. For your lifeblood I will surely exact punishment, from every living creature I will exact punishment. From each person I will exact punishment for the life of the individual since the man was his relative. Whoever sheds human blood, by other humans must his blood be shed; for in God's image God has made humankind. But as for you, be fruitful and multiply; increase abundantly on the earth and multiply on it."

- † God reiterated his plan for human authority and his blessing of fertility. As people reflect God's character and represent God, they will have God's blessing to rule as God's stewards over the rest of creation and to reproduce God's image by raising children to know and walk with God.
- † Until now, people were not supposed to eat meat, they were not to eat animals. God had provided a sufficient diet for them with plants alone. Now that changes.
  - We saw in Genesis 7, when God told Noah which animals to take, and in Genesis 8, with the sacrifice, that there were clean and unclean animals from God's perspective. The distinction between clean and unclean is for another sermon on another day, but it is a mistake to equate uncleanness with sin or cleanness with righteousness.
  - For now notice there were no dietary restrictions for Noah and his family, there were no meats they could not eat. That would change when God created a system of law for the nation of Israel, but for centuries after the flood people could eat any meat they wanted.
- † **[8: Leviticus]** What they must not do is eat meat with blood still in it. A carcass had to be drained before the meat was edible. In the Hebrew text of Genesis, this is an emphatic prohibition.
  - Later, for Israel, God made this into law: **Leviticus 17.10-11 NET:** [God says] "...I will set my face against that person who eats the blood, and I will cut him off from the midst of his people, for the life of every living thing is in the blood. So I myself have assigned it to you on the altar to make atonement for your lives, for the blood makes atonement by means of the life."
  - **[9: Acts]** God still has this rule for the church today! When church leaders gathered in Jerusalem to discuss non-Jews throughout the Roman empire joining the church, Jesus' brother James made the definitive statement in **Acts 15.19-20 NET:** "I conclude that we should not

**cause extra difficulty for those among the Gentiles [non-Jews] who are turning to God [essentially, they would not have to get circumcised and submit to the Mosaic Law], but that we should write them a letter telling them to abstain from things defiled by idols and from sexual immorality and from what has been strangled and from blood.”**

- Why is blood so important to God? We see two reasons in Leviticus. First, the blood symbolized God’s gift of life. Second, the shedding of the blood of a sacrificial animal was what appeased God’s wrath about sin until the savior would come to be the ultimate sacrifice. As the Messiah-savior, the promised seed of the woman, Jesus allowed his blood to be shed, his life to be taken, to make permanent atonement [peace] between God and people. So to God, blood is sacred.
- † Both people and animals have blood in them, but only people are God’s image bearers. Therefore anyone who takes the life of a person would face capital punishment either directly from God or through human institutions of government and law as representative of God.
  - All people are procreated as God’s image bearers, even if they do not live like it, so all human life is sacred. This should speak loudly into our consciences about how we treat the elderly, the handicapped, the fallen, the unborn, even people who differ from our opinions enough to vote for the other party.

**[10: rainbow] Genesis 9.8-17: God said to Noah and his sons, “Look! I now confirm my covenant with you and your descendants after you and with every living creature that is with you, including the birds, the domestic animals, and every living creature of the earth with you, all those that came out of the ark with you— every living creature of the earth. I confirm my covenant with you: Never again will all living things be wiped out by the waters of a flood; never again will a flood destroy the earth.” And God said, “This is the guarantee of the covenant I am making with you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all subsequent generations: I will place my rainbow in the clouds, and it will become a guarantee of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, then I will remember my covenant with you and with all living creatures of all kinds. Never again will the waters become a flood and destroy all living things. When the rainbow is in the clouds, I will notice it and remember the perpetual covenant between God and all living creatures of all kinds that are on the earth.” So God said to Noah, “This is the guarantee of the covenant that I am confirming between me and all living things that are on the earth.”**

- † As acts of grace, God blessed Noah and his family with deliverance from his storm and judgment, with provision of food and fertility, and with authority to rule in God’s name.
  - People are still God’s image-bearers. God blesses them so they can carry out his purposes of reflecting God’s character, representing God, ruling as God’s stewards on the earth, and reproducing God’s image, so they fill the earth with image-bearers and bring about the one promised seed of the woman who would be the perfect image bearer and savior.
  - God remembers them, which means God blesses them, so that God can keep his own previous covenant promises about image and seed.
- † God also chose to add a new covenant promise, about not destroying the Earth again. This promise is symbolized by the rainbow.

- There is no Hebrew word for “rainbow.” [קִשְׁת] means a bow as in the battle weapon and hunting instrument. The Old Testament elsewhere describes God as a warrior [Exodus 15.3] who uses a bow against his enemies [Habakkuk 3.9].
- Here God uses the bow as a symbol of peace. Some say the bow points away from the earth; more likely it represents a bow that is relaxed, hung up on the wall, not being used. It goes horizon to horizon, embracing the world.
- In v.12, God says it is a guarantee [literally the sign] of the covenant God is making. God says it is a sign for him, so he will remember us, he will remember to give us mercy. It also serves to remind us that God keeps his promises, his covenants, no matter what. We should find that reassuring in our day to day reflections.
- The rainbow also reminds us of God’s grace and mercy, that each day he does not bring the destructive judgment the world deserves. That truth can symbolize for us the grace and mercy – the unmerited favor and release from judgment – we get from God through Christ, that instead of being destroyed as enemies of God, we are adopted into his family!

---

## Conclusion

- † I want you to see this is a message of hope. God was angry enough to destroy everyone and start over, but at the end of the judgment, at the end of the destruction, God had spared a few faithful people, so he could keep his covenant promises and continue his plans about people being God’s image bearers and about God bringing one person, one seed, to be a savior who would restore creation.
  - This should give us hope. God has not given up on us! Our world, our nation, seems to be going crazy, turning ever more away from God. Churches are denying essential doctrine; believers are willfully walking in sin, ignoring unpalatable parts of the Bible. We ourselves might struggle daily with sin and despair, but God has a plan – he is working in ways we cannot see – to spare us, to save us, to transform us to be like Christ, the perfect image of God the Father.
- † The Bible says our world does face an imminent judgment. As with Noah, the faithful remnant will be delivered into a new life on a renewed Earth.
  - Despite his wrath for sin and rebellion, God again will extend grace and mercy to a few, to those who respond to his promises with faith and thus respond to his commands with obedience.
  - God is pure and righteous, so we need to be as pure and righteous as we can as we try to live as his image bearers. But it is comforting to know that God, through the atoning [peacemaking] sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah [the Christ], offers us mercy because Jesus took our punishment for sin, and God offers us grace and forgiveness because he accounts to us Jesus’ righteousness and purity and adopts us into his family.
  - Let’s pray . . .