

Genesis Chapter 8

Genesis 8:1 "And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that [was] with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged;"

“God remembered Noah”:

This is not to intimate that during the days of the Flood, God had forgotten His righteous servant; the verb “remembered” refers to the special attention or personal care that God gives to His own.

God’s covenant with Noah brought provision and protection in the midst of severe judgment.

The remnant had been preserved and God initiated steps toward reestablishing the created order on earth.

"The waters assuaged":

Or lessen or abated.

God used the wind to dry the ground; and evaporation returned water to the atmosphere.

The verb is used the same way concerning Samson (Judges 16:28); Hannah (1 Sam. 1:11); Abraham, for Lot’s benefit (Gen. 19:29); on behalf of Israel (Exodus 2:24); and for the repentant thief on the cross (Luke 23:42).

As we have said many times before, the elements are subject to God's command.

When God told the wind to blow, it blew.

This word assuaged means the water was made to cease, or was trapped.

I believe this water was congregated in lakes and rivers, etc.

Genesis 8:2 "The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained;"

The whole race of mankind, except Noah and his family were certainly now dead, so that God's remembering of Noah, was the return of his mercy to mankind, of whom he would not make a full end.

The demands of Divine justice had been answered by the ruin of sinners.

Genesis 8:3 "And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated."

God sent his wind to dry the earth, and seal up his waters.

The same hand that brings the desolation must bring the deliverance; and to that hand, we must ever look.

When afflictions have done the work for which they are sent, whether killing work or curing work, they will be taken away.

As the earth was not drowned in a day, it was not dried in a day.

God usually works deliverance for his people gradually, that the day of small things may not be despised, nor the day of great things despaired of.

Genesis 8:4 "And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat."

The ark rested.

It is stranded on some hill in Ararat.

This country forms part of Armenia.

As the drying wind most probably came from the east or north, it is likely that the ark was drifted toward Asia Minor, and caught land on some hill in the reaches of the Euphrates.

“Mountains of Ararat”:

The text says mountains, which indicates a range of mountains and not necessarily one peak.

Today, Ararat rises about 17,000 feet above sea level.

The ark rested on land 74 days after the end of the 150 days while the water abated.

It cannot be supposed that it rested on either of the peaks now called Ararat, as Ararat was a country, not a mountain, and these peaks do not seem suitable for the purpose.

These were in the region of the Caucasus, also known as ancient Urartu, where the elevation exceeded 17,000 feet.

Oct. 17th was the end of the water prevailing; and, at that point, the water began to subside.

There are many people who do not believe this flood was universal because it was just for the world of the Bible.

It really doesn't matter.

We know that it was a judgment of God on a wicked and perverse generation.

For our study here, that is all that is necessary.

Many expeditions have been made to find the ark.

A number of people have proclaimed seeing the ark.

There are bad storms on this mountain and many have lost their lives searching for the ark.

God does not want us to believe in the ark because we can see it, but because we know in our hearts the account of the ark was true.

Genesis 8:5 "And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth [month], on the first [day] of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen."

"And the waters decreased continually":

Literally, were going and decreasing, until the tenth month.

In the tenth month, on the first day of the month.

The decrease of the waters was for wise reasons exceedingly slow and gradual.

"Were the tops of the mountains seen":

"Became distinctly visible".

The waters had now been subsiding ten weeks, and as the height of the water above the highest hills was probably determined by the draught of the ark."

"The tenth month":

The waters ceased to prevail on the first of the ninth month.

The ark, though grounded six weeks before, was still deep in the waters.

The tops of the hills began to appear a month after.

The subsiding of the waters seems to have been very slow.

Their 10th month would be January on our calendar, in fact, January 1st.

Genesis 8:6 "And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:"

Forty days after the appearance of the mountain tops, Noah opened the window of the ark and let a raven fly out (lit., the raven, i.e., the particular raven known from that circumstance), for the purpose of ascertaining the drying up of the waters.

"The window.":

It seems that Noah has been unable to take any definite observations through the aperture here called a window.

Verses 8:7-12

"A raven ... a dove":

Ravens survive on a broad range of food types.

If any food was available outside the ark, the raven could survive.

In contrast, a dove is much more selective in its food choices.

The dove's choice of food would indicate that new life had begun to grow; thus, Noah and his family could also survive outside the ark.

Genesis 8:7 "And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth."

"And he sent forth a raven":

That by it he might make his observation, how high or low the waters were upon the earth; so he sent out the raven, a bird of prey, which feeds on carrion, that if the earth had been dry, the smell of the dead carcasses would have invited it to go far off from the ark, and not return; but if not, he would see it again.

"Which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from the earth":

Or, "and it went forth, going forth and returning":

It went forth out of the ark, and returned, but might not go into it, but went forth again, and then returned; and thus it continued going backwards and forwards, until the waters were dried up, when it returned no more.

Take note of the difference in the raven and the dove. The raven was a dark bird, not trustworthy to do the job. So, Noah sent the dove, symbolic of the Holy Spirit of God.

Genesis 8:8 "Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground;"

Noah then sent forth a dove, which returned the first time without good news; but the second time, she brought an olive leaf in her bill, plucked off, plainly showing that trees, fruit trees, began to appear above water.

Genesis 8:9-10 "But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters [were] on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark." "And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;"

Noah sent forth the dove the second time, seven days after the first.

The dove has always been a help to mankind.

The symbolic meaning of the dove is throughout the Bible.

One of the most prominent was the lighting of the dove on Jesus at His baptism.

The dove throughout the Bible means the Holy Spirit of God. (Our teacher and guide).

Genesis 8:11-12 "And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth [was] an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth." "And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more."

And the third time was after seven days also; probably on the Sabbath day.

Having kept the Sabbath with his little church, he expected especial blessings from Heaven, and inquired concerning them.

The dove is an emblem of a gracious soul, that, finding no solid peace of satisfaction in this deluged, defiling world, returns to Christ as to its ark, as to its Noah, its rest.

The carnal heart, like the raven, takes up with the world, and feeds on the carrion it finds there; but return thou to my rest, O my soul; to thy Noah, so the word is (Psalm 116:7).

And as Noah put forth his hand, and took the dove, and pulled her to him, into the ark, so Christ will save, and help, and welcome those that flee to him for rest.

The olive oil is also, symbolic of the Holy Spirit.

Isn't it strange that this leaf was an olive leaf?

The Holy Spirit is a promise of help to mankind.

There are all kinds of symbolisms here, as well.

The helper had done his work.

Noah could take it from there.

I could stay on this verse a week, but we are not studying symbols.

We are studying from a spiritual standpoint.

Genesis 8:13 "And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first [month], the first [day] of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry."

As the flood commenced on the 17th of the second month of the 600th year of Noah's life, and ended on the 27th of the second month of the 601st year, it lasted a year and ten days; but whether a solar year of 360 or 365 days, or a lunar year of 352, is doubtful.

The former is the more probable, as the first five months are said to have consisted of 150 days, which suits the solar year better than the lunar.

The question cannot be decided with certainty, because we neither know the number of days between the 17th of the seventh month and the 1st of the tenth month, nor the interval between the sending out of the dove and the 1st day of the first month of the 601st year.

This occurred on April 1st, almost one year after the flood began.

Whether he knocked a hole in the roof, or whether there had already been an observation opening, or not, we are not sure.

It really appears, to me, that he removed roofing and went on top from the Scripture above.

Again, this is supposition, no one knows for sure.

At first glance, Noah could not see water on the ground, but land that had been soaked with water that long, needed to dry thoroughly before Noah could walk on it without bogging down.

God had called Noah into the ark.

God would call him out.

I cannot overlook this symbolic message.

When God calls us to a place to work, we had better stay there, until God tells us that it is okay to leave.

Genesis 8:14 "And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried."

“And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day”:

From this it appears that Noah was in the ark a complete solar year, or three hundred and sixty-five days; for he entered the ark the 17th day of the second month, in the six hundredth year of his life (Gen. 7:11; 7:13), and continued till the 27th day of the second month, in the six hundredth and first year of his life.

And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

It was over a year since the flood began; a year and ten days to be exact.

It began on May 17th and ended on May 27th, one year later.

It did not rain a year, but the water was on the earth a year.

Genesis 8:15 "And God spake unto Noah, saying,"

“And God spake unto Noah, saying”:

Whether in a dream or vision, or by an articulate voice, appearing in a human form, or by an impulse on his mind, is not certain; however, the LORD spoke so to him, that he heard him and understood him: it was, no doubt, very rejoicing to him, since he had not heard his voice for a year or more.

Genesis 8:16 "Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee."

Noah declares his obedience, in that he would not leave the ark without God's express commandment, as he did not enter in without the same: the ark being a figure of the Church, in which nothing must be done outside the word of God.

Verses 17-19

“Be fruitful and multiply”:

In the process of replenishing the created order that He had judged with destruction, God repeated the words of the blessing which He had put upon non-human creatures (1:22).

Noah faced a new world where longevity of life began to decline immediately; the earth then was subjected to storms and severe weather, blazing heat, freezing cold, seismic action, and also various natural disasters.

Genesis 8:17 "Bring forth with thee every living thing that [is]with thee, of all flesh, [both] of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth."

“Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee”:

There is a various reading of the word for "bring forth"; according to the margin, as Jarchi observes, the sense is, order them to come forth; and according to the Scripture, if they will not, oblige them to come.

“Of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth”: For of each of these there were some that went with him into the ark, and continued there.

“That they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth”:

For which end they were preserved in the ark

In other words, turn them loose and let them go to make a home for themselves.

These few would repopulate the world.

Genesis 8:18 "And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:"

“And Noah went forth”:

Being obedient to the divine command, and no doubt with great pleasure in his countenance, and with a heart full of thankfulness for so great a deliverance: and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: in all eight persons, and no more were saved in the ark.

As Peter observes (1 Peter 3:20), and the Arabic writers say: Noah and his sons built a city near the place where they came out of the ark, and called it Themanin, giving this as a reason of the name, we are eight, that is, who have escaped.

So Berosus says that the earth being dried of the waters, there were then only eight in Armenia, from whence all mankind sprung.

Genesis 8:19 "Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, [and] whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark."

The command to leave the ark is given and obeyed.

"The fowl, the cattle, and the creeper."

Here, again, these three classes are specified.

They are again to multiply on the earth.

"Every living thing" evidently takes the place of the cattle mentioned before.

"After their families" this word denotes their tribes.

It is usually applied to families or clans.

“Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth”:

All went out, not one was left, and they went out after their kind; not in a confused disorderly manner, mixing with one another; but as they went in by pairs, male and female of every sort, so they came forth in like manner, or, "according to their families"

"After their kinds":

Literally, "according to their families," implying that there had been an increase in the ark.

Noah just opened the big door, and out they came.

The same way they went in.

Noah did not drive them out.

It was as if some power, far beyond Noah's, was calling them out.

This particular area is rugged and has much bad weather, so they most probably left the area, except for those for Noah's own personal use.

Genesis 8:20 "And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar."

“Noah builded an altar”:

This was done as an act of worship in response to God’s covenant faithfulness in sparing him and his family.

Illustrating his walk with God, the LORD regarded this sacrifice as a “sweet savor,” or more literally, “a smell of satisfaction” (Lev. 1:9, 13, 17; 2:2, 9; 3:5, 16, all for the voluntary offering of consecration).

Noah's first thought was not of self, but God.

Can you imagine the thanksgiving Noah was bringing to God for saving his family?

This is firstfruits worship.

It really did not matter what day of the week it was.

It was Noah's first thought to please God.

God had not yet told His people what was clean and unclean, but Noah was so tuned to God, that he knew what was pleasing to Him.

These altars were stones piled upon each other.

Noah took no thought of the cost of the loss of animals; he was more interested in pleasing God.

Genesis 8:21 "And the LORD smelled a sweet savor; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart [is] evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done."

“Smelled a sweet savor”:

God accepted Noah’s sacrifice.

“Curse ... smite”:

Regardless of how sinful mankind would become in the future, God promised not to engage in global catastrophe by flood again (9:11).

See notes on (2 Pet. 3:3-10), for how God will destroy the earth in the future.

He promised never again to curse the ground, that is, to destroy the earth by a flood, and not a reversal of (3:17 or 5:29).

Not (9:9-17), in this regard.

If the Flood of Noah’s day had been merely a local one, the LORD has violated His promise many times over.

This greatly pleased God.

Noah had not only won blessings for himself, but for all mankind.

The LORD's heart was touched by this unselfish act.

God knows that man has an evil heart, until he completely turns to God.

This sacrifice that Noah made, reconciled God to man.

The ground would no longer be cursed, but would grow.

God said He would never again smite all mankind.

A great promise for all mankind was made by God (in verse 22).

Genesis 8:22 "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

“While the earth remaineth”:

With many alterations from the global flood, God reestablished the cycle of seasons after the catastrophic interruption.

“Shall not cease”:

This may be considered the basis text for the doctrine of “limited uniformitarianism.”

The theory of “total uniformitarianism” is refuted (in 2 Peter 3:1-6), for such a theory denies the possibility of a universal flood and a final supernatural judgment for the world.

Genesis 8:22 guarantees that after the Flood, the seasonal cycle will continue uninterrupted “while the earth remaineth”, until the end of the Millennium.

Thus, the doctrine of “limited uniformitarianism” assures us the world cannot be destroyed by water during our lifetime.

Uniformitarianism: Definition:

The concept that the earth's surface was shaped in the past by gradual processes, such as erosion, and by small sudden changes, such as earthquakes.

Of the type acting today rather than by the sudden divine acts, such as the flood survived by Noah (Genesis 6-8), demanded by the doctrine of catastrophism.

I cannot let this pass without taking note that this is while the earth remains.

There will be a time (after the 1000 year reign of Christ upon the earth), when there will be a new heaven and new earth for this one will have passed away.

In verse 22, not only a literal seedtime and harvest was meant.

The Bible said one will plant; another water, but God will get the increase.

I believe the planting days are about over.

Harvest time is here.

The fields are white unto the harvest.

God is about to gather us into His barn, and there will be no night there, for we will be in the presence of the Light.

Night shall cease then.

There will be one eternal day.

Not until we are carried home to be with God, will this be so.

Genesis Chapter 8 Questions

1. What did God cause to come over the earth to begin the drying process?
2. Are the elements under God, or Satan?
3. What does assuaged mean?
4. In verse 2, two things were stopped, what were they?
5. After how many days were the waters abated?
6. What mountain did the ark settle on?
7. When?
8. By our time, what month and day is this?
9. Why do many people believe this flood was not universal?
10. What was this flood?
11. What Country is the Mount Ararat located in?
12. Why has it been so difficult to physically prove the ark's existence?
13. The tenth month was actually what month to us?
14. What was the first bird sent out by Noah?
15. Why was it called by that name?
16. What second bird did Noah send out?
17. What is it symbolic of?

18. How many times did Noah send the second bird out?
19. On the second trip out, what did it bring back?
20. Why is the Holy Spirit a promise to mankind?
21. What month of our calendar did Noah remove the covering from the ark and look out?
22. What message for our day do we get from Noah waiting until God called him out of the ark?
23. How long had Noah been in the ark when he came out on dry land?
24. What was the first thing Noah did when he got on dry land?
25. How did Noah know what was clean and unclean?
26. In verse 21, how did this offering effect God?
27. What promises did God make at this time?
28. What are two ways to look at seedtime and harvest?
29. Is there a message for our day in all of this?
30. What is it?