

Genesis 8 - God remembered Noah

The Flood Subsides

| | Chronology (Believers Bible Commentary) | Reference |
|----|---|------------------|
| 1 | 7 days — from the time Noah entered the ark until the flood began | Gen_7:10 |
| 2 | 40 days and nights — duration of the rain | Gen_7:12 |
| 3 | 150 days — from the time the rain began until the waters decreased (8:3) and the ark rested on Mount Ararat | Gen_7:11 and 8:4 |
| 4 | 224 days — from the beginning of the flood until the mountaintops reappeared | Gen_7:11 and 8:5 |
| 5 | 40 days — from the time the mountaintops were seen until Noah sent out a raven | 8:7 |
| 6 | 7 days — from the sending of the raven to the first sending forth of a dove | 8:6-10 |
| 7 | 7 more days — until the dove was sent forth a second time | 8:10 |
| 8 | 7 more days — until the final sending forth of the dove. | |
| 9 | 314 days — from the beginning of the flood until Noah removed the covering from the ark | 7:11, 8:13 |
| 10 | 371 days — from the beginning of the flood until the earth was dried (compare Gen_7:11 and Gen_8:14). At this time, Noah was commanded to go out of the ark (v. 16) | 7:11,8:14,8:16 |

Gen 8:1-4 Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained. And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

We are given the record not only of the building up of the Flood but also of the prevailing and now the assuaging of the Flood. We are told that “God remembered Noah”—how lovely—and that “God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged.” It did not happen just overnight. The buildup of the waters took over 150 days, and then there were 261 days in the assuaging. That looks to me like it is something more than just a local flood.

Gen 8:5-8 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen. So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth. He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground.

We could say that this is the beginning of the end of the Flood. Frankly, Noah becomes a bird-watcher. He sends out these two birds, the raven and the dove. – McGee

Note: One bird is unclean, and one is clean.

Gen 8:9-12 But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself. And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.

Genesis 8 - God remembered Noah

I want you to see a great spiritual truth that we have here in the eighth chapter in this account of the raven and the dove. After Noah had spent over a year in the ark, he sent forth a raven, and the raven never came back. But the dove kept coming back and even brought in its beak a little bit of greenery, an olive leaf. I do not know why the dove and olive leaf have always been symbolic of peace, but they are. I cannot quite see that that is exactly the message of the dove's second return. But when the dove did not return at all, that was the sign that the judgment was over and that peace had returned to the earth. But, of course, man going out of the ark is the same type of man that all the sons of Adam were who had provoked the Flood as a judgment from God in the first place. You are going to see that there is not too much improvement in man after the Flood; in fact, there is none whatsoever.

There is a great spiritual lesson here which I would not have you miss for anything in the world. Noah is engaged here in "bird-watching." He sends out the raven, and the raven does not come back. Why didn't that raven come back? You must recognize what that raven eats—it feeds on carrion. There was a whole lot of flesh of dead animals floating around after the Flood, and that was the kind of thing this old crow ate. He did not return to the ark because he was really going to a feast, and he was having a very wonderful time. The raven was classified as an unclean bird, by the way.

The dove is a clean bird and is so listed later on in Scripture. Remember that Noah took into the ark both the clean and the unclean animals. The dove brought back information: it was a regular homing pigeon. With the dove's second trip, Noah was now a confirmed bird-watcher—and the dove brought back evidence that the dry land was appearing. The third time, the dove did not return, and Noah knew that the waters of judgment were gone.

I have said before that all great truths of the Bible are germane in Genesis. The Bible teaches that the believer has two natures, an old and a new nature: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2Co_5:17).

The clean and the unclean are together. You and I as believers have these two natures. Our Lord said: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (Joh_3:6). And Paul writes: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom_7:18).

Paul spoke of a struggle between the two natures. And there is a struggle today between the old nature and the new nature of a believer.

The raven went out into a judged world, but he found a feast in the dead carcass because that is the thing he lived on. The bloated carcass of an elephant would have made him a banquet; I tell you, it would have been for him a bacchanalian orgy. Back and forth, he restlessly went up and down. May I say to you, that is the picture of the old nature; the old nature is like that raven. The old nature loves the things of the world and feasts on them. That is the reason so many people watch television on Sunday night and do not go to church. Don't tell me that you have some good excuse for that. You do have an old nature, but that is no excuse because you ought not to be living in the old nature.

The dove went out into a judged world, but she found no rest, no satisfaction, and she returned to the ark. The dove represents the believer in the world. The old raven went out into the world and loved it. When he found that old carcass, he probably thought the Millennium had arrived! You see, it is a matter of viewpoint. A professor said to me, "This matter of what's right and wrong is relative." He's right; it is.

Genesis 8 - God remembered Noah

It is what God says is right, and it is what the professor says is wrong—and he does not find very much that is wrong, by the way. What God says is wrong is wrong. The believer is told, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world ...” (1Jn_2:15). You and I are living in a judged world today. We are in the world, but not of it. We are to use it, but not abuse it. We are not to fall in love with it, but we are to attempt to win the lost in this world and get out the Word of God. Our Lord told us, “... Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mar_16:15). Let's take care of our job down here and get out the Word of God—that is the important thing. The dove recognized what kind of a world she was in, and she found no rest. She found rest only in the ark, and that ark sets forth Christ, if you please.

Let me ask you this very personal question: What kind of bird are you? Are you a raven or a dove? If you are a child of God, you have both natures—but which one are you living in today? Do you love the things of God, or don't you? - McGee

Gen 8:13 And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and indeed the surface of the ground was dry.

This brings us to 261 days, so that the total time of the Flood was 371 days, extending over a year. That also conforms to the statement of Scripture that the Flood was universal; it was not just the filling of a swimming pool—it certainly was more than that!

There have been other discoveries that have revealed something concerning the Flood, and I would like to pass on to you the words of Dr. J. E. Shelley who takes the position that the Flood was universal, that it covered the entire earth: “The most striking example of this is found in the case of the mammoths. These elephants are found buried in the frozen silt of the Tundra, Siberia, all over the length of the Continent of Asia, and in the North of Alaska and Canada. They are found in herds on the higher ground not bogged in marshes, hundreds of thousands in number.” He goes on to say that these elephants have been examined and found to have drowned. If they had just gotten bogged down, they would have died of starvation. - McGee

“The farther north one goes, the more there are, till the soil of the islands of the White Sea inside the Arctic circle consists largely of their bones mingled with those of sabre-tooth tiger, giant elk, cave bear, musk ox, and with trunks of trees and trees rooted in the soil. There are now no trees in those regions, the nearest being hundreds almost thousands of miles away. The mammoth could not eat the stunted vegetation which now grows in this region for but three months in the year, a hundred square miles of which would not keep one of them alive for a month. The food in their stomachs is pine, hawthorn branches, etc. These mammoths were buried alive in the silt when that silt was soft. They and the silt were then suddenly frozen and have never been unfrozen. For they show no signs of decomposition. Mammoth ivory has been sold on the London docks for more than a thousand years. The Natural History Museum purchased a mammoth's head and tusks from the ivory store of the London Docks. This head was absolutely fresh and was covered with its original fur.”

Gen 8:14-19 And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried. Then God spoke to Noah, saying, "Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you: birds and cattle

Genesis 8 - God remembered Noah

and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth." So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, and whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

Notice: Noah's obedience even post flood. He does not leave the boat till God tells him to. If you doubt the universality of the Flood, here is more than enough evidence to convince you (every living...). - McGee

God's Covenant with Noah

Gen 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. And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. "While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease."

Noah responded to God's saving grace by building an altar. Those of us who have been saved from the wrath to come should likewise bring to God our heartfelt worship. It is as acceptable and pleasing today as it was in Noah's day. The LORD made a covenant that He would never again curse the ground or destroy every living thing, as He had done; also, He would provide regular seasons as long as the earth endured.

In Gen_6:5 and here in verse 21, God speaks of the intense evil of man's heart. In the first instance, there was no sacrifice, and judgment ensued. Here there is a sacrifice; and God acts in mercy. –

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