

Spared to be a Holy Worshipping People

Genesis 8:1-22

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Introduction:

Today we continue to look at the account that God has given us in His word of the most devastating judgement that He has ever brought upon mankind...

- The great deluge—the great flood of Noah’s day.
- Last week I pointed out to you that we need to face the reality of this event...
 - Millions and perhaps even billions of people were wiped out by God on account of their sin.
 - We trivialise this great disaster with our Noah’s ark children’s toys and our Noah’s ark wallpaper in our nurseries.
 - This was a disaster of grand proportions and it was sent by God because of human sinfulness!
 - This is something that we simply do not want to believe because, understandably, it makes us very uncomfortable if not angry to have God wipe us off the face of the earth like a mother wipes excrement off or her baby’s bottom!
 - We have enough trouble dealing with the curse of God as we experience it in the much smaller calamities that we encounter today...
 - local floods, hurricanes, blizzards, tornadoes, earthquakes, birth defects, cancer, starvation, heart attacks, plane crashes, destructive fires, and even things like broken appliances.
 - We try to deal with these things by denying that they are all ultimately sent from God’s hand on account of sin...
 - We wrongly attribute them to impersonal forces of nature or human error or even the Devil, but ultimately, every calamity is from God and is the result of human sin.
 - That does not mean that whenever a believer is injured or gets sick, he is being judged on account of a particular sin...
 - Once we have been pardoned through Christ for our sins, we are still subjected to sickness and calamities, and while these may indeed be and often are chastisements for sin, even then they are sent by our reconciled heavenly Father for our good rather than as harbinger of judgement...
 - But none of the calamities in this world would ever occur if it were not for human sin which brought God’s curse down upon the world.
 - Our desire to deny God’s hand of judgement proves that we simply do not believe what the scripture says about God’s coming eternal judgement.
 - We simply refuse to believe that everyone of us deserves to go to hell forever and ever,

- and that unless we obtain pardon through Christ, even if we have never heard of Him, we will go to everlasting punishment without intermission in hell fire forever.
- The flood of Noah helps to give us a reality check about this.
 - We are brought face to face with the reality of God's judgement.

But today we want to see how God spared Noah from judgement that there might be a people in the earth to be His grateful worshippers.

- In the day that Adam and Eve sinned, God promised that He would raise up a people out of sin to oppose Satan and to serve Him with Christ as their head.
- Of course if you never admit that you deserve to be judged in the first place, God's sparing you from judgement does not do much for you!
- You do not see yourself as one who has been shown unbelievable grace, but rather as one who finally got what you and others should have already gotten.
 - If that is your attitude, it betrays a deep rooted blindness in you and it shows that you have never truly been converted...
 - You really cannot expect to be delivered from judgement until God humbles you and brings you to true saving faith.
 - It is a serious matter and you need to come to Christ for mercy to open your eyes, recognising that if we were not the sinners He says we are,
 - there would have been no need for Christ to die on the cross...
 - and there never would have been a judgement like the flood, much less a judgement such as God has promised at the last day.

But we are going to look at Noah and how God did spare him from judgement and how Noah responded as one who knows that God spares him...

- Noah is a model for us of how we ought to respond to God who spares us from judgement in Christ.
- Our text is Genesis chapter 8, the entire chapter...

So please give careful attention as I read to you from Genesis 8:

Genesis 8:1-22: 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. ² The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained. ³ And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. ⁴ Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵ 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. ⁶ So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. ⁷ Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth. ⁸ He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. ¹¹ 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. ¹² So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore. 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. ¹⁴ And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried. ¹⁵ Then God spoke to Noah, saying, ¹⁶ “Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. ¹⁷ Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that *is* with

you: birds and cattle 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.” ¹⁸ So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. ¹⁹ Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, *and* whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark. ²⁰ 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. ²¹ 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. ²² While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.”

May the LORD bless to us the hearing of His holy word.

As we engage with this text, we first need to be sure we have a good foundation of understanding to build on.

- All through the scripture, the LORD shows that He desires to have (and will have) a people to serve Him in righteousness.
 - When He first created us, He made us upright, in His very own image,
 - and He commanded us to be fruitful and multiply that the earth might be filled with His image bearers.
 - I pointed out to you when we studied about that in Genesis 1 & 2, that being made in God’s image does not mean that we share physical characteristics with Him, because God is a spirit and does not have a body as we do...
 - It was rather that as human creatures, we were to be a reflection of His wisdom, power, holiness, goodness, justice, love, and service—on the scale of a dependent creature...
 - We were to have a beautiful character, but on a smaller, creaturely scale.
- And we have seen that even after we, the whole human race represented by Adam, corrupted ourselves by disobedience to God,
 - God nevertheless promised that He would call out a people to serve Him in His righteous kingdom.
 - God promises to deliver us from sin and from judgement, and He calls us to be fruitful and multiply as those who are renewed in His image.

- He spares us from judgement in order that we might serve Him as His righteous kingdom of image bearers...
- And you see, that is what He did in a very visible way with Noah when He destroyed the world, corrupted by sin as it was, but spared Noah and his household!
- Sparing Noah was God's way of seeing to it that His righteous kingdom would continue in the earth that He might in time send the promised Messiah who would save us from sin by His suffering on the cross.

I. Genesis chapter 8 opens with God displaying His unwavering commitment to His people—to preserve a righteous people for Himself.

- That is the first thing I want to look at with you—it is a wonderful thing.

A. God's commitment to His people is summarised in the words,

- **Gen 8:1: “Then God remembered Noah and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark.”**

1. Whenever the Bible says that God “remembers” someone, it indicates that He is getting ready to move toward them in some way...

- It is anthropomorphic language—do you remember what that is? I introduced that concept to you a couple of weeks ago...
- Anthropomorphic language is language that uses things that pertain to us as humans to speak about God.
- God, of course, knows all things and does not remember things as we do, but when the Bible says that He remembers us,
 - it means that He is getting ready to do something with us...
 - It can be either good or bad.
 - If He remembers a nation's sins, it means that He is getting ready to judge them...
 - If He remembers those He had promised mercy to, it means that He is getting ready to enact that mercy...
 - When the time came for God to deliver Israel from Egypt, the Bible says that He remembered Israel and heard their cries under the bondage of Egypt (Ex 2:24).
 - When the time came for the Messiah to come, Mary speaks of how God has **“helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy”** (Luke 1:54),
 - And in Luke 1:72, Zacharias speaks of how He is ready **to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant.**

2. Now it was a very good thing that God remembered Noah...

- a. God had already remembered him when he had called him to build the ark and had waited for him to finish it and to get on board safely with his family and the animals...

- God did this in remembrance of the promise He had made to bring forth the promised seed of the woman...
 - a people that would repent of the rebellion that characterises every human being since the fall—
 - God would put enmity in their hearts toward Satan and his ways and would bring forth a Son to them who would crush the serpent’s (Satan’s) head and so overcome sin and the curse.
 - That Son, of course, is Jesus who has now come...
 - We know much more about what the original promise entailed now that God has masterfully unfolded it over the years.
 - But there was the promise to maintain this people in the earth as His people and God was doing that through Noah!
 - Noah was the continuance of the seed of the woman, the righteous kingdom, to which Christ was to come,
 - And God had already remembered Noah by calling him to build the ark and waiting till it was done.
- b. But now, in chapter 8, Noah has been on the ark with his family and all the animals for many days.
- It does not appear that Noah knew how long he would have to stay on the ark.
 - But here God remembering Noah indicates that He is going to separate the waters again (as He did at creation) so that Noah and his family and all the animals can be fruitful and multiply in the earth.
 - You can see the result is of God remembering Noah in the case.
 - He causes the rain to desist and the waters to recede.
 - The waters recede gradually until the tops of the mountains begin to appear and until the ark is brought to rest on a mountain.
 - Psalm 104 indicates that at some point along the way,
 - God caused the mountains to rise and the valley to sink down, creating the great ocean basins in which the water now lies and pushing up the great mountains.
 - This is quite well translated in the ESV which says (the NKJV obscures this verse):
 - **Ps 104:8 ESV: The mountains rose, the valleys sank down to the place that you appointed for them.**
 - Our Psalter brings this out as well...“the mountains arose and the valleys sank low, the place you appointed for them now they know.”
 - And as this occurred, the Lord also caused a special wind to blow to help dry the land...

- c. And you see what the outcome of this remembrance was according to verse 4:
 - That the Lord brought the ark to rest on a mountain...
 - All this time Noah and his family had been tossed about in the storm, but now they are brought to rest.
 - Jesus and the whole church were, in a way, in that ark as those who were to come forth from Noah's body as his descendants—
 - And just as after Jesus finished His work of redemption and entered into His rest, so after this great judgement, the ark was brought to rest...
 - Noah's father had named him Noah which means rest because he had prophesied that Noah would bring us all rest.
 - And here he is, with his wife and children from whom the whole world would be populated—and with the animals...
 - brought by God to rest in remembrance of His mercy.
- B. What is special about all this is that God did it thinking of Noah and of all of His people...
1. He remembered all of us—
 - He remembered those righteous persons who lived before the flood in the ancient world and how that He had promised them a Saviour that would come.
 - And He remembered those who would come after Noah—His people Israel under the Old Covenant who would be His people and from whom Christ would come...
 - And He remembered all of those from all nations who would believe on His Son after His first advent—
 - Those like you if you are among those who believe the gospel and look to Jesus for your salvation.
 - And most of all, He remembered His Son to whom He had promised even before the world was formed to give a people as His inheritance...
 - He remembered—He thought of us—and He acted!
 2. There is nothing better than to be remembered by Him as those to whom His mercy is promised!
 - God remembered you and caused you to see your sin and your need of Christ—He graciously opened your eyes...
 - God remembered you and He brought the gospel to you so that you understood it and believed...
 - And then He remembered you and justified you through faith in His Son and adopted you into His family...
 - And now He remembers you and works in you daily to enable you to serve Him...to enable you to grow in grace and to persevere...
 - Each time you come to the Lord's Table, yea, even each time you pray or hear His promises, He remembers His covenant of mercy and grace with you...
 - Each time He chastens you for your sins, it is because He remembers you and remembers what He has promised.

- And on the day of your death, God will remember His promised mercy and then at the great day of judgement, He will remember you and deliver you.

TRANS> It is truly a most excellent thing to be remembered by God as Noah was!

- He does what must be done to bring about His promised grace and salvation!
 - To carry out His plans of mercy toward us.
 - But now I want to move on the second point now and show you how...

II. Noah shows us how we ought to respond in hope when we know that God has remembered us.

A. Let me say first of all that when God does remember you for mercy, He makes it known to you that He remembers you.

1. We saw back in chapter 6:18-20 how God had made a covenant with Noah in which He promised to Noah that He could bring him through the flood.
 - The LORD promised that He would keep Noah and all the animals alive.
 - This promise had provided the needed impetus for Noah to get on with building and then boarding the ark as difficult as that was...
 - He had to spend all and give up many comforts that he might have otherwise enjoyed, and he had to bear the scoffing ridicule of his neighbours as they watched him built a great ark on dry land.
 - God had made His mercy to Noah known, and that had enabled Noah to do what God had called him to do.
2. And so it is for you—when the LORD saves you—He comes to you and reveals His promise in Christ.
 - He does not leave us to guess how He will deal with us, but He makes sure and certain covenant promises to us—
 - that if we believe on the Lord Jesus we will be saved—we will be given everlasting life—He will write His statutes on our heart so that we will serve Him—He will pardon all our iniquities and remember our sin no more.
 - What comfort it brings to us to know that God has promised to save us!

B. We are reminded here, with the example of Noah, that in times of trouble we especially need to remember those promises...

1. Yes, Noah needed to remember God's promise when he built the ark, but now he needed to remember them while he was on the ark.
 - a. We might say that he was tested as the days had turned into weeks and the weeks had turned into many months—and still they remained on the ark.
 - Noah and his family could not survive on the ark indefinitely, nor would they want to!
 - They would run out of food and they would not be able to be fruitful and multiply.
 - When we get to verse 6, Noah has been in the ark for 9 months and it has been 40 days since the ark came to rest...

- When will the LORD command him to disembark?
 - When will the waters of judgement finally recede?
- b. There are times when we are tried in our faith...and we feel like giving up.
- There are times when it may seem as if God is not preserving His church!
 - We can grow very discouraged and frustrated—
 - We can feel like giving up—
 - We do not see the kingdom advancing the way we would like—
 - We are tempted to compromise, to slack off...
 - We have tried to evangelise, but nobody is being converted.
 - We have tried to live a more godly life, but still, we have trouble doing the will of God—
 - Our temper flares up,
 - Our selfishness rises,
 - We start to gossip and the pick at the faults of others,
 - The old lust we thought we had mortified shows up again,
 - We find cursing in our hearts and perhaps even on our lips,
 - Self-control is weak,
 - We are struggling to be faithful in prayer and in the word,
 - Our worship is growing cold...
 - We have tried to love our spouse, but it is not working—
 - We have tried to train up our children, but we are getting nowhere.
 - What is the use?—
 - We are stuck on Mt. Ararat and we are not going anywhere—
 - There is no fruit—we are just resting on the mountain,
 - We are all boxed in an ark as if it were our casket and we might as well be dead with those who perished in the flood.
 - That is when we need hope!

2. Now look what Noah does!

- a. He knows that God has more for him than to spend the rest of his life in this ark and go nowhere!
- He knows that God has promised life to him and that God is going to make him fruitful in the earth.
- b. So Noah expresses his hope!
- 1) He opens the window of the ark—
- Perhaps from Noah's vantage point, he can still only see water around the ark.
 - Before the electronic age, sailors used to send out birds to see if land was near and Noah resorts to that practice here.
 - Or perhaps the window was in the roof and Noah did not think he should get out of the ark until God told him to...
 - God who told him when to get in must tell him when to get out.

- 2) But in any case opening this window is a picture of hope and prayer—
- Noah is looking to the LORD in expectation in his distress.
 - a) He sends out a raven, but it keeps flying to and fro until the earth dries up—it is going back and forth finding no resting place.
 - This raven gives him no hope and no encouragement. It keeps flying about but it keeps returning.
 - Apparently, it does not enter the ark again—just goes to and fro from the ark—perhaps scavenging.
 - b) Then in v. 8-9 Noah sends out a dove, but she finds no place to rest her foot and returns to the ark.
 - Here again, you will note, the word *rest* (related to the word Noah in Hebrew) is used—the dove found no place to *may-noach*
 - But you see that Noah is expecting that the time will come when there is a resting place in the earth after the judgement.
 - We need to persist in prayer, crying out to God for deliverance with patience.
 - c) After another seven days—Noah is following a Sabbath cycle, v. 10 says that Noah sends the dove out again—
 - You can see his patience—waiting seven days—
 - but also his persistence—trying again and again because he knows that God will cause the waters to recede so that he and all who are on the ark can come out.
 - This time the dove returns with an olive branch!
 - To this day, the olive branch is a symbol of peace—a symbol that strife is over and that there is rest—a symbol of hope for a new day.
 - God often gives us encouragement in our prayers—giving us olive branches that let us know that He has heard us and will answer us.
 - Sometimes, you are praying for some particular matter in your life and then you go to church and God gives you a sermon that addresses the matter—or you run into an old friend and they bring up the very matter you are praying about...
 - When you receive these olive branches, let it encourage you all the more in your hope and in your prayers.
 - d) Noah waits another seven days and sends forth the dove again, and this time, the dove does not return to him.
 - This symbolises our prayers being received by God to be answered.
 - There is no need to continue to pray for the waters of judgement that kept Noah in the ark to recede, for now God has answered.

- We do not continue to pray once God has received our prayers and we know it.
- c. Next Noah sees his hope fulfilled—he sees the answer to his prayers.
- 1) In verse 13-14, Noah sees that the ground is dry.
 - There is a new creation—a new world—a world that had been cleansed and that is ready for man and beast to inhabit.
 - The dry land has again been separated from waters of the earth for man’s habitation, just as they were when God created the world.
 - Notice the three-fold repetition in verses 13-14, emphasising that the earth is dry...the waters of judgement are gone.
 - **Gen 8:13-14: 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. And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried.**
 - The earth is ready for a fresh new start!
 - 2) Accordingly, God commands Noah to come out with all that is his and with all the animals.
 - It is time to be fruitful and multiply—to fill the earth, not with corruption, but with a kingdom of priests, a holy people, that will serve the Lord God in righteousness.
 - This reminds us that God saves us from judgement in order that we might serve Him,
 - not in order that we may continue in our sin with impunity but that we may live for Him in Christ.
 - All of us come from Noah, so this is the purpose that pertains to all of us—and we go against God’s purpose if we do not do it.
 - It is not a kingdom of wickedness, but a kingdom of righteousness into which He calls us...
 - It is not a kingdom of ignoring God, but a kingdom of priests who worship Him and serve Him.
- So you see how Noah did not give up his hope or his prayers until the Lord had heard.
- Like Jacob, he does not let go until God blesses him.
 - Like Jesus, he continues to cry out with vehement cries and tears until he is heard.
 - That is the way to pray—not for those selfish desires that you have—but for the things that God has promised...
 - Continue to ask, continue to knock, continue to seek, until God fulfills His promise...
 - Give Him no rest until He makes His city a praise in the earth.
 - That is how you ought to pray for God’s promises.

- That is how we ought to pray for the church's deliverance from judgement and for our own personal deliverance from our bondage to sin.
- That is how you ought to respond to God in hope when you see that God has remembered you and is coming to deliver you from judgement.

TRANS> And now I want to show you the next thing that Noah shows us...

III. Noah shows us how we ought to respond in thankful dedication when we see that God has actually delivered us.

- Do you see how this is different than what we just looked at in our second point?
 - In our second point, we saw how we are to respond when we see that God is committed to delivering us—
 - now we will look at how we are to respond when He actually has delivered us.
- A. The very first thing Noah does when he emerges from the ark is to build an altar and offer sacrifices to God.
- Verse 20 tells us this:
 - **Gen 8:20: 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.**
1. Noah begins life in the new creation with worship! This is reminiscent of what we find all through scripture...
 - a. It is reminiscent of Jacob who, as soon as God brings him back to the promised land builds an altar at Bethel and worships the Lord...
 - b. And it reminds us of the Israelites after they were brought out of Egypt and how they built the tabernacle in the wilderness to worship God...
 - c. And it reminds us of how as soon as they are given the land, they build the temple for God in the land...to worship Him...
 - d. And again, after the exile, the first thing they do is build the temple, then they go to work on the city walls...
 - e. And most importantly, Jesus Himself—as soon as God delivered Him from the cross,
 - gathered His brethren—the whole church—to worship God and to give thanks for accepting His sacrifice.
 - To this day, the church gathers each Sunday at His command to worship.
 - Once Jesus sees that God's judgement is over, He says to the Father,
 - **“You have answered Me, I will declare your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise You!”**
 - He says, **“My praise shall be of you in the midst to the great assembly [the whole church], I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.”**
 - That is why the church worships each week on the day that Jesus was raised from the dead.
 2. My brothers and sisters, if God has delivered you from judgement, you need to make worship your first order of business too!

- Gather with the church each Sunday and pour out your heart in grateful devotion to God!
 - Gather your family together each day and praise Him for His saving mercy and offer yourself to Him!
 - Like Noah, you ought to be filled with thanksgiving!
 - Do not let anything keep you from this duty!
3. You can be sure that Noah had much to do when he came out of the ark!
- He and his sons must plant gardens and build houses.
 - But you see that Noah makes worship his first order of business.
 - He wants to start off right in the new world that God has given him.
 - Worship is the way to start your week—each Sunday—
 - It is the way to start your day and to end your day.
 - It is, in a sense, the way to live all day—as a living sacrifice.
- B. So what does this worship entail?
1. Well you will notice that Noah offers burnt offerings of all the clean animals.
- These clean animals were the domestic animals, part of the flocks and herds that he had for his livelihood...
 - There were seven of each, so it is a great sacrifice for Noah to make, but he does it without hesitation.
 - Burnt offerings are quite significant...
 - They were the general offering that covers almost everything.
 - They are also called ascension offerings because the entire animal is burned on the altar to God—the smoke ascends to God...
 - And they are called dedication offerings because they represent total surrender and dedication to God.
2. Total dedication is what God requires of us when He has delivered us from judgement.
- It is our duty as creatures to start with as those who are made in His image...
 - But it is all the more our duty when God has saved us from judgement as He does when we come to Jesus Christ.
 - He saves us in order that we might serve Him and be His true devoted worshippers, giving ourselves to Him as living sacrifices day by day.
 - It is our reasonable service to God who has shown us mercy.
 - This is to be the rule for the new creation that God gave to Noah after the flood,
 - and it was the rule for Israel after they were delivered from Egypt and from Exile,
 - and it is our duty who have been delivered in these last days by Christ—
 - and it will be our duty when we are delivered from judgement at the last day.

3. But note that there are animals sacrificed.

- Does God want animals?
 - Does He not want Noah and his family rather, to offer themselves fully to Him?
 - Of course He does and that is what Noah wants to do...
- But Noah understands that he cannot serve God as he ought...
 - He knows that there is still sin in him and that he and his family will continue to come short of what God requires.
 - So he approaches God with sacrifices that represent the total dedication that he and his family ought to have toward God.
 - It in fact honours God for Noah to approach Him with these offerings.
- This is very instructive to us...
 - You cannot rightly dedicate yourself to God without Christ crucified.
 - That is the great deception that is found even in churches—that our worship is acceptable God apart from Jesus Christ.
- The scriptures continually teach us that we do not come to God on the basis of our own works and merit...
 - Jesus is the One that God has accepted—He is the one who was totally dedicated and the one who shed His blood to atone for our sins.
 - We join ourselves to Him by faith and then we serve, albeit with our imperfections, but God accepts our service in Christ.
 - There was the shedding of blood for the forgiveness of sins in the burnt offering as well as the total consumption of the animal...
 - We come to God in the name and merit of Jesus Christ who lived for us as our representative and who died for us, to atone for our sin.
 - By Him and only by Him can we approach God in a way that is acceptable to Him.
 - That is what is signified by the offering of these clean animals.
 - God accepts us, not when we come in our own merit, but when we come sincerely in the name of Jesus.

C. And look, you see that God's acceptance of Noah is declared because it is shown that he accepts these offerings...

- Verse 21 and 22 declare it...
 - **Gen 8:21-22: 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."**

1. Here again we have anthropomorphic language...

- God does not have a nose as we have, nor does He need to be fed by the smoke of bulls and goats and birds and such...
 - It is rather His acceptance of Noah through sacrifice of one totally dedicated to Him that is in view here...
 - The animal is killed and wholly given, and Noah is and those who are with him in the kingdom of righteousness are accepted.
2. This all points to Jesus, the true offering by which Noah and all who have ever been God's people are accepted.
 - God accepts us because of our connection with Jesus Christ.
 - This description of His acceptance is tremendously encouraging!
 - It assures us that if we come to Him in Jesus, He will never curse us even though the imagination of our heart is evil from our youth.
 - There is forgiveness with God and there is acceptance of us in our imperfection.
 3. But understand, there is no acceptance of you unless you come to God in Jesus' name.
 - If Noah had come off the ark and had ignored God and lived corruptly as his neighbours had done, he would have been rejected.
 - But he did not—he came off the ark looking to Jesus...
 - He came thanking God that he had been delivered from judgement in order to start a new kingdom of righteousness...
 - Not self-righteousness, but righteousness by faith in Christ who would be crucified.
 - That is what God delights in!
 - The whole earth finds mercy in Christ, and you will find mercy too if only you come to serve God by Him.

Conclusion: We are spared from judgement that we might be a holy worshipping people in Jesus Christ.