

Scripture Reading: Genesis 7:17 – 8:

“Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. 18 The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, and the ark moved about on the surface of the waters. 19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. 20 The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. 21 And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. 22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, all that was on the dry land, died. 23 So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. 24 And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.

8:1 “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.”

"God Remembers Noah"

We come this morning to what I and others have argued is the center of our story:

- **God remembers Noah!**

While we have looked at the account of the Great Flood as historical and considered the geological and biological and anthropological implications of this event we come this morning to what should bring us great comfort:

- **God remembers Noah!**

To help us see this remembrance as the proper center I have again included the Chiasmatic outline of the flood account put together by B. W. Anderson:

The Chiasmatic Structure of the Genesis Flood *Compiled by B. W. Anderson in 1978*

Transitional introduction [6:9-10]

A. Violence in Creation [6:11-12]

B. First Divine Speech: resolve to destroy [6:13-22]

C. Second Divine Speech: ‘enter ark’ [7:1-10]

D. Beginning of flood [7:11-16]

E. The rising flood [7:17-24]

God Remembers Noah!

E. The receding flood [8:1-5]

D. Drying of the earth [8:6-14]

C. Third Divine Speech: ‘leave ark’ [8:15-19]

B. God’s resolve to preserve order [8:20-22]

A. Fourth Divine Speech: Covenant [9:1-17]

Transitional conclusion [9:18-19]

I trust this and my series of messages will help us to see more clearly how this historical account of one of the most significant events in the history of our world is much more than a simple Sunday School story that can be covered quickly with a few flannel graphs or pictures, which are often not even accurate!

- **The Bible gives us a rich account that can be read and studied over and over again, always finding more of God's truth as we mine deeper!**

The account here in the Book of beginnings gives us true historical detail, it gives us some great theological truths as well as an accurate description of the physical event itself...

- **And it should be no surprise that we come to see Jesus at the very center of our story!**

God's justice demanded the judgment upon man's sin that we have studied over the past few weeks and now we see God's Grace and Mercy... Where He remembers Noah & the promise made to Adam and Eve!

The line that would bring forth the seed of the woman would not perish in the flood along with all the other men and women alive at that time! This is why even the structure of the Hebrew language, which is reflected pretty well in most of our English translations draws us to the center of the story just as the life and work of Jesus is to be seen as the center of all human history!

We have seen in these early chapters of Genesis how the sinfulness of man, unrestrained by the Holy Spirit has rapidly brought about God's judgment. After the flood, even with new restraints by the Spirit and God's calling of His own people to bring a blessing to all nations, the sin of man still weighs things down under the domination of Satan, until the time of Christ when once more all hope had been lost in the world! Once again, God remembers His promise to Adam and Eve and the angel Gabriel comes to Joseph with the good news that Mary's Son would be the Messiah Jesus:

- **The one who would save His people from their sins...**
- **God remembered His promise!**

And this time God would bring forth the new creation that will culminate with the full redemption of man and the creatures of the earth that God also saved on the Ark!

I want to come back to this greater remembrance and how it impacts us today for our comfort, but first let's take a closer look at the short text we are considering this morning...

Genesis 8:1 "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, & the waters subsided. 2 The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, & the rain from heaven was restrained. 3 And the waters receded continually from the earth."

So we are given two details along with the center of our story with God remembering Noah...

One is pretty straightforward and the other a bit more mysterious.

In verses two and three we see a simple reversal of the physical forces that brought the destructive flood:

- **The rains ceased after the forty days and the fountains of the deep were stopped.**

Verse three tells us that the waters of the earth receded continually from the earth and we will look at that process in more detail next week as we consider the patience of Noah.

The mysterious part comes at the end of verse one where we read:

"And God made a wind to pass over the earth and the waters subsided."

The early church fathers saw this as a clear picture of the Holy Spirit, just as He hovered over the face of the deep during the first day of Creation!

Other commentators see it as simply a reference to the physical wind that God used as part of the process, much as there was a wind that dried the Red Sea for God's people as they left Egypt.

I don't think this has to be an either or situation and YES both of those other accounts given to us in the Scriptures should come to mind as we consider what is happening here.

- **As we saw last week, there is a clear picture given in this account of how the creation is being undone!**

What God declared very good had been destroyed by the sin of man & soon we will see how God begins again with Noah and his family and the animals that were brought safely through the judgment on the Ark. Remembering how the Spirit of God hovered over the face of the deep at Creation is very appropriate because God is now going to return the waters to their proper places and promise that they will never again be used to destroy the whole earth!

And yet, we also see God using normal means... God created all the waters in an instant on the first day of Creation and He could simply have spoken a command and removed them in another instant after His judgment was complete. However, God simply caused the rains to stop and began to bring the waters back into the deep where they belong.

- **This should rightly remind us of another scene of judgment at the Red Sea as God's people left Egypt!**

Again in that situation, God could have spoken to those waters and parted them in an instant, but when we look at the text we see that He used some natural forces that took all night...

Exodus 14:21 "Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and Jehovah caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. 22 So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left."

Unlike the Hollywood movies where the waters are parted very quickly God took His time if you will, using the rod of Moses and a natural east wind to prepare the way of salvation...

In the meantime, God's people had to sit helpless in the presence of Pharaoh's mighty army... Yes there was a pillar of fire between them, but we know how well we apply the verse 'be anxious for nothing' and I am sure they wondered if the waters would ever part on the one hand and if the armies of Egypt would break through on the other!

So in our short text we see how God began to reverse the great flood, which we will consider in more detail next week. Our focus today is on comfort:

I have made it a point to always try to show how we see should Jesus in these passages from Genesis and this morning that task is not very difficult as we study how God remembered Noah...

- **In fact this leads to two very familiar and powerful and comforting passages that make preaching a joy & pretty easy!**

As I mentioned earlier, the Angel Gabriel came to earth with Good News: God had remembered His people and was sending His own Son to save them from their sins.

As Jesus prepared to do this great work after some three years of ministry He gathered with His disciples for a final Passover meal where He instituted the Lord's Supper that we celebrate to this day.

After He had done so and Judas had gone off to betray the Messiah, we see in the Gospel according to John that Jesus gave the remaining disciples many final instructions and then lifted up His voice in what is called the High Priestly prayer of Jesus:

- A prayer that brings great comfort to His people as He remembers them to His Father...
- A prayer that we should meditate on often in our Christian walk...

In John chapter 17 we have Jesus lifting up His eyes to heaven, & saying: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. 5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. 6 "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. *[like righteous Noah]* 7 Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. 8 For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. 9 I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

[just as God remembered Noah and not those outside of the Ark]

10 "And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. *[Jesus has asked the Father to remember His people!]*

12 "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. *[again pictured by all those on the Ark being saved from the flood]*

13 "But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

[What was about to happen in the next few hours would be very troubling and unpleasant for the disciples just as the flood was for Noah]

14 "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

[Noah was not translated like Enoch] 17 "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

[And now just as God remembered Noah we see that Jesus remembers not only His disciples, but all of us!]

20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. 24 Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. 26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

- Noah had obviously been through some tough times and the disciples were about to witness the crucifixion and death of Jesus.

So on the one hand, I think we should keep our trials in perspective, but we do face trials none the less!

We have loved ones who have died, loved ones who have rejected the faith and been excommunicated, or we can think of the trial that Bill and Dianne Garaway are facing at this time!

Some of us carry burdens that we give daily to the Lord that others would wonder how one could possibly keep going under such a load.

But they are burdens none the less and whether they be large or small we can all draw great comfort from the other passage that tells us that God never forgets His children:

- He remembered Noah and He remembers us!

Romans chapter eight gives great hope to those who have placed their trust in Jesus no matter what their circumstances might be today:

Listen again to these familiar and very comforting words:

“16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;

[the flood is evidence of this truth!]

21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?

[We will ponder this at greater length next week as we consider the 150 days that Noah spent in the Ark carried along by the waters of the flood!]

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

[NO matter how Noah felt in that Ark day by day, he was a man of faith who knew that God would deliver him]

26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Why can we have this confidence?

- Because the God who created the heavens and the earth is OUR God!

29 “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- **God remembered Noah! And the writer of Genesis did not want us to miss that point!**

God remembers us today, in the midst of whatever trials and tribulations we might be facing AND in the midst of whatever blessings and victories we might be enjoying and we should always remember that God warned His people to beware of forgetting God, not in the bad times, but in the good times!

Deuteronomy 10: "6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. 10 "So it shall be, when Jehovah your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, 11 houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant--when you have eaten and are full-- 12 then beware, lest you forget Jehovah who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."

- **God remembered Noah and God remembers us, let us not be those who forget Him!**

Communion Meditation: Hebrews 11:6-7

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith."