

Explore the Bible: January 14

Land! • Genesis 8:10-22

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There is a difference between waiting a few minutes versus days, months, or years. I wonder if Noah's sons said, "Dad, did God tell you how long we would be on this ark?"

Chapter eight answers that question, "But God remembered Noah." No, God didn't forget because He is the infinite Creator God. It was time. Then, "God caused a wind to pass over the earth and the water subsided" (v. 1, Gen. 1:2).

The ark came to rest upon the mountains of Ararat, between eastern Turkey and into Armenia. The water continued to decrease until the tenth month. The mountains became visible, and at the end of forty days, Noah opened the window in the ark and released a raven (a scavenger bird that could live on animal carcasses). It never returned.

Then, Noah sent out a dove (v. 8). It returned because there was no place for the bird to rest its foot.

Wait (Gen. 8:10-14) – Seven days passed before Noah sent the dove out again. This time, it returned with an olive leaf in its beak. Noah waited another seven days to send the dove out,

but this time, the bird did not return (v.12).

In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, and on the first of the month – new beginnings occur on earth. Noah removed the covering. This is not the window or the door, maybe a hatch-like opening that afforded Noah to see the land. He takes a more extended look to comprehend or inspect the newly created earth. Can you hear him saying to his family, “Land ho! The earth is dry.” The waiting was over.

Note: Bodie Hodge, with *Answers in Genesis*, has compiled an overview of the Flood Timeline. Also, look at Psalm 104; many scholars see this Psalm detailing the flood.

Exit (Gen. 8:15-19) – In verse fifteen, God speaks to Noah for the third time (Gen. 6:13-21; 7:1-4). It is time to leave the ark, and God gives the departure order.

First came Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives. Then, every living thing – birds, animals, and the creeping creatures. Notice the command God gives, “spread over the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth,” two instructions. People and animals were to repopulate the world. The initial command echoed Genesis 1:28; 2:15; 19-20.

The phrase “came out” is used four times in this passage. “This is not boring repetition; instead, it represents a strong emphasis on the obedience of Noah and his family. In writing the narrative, Moses wanted to highlight the righteous obedience of Noah in sharp contrast to the wickedness of the fallen world that had been destroyed” (Lifeway).

Once again, Noah obeyed. He and his family went out. Then, every beast, creeping thing, and bird went out by their families (could mean that there were additions).

Worship (Gen. 8:20-22) – Again, note the progression. Everyone and everything left the ark, and we are first told, “Then Noah built an altar to the LORD.” This is the first mention of

someone building an altar, used 401 times in the Old Testament. An altar was a “slaughter place” (Gen. 4:3-4).

Ponder for a moment and think about all that Noah and his family have gone through – building the ark, the flood, and they walk off the ark, realizing they are the only ones living. Gratitude for God’s protection and grace must have filled his heart, soul, and mind. Noah took a clean animal and a bird and offered them as a burnt offering on the altar (Lev. 1).

“The LORD smelled the soothing aroma” speaks “of satisfying God’s requirements or avoiding His wrath. Because God was satisfied after the devastation of the flood. He made a pronouncement concerning future judgment” (Lifeway).

God makes a promise, the “LORD said to Himself,” in His heart. Never again would God curse the ground or destroy every living thing as He did through the flood.” God promises the cyclical working of the universe will continue, “as long as the earth endures...”

Through His mercy and grace, God gives us His redemption and offers us restoration. We must remember that even by destroying the earth, judgment with a flood, it could not and did not change man’s sinful heart. Only through the blood of Jesus are we changed (Eph. 1:7; Acts 4:12).

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