

Salvation

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[0:00] Open your Bibles up to Genesis chapter 8. We are literally in the middle of the story of the flood in Genesis. Genesis chapter 8.

And we're going to read through this entire chapter this morning. And the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed. The rain from the heavens was restrained, and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days, the water had abated, and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen. At the end of 40 days, Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made, and sent forth a raven.

It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. Then he sent forth a dove from him to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth.

[1:22] So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark, and the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf.

So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore. In the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth.

And Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out. Then God said to Noah, Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh, birds and animals, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, that they may swarm 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 beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark.

[2:32] Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took some of every clean animal, and some of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth.

Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.

Father, help us now. Help us to understand. Help us to cherish what we see here. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. There's a major contrast between Genesis chapter 7 and Genesis chapter 8. If I had to sum up that contrast, I would say that Genesis chapter 7 is about the coming down of the waters from the heavens, and the coming up of the waters from the fountains of the deep. And Genesis chapter 8 is about the abating of the waters, the going away of the waters. So the water comes in chapter 7, the water goes away in chapter 8. Genesis chapter 7 is about God's judgment upon the world.

[3:51] Genesis chapter 8 is about God's salvation of Noah and his family. Genesis chapter 7 focuses upon death. The death of the animals. The death of people.

In a real sense, the death of the world. Genesis chapter 8 is about new life. Noah and his family rescued. Now to leave the ark at the end of the chapter to begin life anew.

The animals also leaving the ark to leave and go out and multiply on the face of the earth once more. There's a massive contrast between these two chapters, and you really can't fully understand chapter 8 until you understand chapter 7.

Last week we asked three basic questions from chapter 7. I'm not going to quiz you on them, alright? I know you all went home this week and you listened to the sermon three or four times online or something like that and you've got it memorized, but I'll remind you anyway, alright? Last week we asked the question, what was the flood like? What kind of flood was it? And then we asked, what evidence is there for that kind of a flood? What evidence exists in the world and in Scripture that it actually took place?

[4:58] And then lastly, we asked the question, why does it even matter? Why does it matter whether or not the flood took place? Why does it matter whether it was this kind of flood or that kind of a flood? What's the point?

And with each of those questions I had prepared three answers. And so I told you the answer to the first question, what kind of flood was it? I said, well, it was universal in its extent over the earth. It covered the entire world.

It was universal in its effects upon the living creatures in the world, upon the animals of the world, particularly the land animals, and it was universal in its effects upon humankind.

Everybody except for Noah and his family died. All of them. However many people there were, probably millions at that time, all of them died. And then in the answer to the question, is there any evidence, I gave you three answers.

We said, first of all, that you look around the world and you can see everywhere in the world, whether you're in the desert, whether you're on a mountaintop, whether you're in the valleys and plains, it doesn't matter where you are, you see everywhere in the world evidence that at one time that place was covered by water.

[6:03] Evidence that at one time there was marine life, even in the highest of mountains. And then we also looked at the number of flood stories spread out throughout the world.

In fact, we looked at some statistics that someone compiled from 200 different flood stories and the incredible similarities between stories, sometimes of cultures that had really no connection with each other that we know of, unless, of course, all of those cultures were descended from Noah and his wife and their three sons and passed on the story.

Stories, of course, changed and it's different in different cultures. Nevertheless, cultures all over the world have flood stories with a few remarkably similar details.

And then we also looked at the New Testament and saw that Jesus himself and the apostles themselves treat the flood as if it was a real historical event. So that if you affirm that Jesus really is the Lord, it's very difficult to turn around and say that the flood really didn't happen or to say that it didn't happen in the way in which it's described in Genesis 6-9.

Jesus believed in a real historical event as described here in the pages of Genesis. But then when we came to the last question, why does it matter?

[7:20] I had three answers prepared for you and I only gave you two of them. And if you're OCD, like Misha, that would drive you nuts, right?

That would drive you crazy? I destroyed the symmetry. There could have been three sets of three and I left one of them out and saved it for this week instead. But nevertheless, I said that it matters, first of all, because we need to know that there is a coming judgment.

We need to know that. That in the New Testament, the flood of Genesis is compared to the coming of Christ. That they will be different when Christ comes, the world will not be destroyed by water, but by fire instead.

Yet nevertheless, just as surely as there was a flood, just as surely as there was judgment, in Genesis, there will be a judgment to come at the end of the church age. And I also said that it matters a great deal whether or not you believe Genesis 6-9 because it affects your whole view of the Bible.

Do you have confidence that this book is true, that this book gives us the real story as it really happened? Because if you don't have confidence in the historical details of the Bible, why would you have any confidence when the Bible tells you how to get right with God?

[8:31] You wouldn't have any real confidence. But then the third reason why I think it's important to affirm the reality of the flood and the nature of the flood as a universal flood is because it shows us something that we're going to see also touched upon in chapter 8.

And that is, it shows that there is a real vital connection between human beings and the rest of this created world. In fact, there's really a very strong connection between what we do and what happens to us and what happens to what the Bible calls the land or the earth.

We're connected. We are given dominion over the earth in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. The earth is cursed in Genesis chapter 3 when we sin and fall.

And now we see in the story of the flood that there is a real connection between us as human beings created in God's image and the world over which we have been given dominion.

So that when we are judged, the world itself is also judged. That's actually something that runs really throughout the entire flood story. We haven't talked about it very much.

[9:45] I've just been putting it off until I felt the right time to really deal with this particular issue.

And now I think is a good time to look at it. So turn back all the way to chapter 6 to the beginning of the story of the flood.

And I want you to notice how Moses describes the sinfulness of humanity. Take a look in verse 11. Chapter 6, verse 11.

He says, The earth was corrupt in God's sight and the earth was filled with violence. Verse 12, God saw the earth and behold it was corrupt. And then here's a key phrase right here.

All flesh. For all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. Now it's tempting because most of the time in the Old Testament the term all flesh refers simply to human beings.

It's just a way to describe human beings. And it's tempting to understand all flesh here as nothing more than a simple reference to humanity. It is a reference to humanity but it includes more than that.

[10:43] We know that because of verse 17. In verse 17, God says, I'm going to bring a flood of waters on the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life. Everything that is on the earth shall die.

And then verse 19 explains that. Of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring in and then he begins to list the animals. So all flesh includes human beings but it also includes all the living creatures on the land.

All the animals. All the land animals. That's all flesh here in these chapters. So every time we come across this phrase in Genesis 6-9 all flesh we need to pause and realize that this is talking about not just human beings it's talking about everything that lives on the land.

Cattle, wild beasts, creeping things the Bible calls them. It's talking about all these different land creatures. Move down to chapter 7. We see it again in verse 15.

Then they went into the ark with Noah two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life.

All flesh again. Verse 21. I said chapter 7 was about death.

[11:52] You see it here. All flesh died that moved on the earth. Birds, livestock, beasts, swarming creatures. They all died. All flesh. So there's a connection here.

The problem here, the problem in these chapters, the problem, the reason God brings the flood on the world is because of sin. Because of human sin. We're told that over and over and over.

At the very beginning of the story in chapter 6, turn back again. verse 5. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

The flood is brought about because of human sin. At the end of chapter 8, we see this again.

Chapter 8, verse 21. I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth.

That's almost verbatim from chapter 6. So that the cause of the flood, the reason for the flood, is the sinfulness of humanity.

[12:56] And yet, because mankind has become so sinful, the entire earth is now corrupted in God's sight. Because mankind has blown it, because we have pursued every form of sin, even this early in human history, God judges all flesh.

there's a connection between us and the world in which we live. Now, secularists and environmentalists will often say, well, the connection is there because we all share common ancestor, that we're just more highly evolved animals, just like all the animals around us.

And so that's the connection. And in fact, you can push that argument really far, and it has been pushed really far, to say that really, humans are no different than any other animals. We're no more valuable, we're not of any more worth than any other animals, and so you can try to establish this

connection that really does exist between humans and the rest of the world, by saying, well, we're just like them, we're animals just like they are.

That's not the kind of connection that the Bible establishes, though. The connection that the Bible establishes is that, yes, we do have a common origin in that we have the same creator, but the connection that exists between us and the world is that we are given dominion over the world.

You can see later on in the Old Testament when the kings of Israel would sin against God and go after idols, God would judge not just the king, but the entire nation, because the king stands as head and representative for the nation of Israel.

[14 : 33] Well, so too we stand as the head and representative of the earth, and so when we go astray, the earth suffers greatly. And yet, the connection that we share with the world around us is not such a strong connection, it's not such a powerful connection that we would want to say that we exercise sovereignty over the world.

Even accidental sovereignty, we don't exercise that. We don't have so much influence over the world that we get to control the weather, for instance.

We don't have so much influence over the world that we get to control when the world comes to a tipping point and judgment falls or death comes on a worldwide scale.

We don't have that kind of connection to the world. In fact, that's emphasized here in chapter 8 because even though God has brought a flood upon the earth because of man's sin, at the end of chapter 8, we get this glimmer of hope in verse 22.

He says this, While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.

[15 : 51] It almost seems like a throwaway verse, like God's just saying after the flood, alright, everything's going to just kind of go on now, but think about what God is saying. He is promising, He has just promised that He will never again flood the earth.

He won't destroy the earth with a flood, but now He adds to that promise something significant that God Himself will retain the seasons. Cold and heat will come when He determines that they will come.

The same processes will go. Plants, seeds will be planted. Plants will sprout from those seeds. It will happen over and over. Seed time and harvest will continue.

Summer and winter, day and night. They're not, these cycles are not going to suddenly cease. So we don't exercise, we don't exercise a kind of direct power and control over the earth so that we can determine its course.

That's not the case. It's God who reigns as sovereign and supreme over the earth who says, what you do will affect the earth by my command.

[16 : 54] My command is that the earth remain. Seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, those will remain. You're no longer going to have, you're not going to have the power to affect those things.

I won't flood the earth again. That's not going to happen. All this sort of stuff should affect the way that you view our interaction with the world around us.

It should affect it. It should affect your assessment of environmentalism. It should affect your assessment of how people talk about what we do in the world and how we treat the world around us because there is a stewardship that's present.

We do have to take care of the world. We can't just cut down every tree, right? We have to care about what we do in the world. It's not good to just put litter everywhere.

We have to care about the world in which we live, but we're not sovereigns over the world. And the living creatures of the world are not the same as us. They're not on the same level as us.

[17 : 57] We have dominion over them. We don't decide cold and heat. We don't decide summer and winter. And no matter what we might do or think that we're capable of doing, we can't change those things.

God holds those things in existence. And He has decreed after the flood that He will continue to hold those things into existence for the rest of human history until He once again intervenes in judgment.

He will do that. It really matters whether or not you view these chapters as real historical events that really took place because it affects whether or not you believe that these promises are real concrete promises from God Himself.

It changes the way that you understand your connection with everything else around you. It matters. It matters because ultimately it's not just whether or not the world is judged that hinges upon humanity, but also the ultimate redemption of the created order is connected to our redemption and our salvation.

Turn over to Romans chapter 8. I want to show you this because it's really, really important for understanding this connection that I'm talking about. In Romans chapter 8 verse 19, Paul says this, he says, that the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

[19 : 25] The revealing of the sons of God is a way of talking about our final salvation. After we've been raised from the dead and been given new glorified bodies like Christ's, the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

Here's why. Because the creation was subjected to futility. Not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

The whole creation, when Adam and Eve fell, the whole creation was subjected to futility. That's why there is death and decay in the world. That's why the whole universe tends toward disorder rather than order.

That's why the universe is the way that it is. That's why the world functions the way that the world functions. sins, because of human sin, because of the fall. And human sin brought about the flood, and someday human salvation from sin will bring about the restoration of the world.

Where do you see the world headed? When you sort of step back and you look out at history in the world, where do you see it headed? Does it look just sort of haphazard and random to you?

[20 : 44] I mean, does it look like there's not really any grand design and grand purpose in it all, but everything's just kind of going and flowing and things are happening and how they play out? Who knows? Is that what you see?

Or do you see some kind of major split between, well, God does have this special plan for humankind and the rest of the world will just have to go its way and deal with it?

Or, you take a step back and look from a biblical perspective and see that God is working and moving in all things and directing all things toward a very specific goal.

Something that the book of Revelation calls the new heavens and new earth. Where there is no sin and no death. Where the entire creation is renewed.

The flood, the story of the flood, reminds us that history is headed somewhere. That God has a purpose in things. That it's going somewhere.

[21 : 47] And that what happened in Genesis chapter 3, the fall is not final. God has an answer to every aspect of the fall.

And His answer to the curse of Genesis chapter 3 is the renewal of all the earth. In Romans chapter 8, in Revelation 21 and 22.

all the earth will be renewed. New heavens and new earth. But that will only happen when God finishes His work of saving His people.

And all of creation is longing for and waiting for that day. Now chapter 8 of Genesis gives us a glimpse of that day.

Chapter 8 gives us a picture of that coming, ultimate, final salvation. And even gives us a glimpse of our salvation and how we ought to respond to God's saving work in our lives now.

[22 : 46] Because just as chapter 7 gives us that picture of judgment and death, chapter 8 just as assuredly gives us a great picture of life and salvation. You can see it in the first verse.

We're told in chapter 8 verse 1, Now that phrase, God remembered, does not mean that God had forgotten anything.

It doesn't mean that, well, God had set things in motion and then all of a sudden God, oh yeah, I've got to deal with Noah. Oops, sorry about that. I mean, I flooded the world and I guess I better attend to this boat and these people and animals on the boat.

That's not the point of it at all. In fact, almost every time in the Old Testament when the word remember has God as its subject, when God's the one doing the remembering, most of the time it means that God is fulfilling His promises, that God is remaining faithful to the covenants that He has established.

Just turn over a few pages in Genesis. Turn over to Genesis chapter 20. Where, not chapter 20, chapter 19. Genesis chapter 19, the story of Sodom and Gomorrah that some of you might be

familiar with, where God has determined that He's going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah for their sin.

[24 : 03] This is like a micro, a small picture of what happened in the flood. And yet, Abraham's nephew Lot is living in that region and Abraham has already pleaded to God to save Lot and God has agreed that He will save Lot.

And so in chapter 19, verse 29, we read this, So it was that when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that's Sodom and Gomorrah, God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow when he overthrew the cities in which Lot had lived.

God remembered Abraham. It's the exact same phrase that we see in Genesis 8-1 with Abraham instead of Noah. In 8-1, God remembered Noah. Now God remembered Abraham.

It means that God remembers the promise. He's going to be true to the promise. I said I would save Lot. I'm saving Lot. I'm rescuing Lot from my wrath. I told you, Abraham, that I would do that and I'm going to do that.

We see the same kind of language in the book of Exodus. In Exodus chapter 2, referring to the whole nation of Israel, Abraham's descendants, while they're in slavery, it says in verse 24 that God heard their groaning and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

[25 : 26] God saw the people of Israel and God knew. God remembered the covenant. When God remembers something, He's not recalling to mind something that He previously forgot.

God is remaining faithful to the things that He said He would do. He's being faithful to all of His covenant promises. He's being faithful in His covenant love, His mercy.

So that salvation in Genesis chapter 8, the saving of Noah and his family, is rooted in God's commitment to uphold His own covenant promises.

That's the foundation of the saving of Noah and his family and the same foundation is laid for our salvation. God does not rescue us because we are so deserving of being saved.

I remember there was a song that came out a couple of years ago. It was played on KSBJ and I remember one of the lines from the song talking about the death of Christ is that He would rather die than to live without you.

[26 : 35] I don't remember what the name of the song was. I don't remember anything else about it, but that line caught my notice because I thought to myself, did Jesus die because He couldn't stand to live without me?

Or did Jesus die because God has promised to save the people for Himself? I think Jesus would be just fine without Chris Trousdale for all of eternity.

I think He'd be just fine. He died because He's faithful to His promises to save the people for Himself.

And He saves us when we trust in Christ because He's faithful to the promise to save all of those who believe in His Son. He can bank on His promises.

Our salvation is not rooted in our own worth. It's not rooted in our irresistibility before God. It's not rooted in our ability to get God's attention by doing a lot of good things.

[27 : 38] That's not the basis of our salvation. The basis of our salvation is purely and simply the covenant mercy of God. And that's on full display here in chapter 8.

Noah hasn't done anything notable so far. In fact, Noah hasn't said anything yet in this entire story. I mentioned that a couple of weeks ago.

I don't know if you've tracked along with it and noticed. But Noah still hasn't spoken a word yet. Now obviously Noah must have talked during this time period. You can't build a gigantic boat without communicating with the people that are helping you build it.

Whether that's just his sons or other workers that he's hired, we don't know. But you can't build something without communicating. I mean, he has a wife and a family and children. He obviously talks and communicates. He's not some robot that doesn't ever say anything.

But Moses doesn't record any of it. Why? Because Noah's not the central character here. This is not a story mainly about Noah. This is a story about God.

[28 : 40] This is a story about God's holy response to sin and God's merciful saving of Noah and his family. All of it. All of it rooted in God's covenant mercy so that God, as this boat floats along in the waters, tossed all about by the waves, God suddenly, in the midst of it, we're told, God remembers.

He's going to be faithful. He's not going to go halfway in saving Noah. He's not going to just rest him initially from the flood. He's going to take him safely through the whole thing. He remembers Noah and all the animals.

He's going to do something spectacular here. He's going to do something very similar to what he does in Genesis chapter 1. In Genesis chapter 1, we see God first creating the heavens and the earth and the earth at the beginning is formless and void.

It's like a watery mass. And we're told that out of that watery mass, God calls the land to rise up. In fact, it's significant that in Genesis chapter 1, verse 2, we're told that the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

The word for Spirit in Hebrew is the same word for wind. And we see the same word here in verse 1. God made a wind blow over the earth and the waters subsided.

[30:04] The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed. The rain from the heavens was restrained and the waters receded from the earth continually. How does God begin the process of renewing the earth?

How does He begin the process of moving beyond judgment to redemption and salvation? Well, He begins that process by sending a wind to blow upon the face of the waters.

And I think that Moses intends for us with the words that he chooses, I think he intends for us to recall Genesis chapter 1, verse 2, a ruach over the waters, over the earth.

I've seen that before. I think I know what's coming. And what's coming is a new world. Land rising up out of the waters.

In fact, when you read through chapter 8, it reads really like exactly what you would expect if these events had really occurred. There's nothing magical that happens here.

[31:14] There's nothing strange and out of the ordinary that happens here. It happens just as you would expect. If the world had been covered by a flood, then the subsiding of that flood would happen just as it's described here.

Take a look. We're even given a pretty good timeline that it was at the end of 150 A's. This is verse 3. At the end of 150 days, the waters had abated.

So you had 40 days of rain and then another 110 days of the water sort of at its peak. And now, after 150 straight days of high waters and flooding, now suddenly the rains are going to stop.

Now the water is finally going to begin to go down. so that we're told then in verse 4, in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Erech.

So the picture here is that the mountains still haven't appeared. They're coming in the next couple of verses. The mountains are still covered. Remember, the water rose to over 20 feet above the tops of the mountains.

[32:21] But now the water has gone down enough so that the bottom of the boat, several feet probably under the water, now the bottom of the boat scrapes against the mountain and gets lodged there on the side of one of the mountains of Erech.

And then it goes on. Verse 5, the waters continued to abate until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the waters were seen.

So it takes another two and a half months for the water to lower enough for them to actually see the mountains. They know that they've stopped. They know they've hit something. And now they can see the something that they've hit.

They're resting on the side near the top of a mountain. The timeline picks up in verse 6. At the end of 40 days, Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and he sent out a raven.

So now we're in the stage where Noah's going to try to find out what's happening. They can see the tops of the mountains. They know that they've hit some form of land, but it must be the mountains. They're too high to hit anything else.

[33:25] He needs to find out what else is out there. Is there anything other than death and destruction out there? Is there anything? It's appropriate that the first thing that he sends out, the first animal that he sends out to try to assess the situation is a raven, a scavenger, an animal that would thrive in a world that's filled with death.

And we're told that he sent the raven out. At the end of 40 days, Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and he sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters dried up from the earth. The raven never came back.

Why? Because there's plenty of death outside of the ark to sustain the raven. That's the lesson that Noah learns in sending out the raven. Judgment is complete out there.

Death is everywhere. The raven never returns for food. There's a plentiful supply in the world around them. Not quite time to leave the ark.

So then he changes his tactic. Now he's going to send out a dove or a pigeon. An animal that would be not likely to land upon anything floating.

[34 : 32] Not likely to scavenge at all. In fact, the kind of bird that's mentioned here we're told was sort of a bird of the valley. That they made their nests in the sides of cliffs and things like that.

So this kind of bird requires a really dry arid region. It's not going to make its home anywhere else.

So this bird's not going to settle in unless the world is really dry.

So he sends the dove out. The dove comes back. Nothing. And then we're told that he sends it out again. And this time though there's signs of life. He comes back we're told with an olive branch.

Verse 11. The dove came back to him in the evening and behold in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. Why is that significant? Why does that matter? Why is there a ring of truth to that?

Because the olive tree is one of the hardiest trees in the world. It's one of the toughest trees that there are. In fact, there are olive trees in Palestine that were saplings at the time of Christ.

[35 : 35] Olive trees over 2,000 years old still living, still thriving in Palestine. These are tough, hardy plants. If there's any plant that's going to begin to grow really quickly in the region where Noah is, it's going to be an olive tree.

It's going to be one of the first things to begin to sprout and show signs of life. And that's exactly what happened. There's nothing weird going on here. You don't get some account of all of a sudden a garden appears on the scene out of nowhere.

That's not what happens at all. Exactly what you would expect after a massive flood. The first thing that begins to produce any sort of greenery is this very hardy plant that thrives in this area of the world.

So he comes back with an olive leaf. Which means that there's land out there to be had besides mountaintops. It means that much at least. But it's not enough for the bird to make a nest yet.

It's not dried out. So, verse 12, he waited another seven days. He sent the dove out. This time, the dove did not return.

[36 : 36] This time now, there's enough dryness out there in the world for the dove to make her own home, her own nest. And then the account continues. In the 601st year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth.

So there's no more standing water where there ought not to be standing water. There are, of course, seas and oceans, probably many of them newly formed, rivers, lakes, but water is now confined to the places where it should be confined.

It's not standing water. My backyard right now is mostly standing water. It's ridiculous. So much rain. Just standing water. Well, that kind of water now from the flood here is gone. But it's still that mush, you know?

You go out into your yard after it's been raining for a while and you finally look out and you're no longer seeing a lot of water standing on the ground so you go out and you just kind of mush around and sink in it. It's still that.

It's not fully dried. Verse 14, In the second month, on the 27th day of the month, the earth had dried out. Now, another month later, it takes another month, now the ground is dry enough to walk on.

[37 : 45] Verse 15, Then God said to Noah, Go out from the ark, you and your wife, your sons, and your wives' sons. So, this account proceeds just like you would expect a real drying up of waters to occur.

First, you hit the mountains, you can't see them. Then you can see the mountains, but you can't see anything else. There's only death everywhere. Then the first plants to begin to come back are the hardiest of the plants in the region.

Then you can see the ground. It's not standing water anymore, but it's not dry yet. You can't walk on it. And finally, it's dry enough. You can get out of the boat. You can walk around.

It's safe. Things are more or less back to normal. Or at least, a new normal. Because now it's a new world. It's a transformed world.

Prior to the flood, you didn't have the regular cycle of seasons and rain and snow and all those sorts of things. Now, after the flood, you do.

[38:47] In fact, Peter tells us that it was such a drastic change. He says that the world that then existed was deluged and perished in the flood. Noah is leaving the ark into an entirely new kind of environment.

A new kind of world. And yet, for Noah, this doesn't represent a fearful thing.

For Noah, this means that God has been faithful to his promises. He has brought Noah and his family not only through the rain, not only through the bursting forth of the fountains of the deep, but he has now carried him all the way through to the final end of the flood.

There's ground to walk upon. So what would you do if you were Noah? What's the first thing you do when you've been rescued and when you've been saved and now you're in this new world where everything is different?

I mean, the mountains would be new and bigger and different than they were before. The oceans are moved and new places. I mean, everything is changed. It's all new. Well, what's the first thing you do?

[39:54] First thing I'm going to do is probably find some food, build a house, set up shop, get ready for the night. Get ready because now you've got to deal with rain.

You never know when it's going to rain now. You're going to have to deal with seasons so there's going to be a winter coming up. I mean, you've got all sorts of things to think about and prepare for. I mean, that's what I would do.

Probably not very effectively, but I would attempt to prepare. I wasn't a Boy Scout so it would probably be pretty sad shelter that I would build, but nevertheless, I would give it a shot. That's not at all what Noah does.

Take a look at verse 20. Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and he took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered bird offerings on the altar.

And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth.

[40:55] Two things we learn from these verses. Number one, it's a new world, but it shares a lot in common with the old world. The main thing that it shares in common, fallen human beings.

God doesn't say, I'm never going to flood the world again because I've rid the world of sin. He says, no, I'm not going to do that again because then I'd have to do it constantly.

Every intention of man's heart is evil still. We're going to see Noah in the next chapter. He doesn't even, you don't even get past Noah. You don't even have to get to Noah's sons before sin begins to work its way back into the regular ebb and flow of human life.

Still sinful. It's still a fallen world which means that the salvation that God has delivered to Noah is not ultimate salvation. It points to something bigger and better than itself.

A new heavens and a new earth in Revelation. Deliverance from sin for those who trust in Christ. Something better is coming. But it also teaches us how we ought to respond when the something better comes.

[42:05] Because Noah's priorities at this point at least are set right. The first thing that Noah does after he's been saved and delivered and rescued by God, the first thing that Noah does is to build an altar in order to worship God.

I mean, that's not a minor thing. That's not like something that Noah did quickly. He has to build the altar. He has to take time to gather stones and rocks and build an altar.

He has to choose some of the animals that he's taken on the ark. The ones that he took seven pairs of, you don't want to kill the ones you only have one pair of. But he took seven pairs of the clean animals, he takes some of those, and he offers them up as an offering of worship to the Lord.

And we're told that the Lord was pleased by that. It was a pleasing aroma to him. What does God want from his people? What does God expect from those whom he has saved? He expects for us to worship.

He expects for us to fall down before him and give him the honor and the glory that he deserves. That's what God expects. That's what we ought to be about. We are a people who have not been rescued from a flood.

[43:12] We've been rescued from God's wrath. We haven't been saved from overwhelming waters. We've been saved from eternity in hell. How should we respond on a regular basis to that?

You can't do any better than Noah right here. At the end of the day, I don't think that this story about the flood is all that complicated.

And at the end of the day, I'm not sure that the Christian life is really all that complicated. We complicate things. Sin certainly complicates things.

But at its core, at its essence, the story of the flood is a simple story. God judges. God saves. His people worship.

And for us, the Christian life, He's a just judge. He has saved us by the blood of His Son. And we respond with worship.

[44:17] Let's pray. Help us, Father, to never complicate the message of the Gospel, but to remember that it's simple. Christ died for the ungodly.

Help us never to be so caught up in all the details of life that we forget that life is really about one thing. It's about giving you the honor and the glory that you deserve in the everyday things of life.

So let us hear the Apostle Paul's words whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God so that we don't try to pause to build altars, but we worship you, we honor you in our everyday comings and goings.

Eating, drinking, working, raising children in everything that we do, may we honor and glorify you for all that you've done for us. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.