

But God Remembered Noah and all the Animals and Livestock with Him in the Ark

8: 1-5

DIG: How did the waters dry up after the Flood? Was any of Noah's family lost? Were any of the wild animals or the livestock that were with Noah in the ark lost?

REFLECT: When has God remembered you and intervened on your behalf? When did you get a fresh start with God? What did you do with it? What does the fact that none were lost in the ark have to do with you?

Chapter 8, verse 1 is the defining moment of the Flood story, the pivot on which the story turns. Up to this point things were getting steadily worse, but from this point on things gradually get better. And the reason they get better is because **God remembered Noah**. For five long months Noah and his family and all the animals rode out the flood. During that time they saw no dry land at all. They must have had the sinking feeling that God had forgotten them. **But** just when all seemed lost, **Elohim remembered Noah (8:1a)**

To remember in the biblical sense is not to recall to mind or to refresh one's memory. Rather it means *to lavish God's loving care upon someone and to intervene on his or her behalf.*¹⁴⁷ This is like when Sampson called to God, "Adonai ELOHIM, just this once, please, think of me, and please, give me strength, so that I can take revenge on the Philistines for gouging out my two eyes" (Judges 16:28 CJB). *In Your love, intervene on my behalf.* Or when Hannah wanted to be remembered as she wept, praying: ADONAI, the LORD of heaven's angelic armies, if you will only look upon your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to ADONAI for all the days of his life (First Samuel 1:11). *In Your love, intervene on my behalf.* Or when the thief on the cross said: Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom (Luke 23:42). *In Your love, intervene on my behalf.* It that sense . . . God remembered Noah.

And all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark. Thousands of years later, an angel of God would say to Paul, who was in a ship on the wind-tossed Mediterranean Sea: God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you (Acts 27:24). As the salt of the earth (Mattityahu 5:13), God's people can protect and influence those around them for good.

Creation started all over again; it was a fresh start. In 1:2b we read that **the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters**. Here **He sent a wind over the earth and the waters receded (8:1b)**. Here we see the use of the creation themes of **Chapters 1 and 2** where water recedes, dry land appears and vegetation grows. **The LORD** uses the wind to evaporate the water, but **He** could have accomplished that same result by merely speaking: **Who says to the watery deep, "Be dry, and I will dry up your streams" (Isaiah 44:27)**. During a furious storm on the Sea of Galilee, **Jesus rebuked the winds and the waves and they became completely calm**. Unable to recognize who **He** was, the apostles said: **What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him (Matthew 8:23-27)!**

The two sources of water for the Flood were then stopped. Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky (8:2). This is the first time that **God** delivered His people through water; another time was through the **Red Sea (Exodus Chapter 14)**.

Once these two sources were stopped, **the water receded steadily from the earth (8:3a)**. The Hebrew word for **receded** is *shuwb*, which means *return* or *returned*. **The waters returned both downward and upward by means of evaporation (Psalm 104:6-9)**. The result was that **at the end of the hundred and fifty days the water had gone down**. Obviously **water** did not completely cease to exist, but merely returned to its former position in streams, rivers, lakes and oceans.

And on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on the mountains, or mountain range, of Ararat (8:4), in what is today northeastern Turkey on the Russian border. It is significant that **the ark** is said to come to **rest**, as though it had been *laboring* for five months in accomplishing its work of saving its occupants from sin and judgment.¹⁴⁸ **The ark rested on the same day that Jesus rose from the dead**. During **Noah's** lifetime, the Hebrew month of Nisan was **the seventh month**. At that time **God** had ordained an agricultural calendar that started in September-October with the month of Tishri. It was the first month of their calendar year and the month of Nisan, which was in the spring, March-April, was the seventh month. But at the time of the Passover, **ADONAI** said to **Moses and Aaron in Egypt**, **"This month of Nisan is to be for you the first month of your year" (Exodus 12:2)**. Thus, from the time of the first Passover, the Jews had two calendars, an agricultural calendar that started in the fall and a religious calendar that started in the spring. The use of two calendars continued up until after the Babylonian exile. Today the Jewish calendar uses only one calendar that begins in the fall with the month of Nisan.

As a result, Nisan, which had been the seventh month in the Jewish calendar in the days of Noah, had become the first month in **the Life of Christ**. **The Passover** was on Thursday the **fourteenth** of Nisan (**Exodus 12:18**), and three days later **Yeshua** rose from the dead on Sunday **the seventeenth day** of Nisan. **The ark** rested from its work on the same day that **Messiah** rested from **His** work of redemption (see my commentary on **The Life of Christ IX - The Examination of the Lamb**).

The placement and the timing of **the ark** was no accident. Both had a purpose. Why was it put in a place that almost defies access even today with our modern technology? Its highest peak is 16,946 feet above sea level and most of the year it is under ice. You would have thought a lush valley would have been more appropriate! **The ark** stood in **Noah's** driveway for 120 years as a testimony to an unbelieving world. I think it might emerge again, in **God's** own timing, as a testimony to another unbelieving world or another coming judgment.

The waters continued to recede until the tenth month, and on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains became visible (8:5). Noah, his family and the animals remained in **the ark** for many months before they could leave it. They were not out of danger. In one way of looking at it, **Noah's** experience at the top of one of the mountains of **Ararat** is no less frightening than that of **Moses** at the top of Mount Sinai. Both find themselves at the top of a mountain that is either enveloped in a rainstorm or an electrical storm. For **Noah**, as **the waters** went down, his hopes went up.¹⁴⁹ Eventually, **the earth** began to dry out.