



Bible Study

Genesis 8

This chapter sees the waters slowly receding and then it becomes possible for Noah to leave the ark and make a sacrifice. We also see God making a special covenant with mankind.

The waters recede v.1-5

The flood had occurred over a time and the drying up of the floodwaters also took time. God could have evaporated the waters very quickly but He chose not to. God will never be rushed. The tops of the mountains could be seen. This makes it clear that the flood had been extensive and over such an area that all were affected.

A window is opened and a raven and dove are sent. v.6-9

Noah had built the ark according to specifications given by God. *God provided window in the ark* There would be a point where he would need to monitor the situation. The window also shows us that Noah knew a time would come when he would leave the ark. In difficult times God's window of opportunity is there to be found and used. There are times when God invites us to see what He is doing.

The raven goes on an exploratory mission. The raven is seen as an unclean bird and so there could be a sense of purging before the flood totally recedes. The dove is often a symbol of purity and on its first flight returns with nothing.

The dove is sent again and has an olive leaf. v. 11

This bird of peace has an olive leaf in its beak. This is a sign of reconciliation and hope for mankind. Noah knew the wrath of God had been satisfied and that hope for a new beginning was in sight.

Dry ground v. 13-14

Noah removes an outer covering which was protecting the ark to see that there is dry ground. He must have been very excited that after being in a confined space for 40 days, the prospect of leaving the ark is now in sight. Christ has won freedom from our sin and we can enter a new life with Him.

Leaving the ark v 18-19

Noah, his wife, his sons and their wives can now leave the ark in safety. They step out into a fresh start. All the animals are free to go. These people have lived through a tremendously traumatic time and have witnessed the outcome of God's wrath but now see new opportunities.

Noah builds an altar v 20.

Noah sees it as an obvious response that he should build an altar and make a sacrifice to the Lord. This pattern of building altars will be repeated many times. The altar is a symbol of worship and praise and the sacrifice emphasises the need to shed blood which will literally be embodied later with the sacrifice of Christ Himself.

God makes a covenant with mankind v 21-22.

The Lord is pleased with the sacrifice and similarly, we know that although devastating, it pleased the Lord that Christ's suffering and sacrifice dealt with our sin.

After the Flood, God promised that despite the evil, sinful hearts of men, He would never again destroy all living creatures in this way..

He also promised that there would be a cycle of harvest, and that the seasons would never cease.

Points to consider

God's mercy prevails, but how well do we respond to his timing?

God gave Noah a window, do we take the windows of opportunity He provides to see the bigger picture?

To what extent are we like a dove bringing peace and hope?

We may not offer sacrifices like Noah, but in what way can we build altars of praise, sacrificing our wills to the Lord?

Do we appreciate God's covenant and appreciate the harvest provided for us? Do we share with those less fortunate?