



Sunday, August 10, 2025

Genesis 7-8

It's been a few weeks since we've been in our Genesis series - working our way through chapters 1 to 11 - and if you can remember that far back, we left off right at the introduction of the flood and Noah's ark.

In that message, we talked about the ark not as a sailing ship, but as a kind of floating safety barge - a vessel that no man could steer or control. We know this to be true because the Hebrew word used for ark (tebah) simply means box or coffin - not sailing ship. Interestingly, it is also the same word used for the little basket that Moses was placed in as a baby when he was floated down the Nile.

Two different arks. Two different stories. Two significant themes:
God was in control and God was their protection.

But here's what's surprising though: the water that symbolized chaos and judgment in Noah's day was the very thing God used to accomplish His will. It lifted the ark - not to drift aimlessly, but now to be carried by His direction. That which was meant for destruction was now being used by God for salvation.

And that's a pattern we see throughout Scripture. In creation, God hovered over the waters of the deep symbolizing His control over them. In Egypt, He used the Nile river to carry baby Moses to safety. In the Gospels, Jesus walks on the waves showing His control over chaos. Again and again, God shows us that He doesn't just calm the chaos - He is sovereign over it. He uses it. He directs it. And through it, He brings His people to safety.

And when we carry that thread all the way through Scripture, we see another kind of ark emerge - this time, in the form of a cross. Again the theme of God's sovereignty rings out loud and clear - that which was meant for destruction became the means of salvation. Once again, God proved that He is sovereign over chaos, able to turn death itself into life.

And this is where the flood story becomes deeply personal - because at its core, it's not just about judgment or rescue... it's a story of grace.

And in the middle of a wicked, wicked world, one man and his family found such grace.

Genesis 6:8 says:

'But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.'

Old Testament scholar J.A. Motyer once said that in order to gain full perspective of that verse, we should try reading it backwards. Not 'Noah found grace,' but: 'Grace found Noah.'

This simple little nuance allows us to see clearly that the emphasis is not on Noah but on the work of God in Noah's life.

You see, Grace enabled Noah to walk with God. Grace empowered him to trust when nothing made sense. Grace gave him faith to build a giant floating barge in the middle of dry land, under a blue sky with not a cloud in sight.

And I love that. Because this is our story too.

The same grace that found Noah is the grace that has found you and me.

The same grace that carried Noah is the same grace that is still enabling His people today. And that grace? That grace has a name.

Jesus Christ.

That brings us to the end of chapter 6. Today as we approach the rest of the story in Chapter 7 and 8, we will be looking at the time spent on the ark and what this protection of the Lord actually looked like for Noah and his family.

Today our reading is a rather lengthy text as we will be reading both chapters 7 & 8 in their entirety. If you are able to, please stand for the reading of the Word of God:

Genesis 7:1-24

'Then the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation. 2 You shall take with you seven each of every clean ani-

mal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female; 3 also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth. 4 For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made.” 5 And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him. 6 Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth.

7 So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. 8 Of clean animals, of animals that are unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth, 9 two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. 10 And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth. 11 In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. 12 And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

13 On the very same day Noah and Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark— 14 they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every sort. 15 And they went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which is the breath of life. 16 So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in.

17 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.

Genesis 8:1-22

‘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 re-

ceded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. 4 Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. 5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

6 So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. 7 Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth. 8 He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground. 9 But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself. 10 And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. 11 Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. 12 So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.

13 And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and indeed the surface of the ground was dry. 14 And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried.

15 Then God spoke to Noah, saying, 16 “Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. 17 Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you: birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” 18 So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. 19 Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, and whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

20 Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in His heart, “I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

22 “While the earth remains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Winter and summer,

*And day and night
Shall not cease.”*

This is a massive reading - yes, but it captures the entire flood story so I feel that it was important to read it in its entirety. Now, within these two chapters is a ton of detailed information - too much for us to walk through today though. So for the sake of time and continuity, there are three things that I see in this section that will help us to strengthen our relationship with the Lord.

Point #1:

If we look closely at verse 11 in Chapter 7, it says this:

Genesis 7:11b

‘...all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.’

This is significant because it suggests that water was not just raining down but exploding up from the deep as well. We often picture the flood as just rain, and yes, the skies opened, but scientifically, forty days and nights of rain alone could never flood the entire earth. Something else happened. It’s as if the very crust of the earth split open and the waters trapped beneath surged upward in a violent eruption.

What’s happening here is nothing less than the undoing of creation. In Genesis 1, God separated the waters above from the waters below, setting boundaries so life could flourish. But now, those boundaries are removed. The order of creation is reversed. The world sinks back into chaos.

It’s almost as if God is responding to humanity’s demand to live without His boundaries: ‘You want no boundaries? Then you will have none.’ And when the boundaries are gone, the chaos rushes in. In the flood, humanity experiences the full weight of life on its own terms - and it is devastating.

The flood wasn’t just water. It was God handing humanity over to what it thought it wanted. And without God’s boundaries, creation collapses.

Now watch this - the Bible is actually book-ended with this exact theme. Here in Genesis, God removes His protective boundaries and allows chaos to consume a world that has rejected Him. And in Revelation, we see it again during the trumpet and bowl judgments (chapters 8–9 and 15–16), as God gives humanity over to the desires of their hearts. The restraints are lifted, the forces of chaos are unleashed, and the very things people worship instead of God become their undoing. He doesn’t

force submission. If we insist on life without Him, He will let us have it - but in the end, that life is no life at all.

From beginning to end, the message is the same: God's boundaries are not restrictions meant to rob us, but guidelines meant to protect us. Remove them, and the waters rise.

Point #2:

Partway through chapter 7, we read that the water covered the earth for forty days and forty nights. Now, I find this entire section fascinating because you don't have to look very closely to see that there are many references to various numbers and lengths of time. And all of these numbers carry with them some sort of significance, but perhaps the most interesting one for me is the term 40 days and 40 nights. and I think it's because when I read that specific duration, I'm immediately drawn to account of Jesus being in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights. And if you take that example and start to look deeper into it, you will come to see that the number 40 as it relates to a delineation of time appears frequently throughout the Scriptures:

For example,

Moses fasted for 40 days on Mount Sinai as God prepared to give the law.

Israel wandered for 40 years in the wilderness as God refined their hearts.

Elijah journeyed 40 days to Horeb, where he heard the still small voice of God.

And Jesus was tested for 40 days in the wilderness before launching His ministry.

What's interesting is that in all of these examples, the term 40 is representative of a season of testing and transition. When Moses was fasting for 40 days, that was a serious test and then after the test came to transition as God gave him the law. Israel was tested for 40 years in the wilderness, but then afterwards God brought them into the promised land. Elijah journeyed for 40 days and wanted to die after that but then he transitioned into a renewed vision and mission once he heard the still small voice of God. Jesus was tempted and tested in the wilderness but after that stepped right into his season of ministry.

In all of these examples, the forty itself is the testing before the transition. It's the wilderness, the mountain, the journey, the hunger, the uncertainty. And the time of testing happens within those forty days.

And it's the same with Noah. The season of testing came as the rains poured down and the wells of deep gushed upward. But after that came silence.

No more roaring waters rising. No thunder. Just the still, endless expanse of water. The trial transitioned from enduring the storm to now enduring the silence.

Sometimes God's greatest work in us doesn't happen in the storm, but in the silence that follows. It's not just obedience or patience - it's formation. For it's in this kind of season, more than any other, that He tends to do His deepest work in our heart, mind, and soul - molding us and shaping us for what He has in store.

Noah's story is so beautiful because as hard as that transition from storm to silence can be, we know that that silence doesn't last. The waters recede, the ark finds its place on dry ground, the door opens up and a brand new world is right at their fingertips to explore.

Relate to babies being in the womb for 9 months. The time of growth and preparation is key for the next stage of life.

So forty, then - especially in Noah's story - reminds us of the space between what was and what will be. And in that in-between, God is preparing something new. But the middle is often uncomfortable, uncertain, and quiet. And still - Noah waited. So did Moses. So did Elijah. And so did Jesus. And so must we.

Part #3

Genesis 8:1 begins with a simple but powerful phrase, 'But God remembered Noah...'

In English, to remember usually means to call something back to mind - as if it had been forgotten. But in the Hebrew language, it's different.

The word remembered here is the Hebrew *zākar*, and it doesn't mean God had somehow misplaced Noah in His thoughts. This is covenant language. It means God turned His loving, faithful attention toward Noah and acted on his behalf. This isn't memory, it's God's deep love in action. It's God keeping His promise.

Whenever Scripture says 'God remembered,' it's the signal that He is about to intervene:

In Genesis 19:29, 'God remembered Abraham' and rescued Lot from Sodom.

In Exodus 2:24, 'God remembered His covenant' and began to deliver Israel from Egypt.

And in 1 Samuel 1:19, 'The Lord remembered Hannah' and opened her womb.

So what these three little words are doing here are actually acting as a hinge from Old Creation now to New Creation. They mark that turning point from destruction to creation: from Old Creation, to New Creation.

The next thing we read is that, '...God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided.'

I think it's easy to skip over this section and miss the spiritual significance. You see, when we read the term 'wind,' we likely picture a massive blowing breeze, which is true, but the word in Hebrew that is used for wind here is the word, 'ruach.' Which is really, really interesting. Because this is the exact same word that is used to describe the presence of God hovering over the face of the waters in Genesis 1:2.

So if you're following along, what the writer of Genesis is doing here is drawing a deliberate parallel between the very start of creation and this moment after the flood.

In Genesis 1:2, the ruach - the Spirit of God - hovers over the dark, chaotic waters, ready to bring order and life. Now, in Genesis 8:1, the ruach of God moves again over the chaotic floodwaters and they fall back - thus signalling that something new is about to emerge.

It's as if God is saying, 'I did this once, and I can do it again.'

The flood wasn't the end - it was the massive reset. The Spirit who breathed life into the first creation is the same Spirit now ushering in a renewed creation.

The chaos is being pushed back. The boundaries are being restored. And just like at the very beginning, God's Spirit is the one doing it.

This is why 'God remembered Noah' isn't just a nice little anecdote - it's the pivot point where judgment gives way to mercy, where death gives way to life, where chaos loses its control and where the same Spirit that began it all begins again.

And that's where I think we will pause for today. Because the 'ruach' of God is his nature. He is in the business of renewing. He's in the business of reclaiming. He's in the business of pouring out mercy. He's in the business of forming and shaping. And he does it because of his great love for you...for me.

So maybe you are here today and you can relate to seasons of testing and transition, and perhaps even find yourself frustrated in the silence. Be reminded today: God has not forgotten you - not in the way we think of forgetting - but in the truest, covenant-keeping sense. God remembers you. Just as He remembered Noah, Moses, Elijah, and Hannah.

As Isaiah 30:15 says:

'In quietness and in trust shall be your strength.'

It's not the frantic striving or the noise of the storm that renews us - it's the presence of God, the ruach, moving in ways we can't always see. And just as He brought Noah through the chaos into a brand-new creation, He is able to bring you through too - shaping you, sustaining you, and preparing you for what's next.

Blessing

Pastor Josh Hageman

Lead Pastor

Kingsview Community Church

Stoney Creek, ON

www.kingsviewchurch.com

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