

## The Olive Branch (part 2)

Noah's great flood is NOT a children's story!

The story of Noah was a sad one: People on earth did what God said was evil continually, and violence was everywhere (Gen. 6:11). We don't have much detail about it but we know that the level of wickedness was so intense and so widespread over the young earth that in His righteousness nature could not allow it to continue.

Such rebellion broke the heart of God. His heart was filled with pain (Gen. 6:6). He would send a flood and purge the earth.

Look at [Genesis 7:15,16](#) They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. <sup>16</sup> And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And [the Lord](#) shut him in.

And so it began: The skies rained for forty days. ([Gen. 7:17–20](#)). “The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. <sup>18</sup> The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. <sup>19</sup> And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered.

This is not a nice little kiddie story filled with the cuteness of little animals frolicking around. We don't like seeing the devastating dark side of sin.

[Verse 21](#) goes on to tell us that “every living thing that moved on the earth perished”—everything—“birds, livestock, animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind.” Every man, every woman, every child.

Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark.” Eight people.

Cruel? It seems so cruel to send a flood!

Remember... the message of righteousness and repentance was preached over a time of about 120 years. With every ping of the hammer, with every thrust of the saw. ([1 Peter 3:20](#) “... God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.”)

1656 yrs. people sinned in rebellion --- God saved Noah; told him to preach for 120 years. At the end of 120 years, God said there would be one more week and then the rain would start. God was patient and He warned the inhabitants to repent. But they would not repent!

[Genesis 8:1](#) picks up the rest of the story. “**But God**” **this is the only place of hope that the story offers...** “**God remembered Noah**” - not that he had forgotten him but God had made a covenant promise that he would save him and his family and now he's going to act upon that.

Genesis 8:1-4 But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. <sup>2</sup>The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, <sup>3</sup>and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, <sup>4</sup>and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

## “The ark rested...”

Ironically in this story of toil, trouble, and suffering the subject of “rest” seems to be at the fore front of this message.

- ❖ Noah’s name actually means “rest”

Genesis 5:28,29 NASV Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son. Now he called his name Noah, saying, “This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands.

Obviously God had revealed something prophetic to Lamech about his son. Perhaps he saw something of God’s future purposes in connection with Noah in that he looked on him as one that was to bring “comfort” or “rest.”

- ❖ Genesis 8:4, says the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

Notice it doesn’t say that it stopped sailing or stopped floating. It doesn’t say that it ran aground. Instead it rested! God does not waste words!

When the ark came to rest on Ararat, this was more than a physical landing on dry ground. It was a new beginning; the world was clean and at rest.

Sometimes the only way the new comes, is when the old dies.

Let God prune you today. Stop holding on to old tormenting memories, let it die!

- ❖ When Noah released the dove the Bible says, **the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him to the ark.** (Ge. 8:9 NAS)

Everything about the ark speaks of Rest!

Remember, the dove represents the Spirit of God and the Spirit of God will not settle where on rotting flesh. Learn to follow your peace. God leads us in this life by an inner peace and in the safety of His word.

## A Special Rest for the People of God

Hebrews 4:9-11 ESV So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, <sup>10</sup> for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

- 1) A rest comes from knowing you have done all you can to obey God's voice.
  - a) The rains fell for 40 long days and nights. Add another 150 days for waiting for the waters to recede, Noah and his family were on the boat nearly a year before they were able to exit.
  - b) The principle is simply this: Destruction comes quickly. Restoration, redemption and renewal takes time.
- 2) A rest comes from knowing that the storm waters are beyond your control and you must wait.
  - a) Coming into alignment with God's agenda regarding the relationships around you. Many things are beyond our control, our understanding and even our comprehension. Rest in God!

You will never enjoy the promise of special rest with a controlling spirit.

- b) **Isaiah 40:29-31 He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; (v.31) but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.**
- 3) A rest comes when you know that God will give you a clear sign when it is time to make a move.
  - a) The story continues (**Genesis 8:13-19**). Finally the ground is coming back. **"Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry."** He looks out and he sees land!
    - i) This is a man who wants to get off the boat, right?
    - ii) This is a man who has spent a year with his in-laws. This is a man who has the funky stench of animals. They have not taken a decent bath. They have not had a hot meal. It has been a year. This is a guy who wants to get off the boat.
  - b) But Noah waits for instructions. He waits for God to tell him to proceed. And God does. (v.15-17) **" Then God said to Noah, <sup>16</sup> "Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. <sup>17</sup> 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.”

Noah was a doer... But what Noah doesn't do -- is leave the boat too soon! God said build the boat, God said go on the boat, God has not yet said get off the boat. And so Noah stays on the boat until God tells him to get off the boat.

Don't move too quickly... make sure the timing is right.

There is a Rest for the People of God!