

Never Again

Genesis 8:1-22

Sunday June 6th 2010 Morning Service

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1. God will never forget us (1;1a) ‘But the Lord remembered Noah’ There is a principle that shines through this story, a principle that can warm the heart of any discouraged believer facing the storms of life. The principle is this: God remembers you. We are not forsaken.

- i. **The Lord remembers us in the storms of life.** God never forgets us, whatever we are passing through.
- ii. **The Lord remembers us in the storms of judgement.** In Noah’s case he was facing a storm caused by God’s judgment on a rebellious world. When the Lord judges this world by fire we can be confident that he will remember and deliver us if we are those who follow him.

2. God will give us rest (8:1b-14) ‘the ark came to rest’ (4) The name Noah means rest. Noah is a picture of how we can find rest in a rebellious sin torn and judged world. The concept of rest is a biblical picture of salvation (Heb 3:11,18; 4:1-11).

- i. **Rest from this world.** Noah knew how to find rest in the midst of a sinful generation, in the shadow of coming judgement and in the midst of a cataclysmic storm. Where did his rest come from? It came from trusting God and obeying God. It is only in these ways that we can find rest today. Whatever we face, a spirit of rest, the spirit of Noah, is available to God’s people. We need to bring everything to him in prayer and he will keep our hearts in peace.
- ii. **Rest from judgement.** Noah found rest in the storm of God’s judgement; he had trusted in God’s means of salvation. We can only find rest from the coming judgement of fire on this earth by trusting in the Lord Jesus.
- iii. **Rest in a new world.** Noah stepped out of the ark onto a glistening new world. This is surely a picture of heaven. Judgement has passed and a new life will begin. This is the ultimate Sabbath rest for God’s people, where all the other rests of Scripture point.

3. God calls us to step out in faith (15-19) ‘God said to Noah, “Come out of the ark” ... so Noah came out’ (15&18) See Heb 11:7. Noah was a man of faith.

- i. **Noah had faith to live among a wicked generation for God.** When wicked people all around him were jeering at his moral values, Noah still continued in them. He trusted in God when it was unpopular. Likewise, we are called to walk by faith in a depraved and an unbelieving generation.
- ii. **Noah had faith to build an ark.** As we build God's church we are building an Ark of salvation for humanity, for those who would enter it and flee from the coming wrath. This working for the church is an act of faith; it is building an Ark.
- iii. **Noah had faith to enter the ark.** It is not enough to build the Ark; salvation only comes from entering it. How many people serve God's Ark, the Church, the body of Christ, they lend a hand, they give their money, they give their time, but when it comes to it they never actually enter. They are labourers but do not really belong. In New Testament terms, they are not born again; they have not trusted in Jesus for their forgiveness; they have not repented of their sin.
- iv. **Noah had faith to leave the security of the ark.** Once the flood was over God still wanted Noah to step out further – to follow him by faith. In our lives we must go where the Lord leads.
- v. **Noah had faith as he steps out to receive the promises of God in this new world.** God always has more for us; more for us to do, more for us to obey, more for us to experience. There are always new challenges. This is the adventure of faith; a whole new world to explore.

4. God calls us to worship (20)

What is the first thing Noah does when he leaves the Ark? ***'Then Noah built an altar to the Lord.'*** (20)

- i. **Noah gave thanks for his deliverance** – his first thought was sacrifice rather than enjoyment of the new land. A whole category of OT sacrifices were thank-offerings; part of the significance of sacrifice is thankfulness. Here the righteous man, Noah, demonstrates the spirit of someone who walks with God: they are thankful to God.
- ii. **Noah knew he needed a substitute** – he sacrificed an animal, which died instead of Him and his family. The other great significance of sacrifice in the Bible is that of substitution. The idea is that the animal dies instead of you; it dies for your sins. Its blood is shed so that you might go free. Noah knew he needed forgiveness. All these sacrifices in the Old Testament never actually take away guilt; they simply pointed to that one future sacrifice that would actually take away sin, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. In a sense, they all picture something greater; they all point to a final fulfilment; they are all prophetic. The aroma that God smelt and found pleasing is symbolic of his accepting the sacrifice (See Eph 5:2).

5. God responds to thankfulness and sacrifice (21-22)

'As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.' (22)

- i. **No extra curses** (21a) - There would be no more extra curse on the land. Although there will be specific disasters there will not be any more general all-pervading curses covering all of creation

- ii. **No more universal floods** (21b) – never again will the whole earth be decimated by floods. There will be partial disasters, but not total disasters. This will be the state of affairs until the final day when the earth ends. But why? See 2 Peter 3:9
- iii. **No interruption of the cycles of nature** (22) – the cycles of nature will continue until the end of the world. (cf Acts 14:17). This is evidence of God’s existence and mercy. Seedtime and harvest are a testimony to us to cause us to seek God. They are an evidence of God’s grace.