

A study of Genesis 1-12

MISSING THE BOAT

Last Week, we studied Noah's faithfulness to obey God's every command. We can only imagine the mocking over the years it took to build the massive life-raft that would save him, his family, and the animals. As the Ark took shape, dominating the horizon, insults must have only gotten louder and meaner. That is, until the day it started raining.

When the Lord initially sealed everyone in the Ark, imagine Noah's neighbors stopping by, slapping the hull, and mocking those locked inside. However, soon those slaps turned into banging and pleading shouts, "Let me in! Let me in!" As time passed, the sounds stopped and the Ark set afloat. Eventually, the rain ceased and the only sounds were the animals and waves lapping the hull as the rudderless Ark drifted.

In today's world, people take shots at Jesus and God's Word all the time. However, they're like the mockers slapping the side of the hull in jest. Soon, however, their mocking will end and, apart from Jesus, they'll have missed the boat. Even if we're mocked, God has given those on-board the opportunity to throw the life-line and invite others to board.

GENESIS 8 (SELECTED)

¹ But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and domestic animals that were with him in the ark. God caused a wind to blow over the earth and the waters receded. ² The fountains of the deep and the floodgates of heaven were closed, and the rain stopped falling from the sky. ³ The waters kept receding steadily from the earth, so that they had gone down by the end of the 150 days. ⁴ On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ark came to rest on one of the mountains of Ararat. ⁵ The waters kept on receding until the tenth month. On the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains became visible.

¹⁴ And by the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was dry. ¹⁵ Then God spoke to Noah and said, ¹⁶ "Come out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁷ Bring out with you all the living creatures that are with you. Bring out every living thing, including the birds, animals, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. Let them increase and be fruitful and multiply on the earth!"

²¹ And the LORD smelled the soothing aroma and said to himself, "I will never again curse the ground because of humankind, even though the inclination of their minds is evil from childhood on. I will never again destroy everything that lives, as I have just done."

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Uniformitarianism is a view in geology that suggests the Earth's geologic process has always acted in roughly the same way as what we can observe today. The opposing view is Catastrophism (like catastrophe). It's the view that the earth has been shaped more by "violent events of great magnitude." Let's ask a simple question, in your life, what has ever stayed consistently the same? Why should geology be any different? Could a world-wide flood best explain the world as we know it?



DISCUSSION

How have you experienced God's faithfulness?

1. What 2 things did God do in this verse? (1)

2. What events took place according to the following references to time?

-150 days (3)

-July 17th (4)

-February 27th (14)

3. What promises did the Lord make in response to Noah's obedience? (21)

4. In what ways did God act faithfully toward Noah, his family, and the animals?

5. Describe a time when it felt like God "remembered" you?

6. Describe a time when it felt like God "forgot" you?

"Obedience" is not a word many of us like. In fact, it's something you only appreciate through hindsight. You must obey to love obedience. Sound weird? Talk to your coach today.

ICEBREAKER

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

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STUDY NOTES QUARANTINE

With the exception of those that got married or had a baby, 2020 will go down as one of the worst years ever for a lot of people. From a pandemic, to wildfires, to murder-hornets, to the nastiest election cycle ever, this year can't end soon enough. However, what tops the list for many of us in the year has been the quarantine.

Early in the pandemic, we saw images from ally countries of overloaded hospitals with people dying in the hallways because there weren't enough ventilators. To slow the spread many people across the world began to quarantine. Acronyms like "PPE" and phrases like "social distancing" quickly became common language. Now, clothing stores sell accessorizing masks to match outfits. In a matter of months, our whole world looks so different. We've remained distanced and relatively quarantined, and even as businesses and venues reopen, many people have cabin fever while still others are a little nervous to leave the safety of their homes.

As the rain fell, we can imagine that Noah and his family experienced many extreme emotions—fear of the storm, gratitude for safety, anxiety over feeding and cleaning up after the animals. Early on, every sound and jostle must have brought terror. However, as days, weeks, and even months went by, incredible boredom must have sunk in, the likes of which Covid-19 cannot touch. **But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and domestic animals that were with him in the ark.**

GOD IS FAITHFUL

Once while working from home, I put on a pot of chili. Sometime later, I was sitting at my computer when I smelled something burning. I ran downstairs to find a ruined, scorched pot of what was previously chili. Did God "remember" Noah because he had forgotten about him the way I forgot about my chili? No. This Hebrew word "remembered" indicates that God acted toward someone because of a prior commitment. It's because of this commitment to Creation that **God caused a wind to blow over the earth and the waters receded.**

God's faithful care, however, had to last a lot longer. We read in that passage that the water spigots were turned off **and the rain stopped falling from the sky.** However, unlike a ride at a waterpark, they didn't unload when the splashing ended. We appreciate and worship God's faithfulness in the storm—what we don't acknowledge enough is God's faithfulness in the waiting. **The waters kept receding steadily from the earth, so that they had gone down by the end of the 150 days.**

Many of us struggle to unplug from technology for a day or two. We have complained in quarantine about virtual meetings, classes, and hugs—and I'm with you in the grumbling. However, in total, Noah, his family, and the animals were in the Ark for over a year.

At first, **the ark came to rest on one of the mountains of Ararat.** Then, **the tops of the mountains became visible.** But finally, after one year and 17 days, **God spoke to Noah and said, "Come out of the ark."** God finished the work he promised to do.

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS MOTIVATES OUR OBEDIENCE

When Noah experienced the faithfulness of God, he made a sacrificial offering. **The Lord smelled the soothing aroma and said to himself, "I will never again curse the ground because of humankind, even though the inclination of their minds is evil from childhood on. I will never again destroy everything that lives, as I have just done."** Noah's great faith rested in the greatness of God. God responded to Noah's gratitude with a promise to never again destroy everything that lives with a flood.

For Noah, God "moved" by sending a *storm*. He moved by the *slow evaporation* of water. And he also moved by the *command to leave* the ark. We often put God in our box to say that God only "moves" in favorable circumstances. We love the "freedom-from-ark" moments, but fail to celebrate God's movement in the roar of the storm or the silence of the "evaporation" months. We think that when it says "God remembered" that he really *did* forget about us.

What are "freedom-from-ark" moments? It's any time God does what *you* like—it's making varsity, it's getting a starting spot, it's the trophy, it's the girl/boyfriend, it's the car, it's the scholarship, etc. Before these pinnacle moments, has God forgotten us on JV, on the practice squad, in the losers' bracket, in singleness, in ride-with-my-mom-ness, in busted dreams, etc.? The pinnacle moments may or may not ever come. So the question becomes, can you worship a God who doesn't meet your demands?

Often, we come to God like spoiled children, "If you do this, I will do that." God says, "You want me to feed you a mud pie, when I've already given you an invitation to the greatest feast eternity has ever seen. Stop asking for things too small for who I've made you to be." God has already been so faithful to us in countless ways.

Sure, our lives may be stormy, we may be in a season of waiting, or we might be riding high. God is still faithful. And God's faithfulness should motivate us toward obedience.