

The Ark Rests on Mt. Ararat

Genesis 8:1-12

Genesis 8:1-12 - *"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 receded 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 that 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."

Background Notes

Comparing the date given in Genesis 9:4 with the date given in Genesis 7:11, the Flood lasted for five months. After the ark came to rest, another seven months went by before the waters receded enough for Noah and his family to exit the ark. Certainly this was a worldwide flood - not just a small local flood that lasted for a few days! This was a worldwide flood. Throughout the Flood period, and even after Noah came out of the ark, a lot of geologic activity would have occurred on the face of the earth. Verse 3 says that the waters receded continually from the earth. These great volumes of moving waters would rapidly cut the layers of soft sediments that had been laid down during the Flood. Huge canyons, like the Grand Canyon in Arizona, would not have taken millions of years to carve. They would have been carved in a relatively short period of time, as the run-off of the floodwaters carved out the still-soft sediments that were laid down during the Flood. Even a small catastrophe like the eruption of Mount Saint Helens in 1980 proved that soft sediments can build up and then be carved out by water and mudflows **in a matter of days**, before hardening into rock. It doesn't take millions of years!

In addition, a lot of tectonic activity occurred worldwide. Sea floors sank. Landmasses rose as the earth came to isostatic equilibrium (equal pressure). There would have been a lot of deformation and folding and faulting and uplift of the soft sedimentary rock layers.

The results of this activity are visible all around the world today. Some sedimentary layers are tilted and then folded over (with the layers all folded together in “soft” folds, like a layers of blankets folded together). This shows that the layers had to be laid down in a short period of time - and were folded over together while they were still in a “soft” state. It’s **impossible** for a layer of sediment to be laid down, then harden into rock over thousands of years, then another layer laid down and hardened - and then for all the layers to bend or to be folded smoothly, without cracking the hardened rocks. All the layers have to be soft together, at the same time, for folding to take place. The geologic phenomenon of folded layers indicates a rather rapid, continuous build-up of layers of sediments, and carving and tectonic activity while the sedimentary layers were still soft.

A lot of mountain building would have gone on all over the earth during these post-Flood years. For example, Mount Everest and the high Himalayan mountains wouldn’t have been around before the Flood - they are the *result* of the Flood. There was no need for enough water to cover Mount Everest during the Flood, because Mt. Everest would have been thrust up by tectonic activity during and following the Flood. In fact, the Himalayan Mountains are still active and gaining height as the tectonic plate on which India sits pushes north and subsides (or slides) under the tectonic plate on which the Himalayan Mountains rest.

Marine fossils found near the tops of all the high mountain ranges around the world is evidence of the worldwide Flood, and the catastrophic events immediately following the Flood. Needless to say, with the collapse of the subterranean reservoirs (“fountains of the deep”), there would have been a lot of volcanic activity during the Flood, and following the Flood. And there is a **lot** more we could say here, but we must move on!

Doctrinal Points

1. God remembers His people.

Verse 1: *“Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark.”*

What does that mean – “God remembered Noah”? Isn’t God omniscient? Doesn’t He know everything? Does God forget, and have to recall people and events to His mind? Of course not! The phrase, “God remembered Noah” means that God intervened and he acted on Noah’s behalf.

In 1 Samuel 1:11, when Hannah prayed, “Oh, Lord remember me” – she meant “Oh Lord, intervene for me and act on my behalf.” And the Lord did intervene and act on Hannah’s behalf, and gave her a son, Samuel. In Luke 23:42, when the

thief on the cross prayed, *"Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom"* he meant, "Lord, intervene for me. Act on my behalf." The Lord did intervene and act on behalf of that repentant thief when He said, "Today, you will be with me in paradise."

How did the Lord intervene and act on Noah's behalf? *"God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained"* (v1). And then God caused the ark to rest on a nice level area in the mountains of Ararat (v4). It's not easy to find a level area one and a half football fields in length in rugged mountains. It's hard enough to find a level place to pitch a small tent, let alone a huge boat! But **God remembered Noah**. Can you imagine what would have happened to the ark and the animals and Noah's family if the ark had landed on the edge of a cliff or precipice? God remembered Noah and his family and the animals. He intervened and acted on Noah's behalf, and guided the ark to a level resting-place. God remembers His people - and that includes you. If you're one of God's people, as you trust the Lord, He will intervene for you and act on your behalf. God remembers His people!

A few years ago we faced a major decision about Growing Christian Ministries. We faced a major decision on which direction to go, and the Lord intervened and acted on our behalf in an amazing way. He gave us specific direction - and He even made financial provision for this decision! God remembered us. God will intervene and act on your behalf, too, as you trust in Him. God remembers His people.

2. Christ rests from His finished work.

Where do we see that doctrinal point? Do you recall that we said the ark is a wonderful picture of Christ? As the ark suffered and was battered in the Flood of God's judgment, and endured the storm, so Jesus Christ suffered the judgment of God against sin when He was on the cross. He endured through the awful storm of God's judgment, and He finished the work of salvation.

Genesis 8:4: *"Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat."* As the ark rested, having finished its work, so Christ rests from His finished work. When the Lord cried out, *"It is finished,"* His work of atonement for our sins was complete. The Lord Jesus Christ is now seated at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 10:12). He rests from His finished work.

As Noah and his family were brought into a whole new world, so we who are in Christ are brought into a whole new realm. 2 Corinthians 5:17: *"...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."* This has taken place because the work of Christ is complete. Jesus Christ rests from His finished work.

Practical Application

Are you a raven or a dove?

Notice that I didn't say, "Are you a hawk or a dove?" I'm not talking politics here! The question is, Are you a raven or a dove? In verses 6-12, Noah sent a raven and a dove out from the ark to see if the waters had receded. The raven didn't return to the ark (v7). The raven found floating debris and dead matter on which to rest and feed. However, the dove found no resting place (v9).

A week later Noah sent the dove out again, and she returned with a fresh olive leaf in her beak - life from the new world! The spiritual picture here is quite clear: the raven resting on debris and feeding on dead matter pictures life in the realm of the dead world - the flesh. The dove with the fresh olive leaf pictures life in the realm of the spirit and the new creation.

Are you a raven or a dove? Where are you "resting"? On what are you "feeding"? Listen to the words of Romans 8:5-6, *"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."*

If you're renewing your mind by constantly feeding on the Word of God and being involved in the things of God, then you are a dove. However, if you are constantly filling your mind with things that appeal to the flesh, and feeding yourself on the garbage and debris of this spiritually dead world, then you're a raven.

Think about it - do you spend more time watching TV or on the internet than you spend reading and studying Scripture, or being involved in spiritually beneficial activities and service? **Are you a raven or a dove?**