

GENESIS 8 : 4-5, 14-17, 20-22**GOS's REST ON THE MOUNTAIN**

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. . . .

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." . . .

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, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

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When would a person rest at the top of a mountain? When he's been climbing half a day to get there—physical rest and emotional joy! In our text, it was just the opposite. Noah's ark had been floating above the water above the tops of the mountains for several months, when it came to rest on Mt. Ararat.

Rest—removing the concerns. Do you suppose Noah's family wondered, "Will we ever get back to solid ground?" What other emotions might they have had? Surprise at the sound of pounding rain (likely no rain before this—Genesis 2:6 says a mist went up from the earth and watered ground). Unfamiliarity in living in these unusual quarters. Apprehension as the ark began to shift and rock, being lifted by the water. Uneasiness at the continual motion of a vessel at sea. Wondering if the pounding rain would ever cease (40 days). "Monotony" as week after week went by, caring for the animals. There much we don't know about the trip in the ark. All we do know is size of the ark—450' x 75' x 45'. It had three stories/decks. Everything else about the ark, everything else about the "life-size ark replica" in Kentucky—other than the length, width, height, and three floors—is conjecture; it's maybe true. After the water stopped rising, God sent a great wind to help dry up the water, which meant getting used to the sound of the wind day and night for many weeks. Finally—five months after the trip started—Surprise! CLUNK! the ark was grounded on Mt. Ararat. Perhaps it had bumped and scraped ground for several days before it finally came to rest. Consider, the ark perhaps had 10-15 feet of "draft" below the water line to catch ground. By the eighth month of the trip, the tops of the mountains could be seen. Imagine the curiosity and eagerness to look out the window in the ark!

It's fascinating trying to put oneself into their shoes. Eight grown-up people, family members, no children, enduring, in safety, God's wrath upon the rest of the earth. What did it take? It would have taken lots, but each had the most important thing—trust in the Lord and in His promise of rescue; ultimately, His rescue from sin. They most certainly knew the deep sickness of sin in which the world around them had reveled, total disregard for the Lord, the people were "only evil all the time," no admitting of sin, no seeking and pleading for the Lord's merciful forgiveness. But those eight had that, the sure mercies of God as promised to Adam and Eve 1500 years earlier. Namely, the Seed of the woman will come to bruise the devil's/serpent's head. Defeat for Satan, victory for them. These were the only eight among the thousands on earth, clinging to Jesus.

When God sends you on a long “journey” in life, bear with it. You are not abandoned or cast off. He spares you for REST, not just on Mt. Ararat, but rest for your heart and soul before God who has loved you and meticulously spared you—God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Your sins and shame of this past year, week, and day—sins that you wouldn’t want to disclose—in Jesus’ blood, in His death and resurrection, are washed away. Here is rest!

Serve Him in the station in life He gives you. You may think you gotten a bum rap, a bad deal in life. Maybe Noah and his family felt that way. But had they? Have you? They had a very important function and privilege in life—saving the remnants for continued life on the earth. Imagine the joy of coming out of the ark, one year and ten days after going in. God, who had shut them in, directed them to go out. What joy to be on God’s green earth again! The joy of seeing those animals tumbling and flying out of the ark to resume life and to repopulate the earth. By now they must all have been beloved pets. Their also was their own joy of being back to days on earth. There is joy in your life too; just look a little! Joy in serving others, joy in being part of God’s family and kingdom, joy in living where you live—region or house—your occupation, your family, and your Savior each day. Each person has a role in God’s master plan. Stop feeling sorry for yourself, get rid of the self-pity bag, don’t envy others. Do you think the high-flying people who didn’t make it into the ark enjoyed what they actually got?

After Noah exited, he built an altar and offered a sacrifice “of every clean animal and bird”—“clean,” fitting for sacrifice and food. Animals were there for man’s use; they were not hands-off-sacred. The Lord was pleased with the sacrifice. The Lord is pleased with your offerings, your displays of devotion, thanks, and love also. “We love Him, because He first loved us.”

In His goodness and kindness, God promised never to destroy all living things on this earth again by a flood. He set His beautiful rainbow in the sky as a sign of His merciful promise in spite of the deep corruption of sin in the heart of man. The rainbow is not a sign of anyone’s right to live in whatever sin they choose.

God also promised, “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.” Until the END of the earth comes—and He says it will—He will never stop providing daily bread. People will not all die from worldwide drought, from climate change due to the melting of the polar icecaps, from a freeze-up and nuclear winter caused by dust raised from massive numbers of atom bombs, which will darken the skies so that there is no sunlight. God will keep His children safe. Rest!

In fact, the “best Rest” will be yours in heaven! Jesus’ death on Mt. Calvary has paid the fare for you. His resurrection from the nearby tomb has guaranteed it! When your ark of life arrives at the heavenly Mt. Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem, you will live in joy forever. *“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Revelation 21:4).*

Do you know what Noah’s name means? *Genesis 5:29 says, He [his father] called his name Noah, saying, “This one will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD has cursed”* As a prophet, Lamech, spoke God’s message and named the boy “Rest,” or by a play on words, “Comfort.” Noah would be for the comfort of this fallen sinful world. Did Lamech realize the flood was coming? I doubt it. But God revealed to him that somehow this boy would comfort his people. Through Noah God spared the human race from total annihilation. Noah would also be the one from whom the Savior of the world would come! God certainly could have put to death all people and started over, but not so. God’s Words and Promise would stand, spoken against Satan in the presence of Adam and Eve, “A seed of the woman (of Eve) will come to bruise your head forever, Satan.” God never goes back on His Word. What a comfort Noah is for us. God rescued Noah’s family of eight in the flood. God has rescued all His family-to-come from judgment in hell—through Jesus!

There is rest for you, at the top of God’s mountain!

Amen! So be it!

---Pastor Kanzenbach