

**Genesis 8: 1-14; “God Remembering Noah”, Sermon # 6 in the series –
“The Life of Noah”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on
April 23rd, 2023, in the Morning Worship Service.**

In verse 1 it says, “Then God remembered Noah.” When He remembered Noah, and his household and all the animals with him, I believe that it shows us the basis of our assurance of our salvation. It is that God remembers His people. And God remembers His promises, to fulfill them in the life of His people. Sometimes those who have believed in Christ, however, think that God has forgotten them, and so they come to lack assurance. But I want to show you from this passage, that He never does. God always remembers all of His elect people to do them good. He is faithful to give them tokens of assurance, when they think that perhaps He has forgotten them. So the question that I want to pose to you in this regard, is this: In what ways does God remember Noah so that Noah is convinced of God’s faithful and loving care towards him as a believer? I would say to you that God remembered Noah and all of His elect people on the ark, by giving them 3 Lines of assurance, and by showing His love to them, in all of these ways.

1st of all – God remembered Noah by giving him the assurance of his adoption as a son.
(verses 1-5)

Noah and his household, and all the chosen animals, had been in the ark a full year upon the waters of the great flood. And what a baptism it had been! He had been saved from judgment by entering into the ark. He had been delivered from the wrath of God. He had been buried in the ark and passed through the stormy waters. And they had risen higher and higher until they covered the highest mountains by 25 feet. And then these deep waters had just sat there for 150 days, while God’s justice and anger prevailed against the sinners of that old world. It must have seemed to Noah, at times, that God had forgotten him.

It appears that God had not spoken to Noah for at least 5 months. And perhaps Noah wondered if God would ever turn from the fierceness of His anger. God had told him when the flood was coming, but he had not been told when it would end. And I am sure that this was a great concern to Noah. As we can sympathize with what Noah was going through, we need to understand that there can never be any assurance of salvation outside of faith in Jesus Christ. The wrath of God prevailed against all the sinners of Noah’s day, and it will prevail against all the sinners of our day and in every generation of men, whoever will not repent, will perish.

Those people who will not come into the ark of Christ’s finished work; those who will not believe in Him for His perfect righteousness to be charged to their legal account, they can never work out a righteousness of their own that God will accept. There may be a self confidence that some people have, or develop in this life, based upon who they are, or what they have done in this life. But that will completely vanish away in the Day of Judgment. A person’s assurance of salvation can never ultimately rest upon what they have done, but must always rest in the primary sense, upon what Christ has done for them in His death.

It is Christ’s righteousness being accepted before God, and your trusting alone in that; that is what brings you assurance. When you trust in God, and your confidence is completely fixed upon His promise of salvation, then God will remember you. He will not only remember you in this life, but He will remember you forever. We have seen the picture of conversion in Noah’s entering into the ark. We have seen the picture of Baptism in Noah’s obedience to stay in the ark; to be buried with Christ in baptism, and to pass through the waters in by residing in this ark which saved him.

Now in this passage, we are seeing the first steps of God’s giving assurance to a new believer. It is assurance given to a believer undergoing affliction, when it says – “Then God remembered him.” Noah is the picture of a believer entering upon a new life in Jesus Christ. And for the new believer, or even for the older believer, there will be many discoveries over time, of what God is doing for them. There will be many discoveries of what He is doing for them, and what He is going to do, to help you to see righteous changes in their life. And these will only come with inquiry and

investigation.

These are things that the believer longs to understand. They are things which he wants to begin to see take place in his life, through his growth in grace and his growing in Biblical wisdom and understanding. There is much work that the Spirit of God must do in the life of a believer, to give him the assurance of salvation that he needs when he enters upon the Christian life, that it will be so. And so the text says, “And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided.” This was a real indication to Noah that things were going to change for the better for him. The waters of judgment subsided, and God used the wind to hasten the earth’s drying.

Noah thought to himself – I am not going to be in this buried state forever. I’m going to get out of here. The true believer in Jesus Christ, after he has believed, or when he is passing through affliction, he often thinks to himself, “Now what is God going to do with me? How am I going to get over this sense of conviction of sin? How do I know that God is for me? How do I know that He will continue the good work that He has begun in me? How can I glorify God in this affliction that I am in? I feel like I am dying inside, and dying physically. What will God do for me now, to sustain my weary spirit?”

The text says that, “God made a wind to pass over 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.” “And the waters receded continually from the earth.” “Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.” “And the waters decreased continually until the tenth of the month.” “Then the tops of the mountains were seen.”

I hope that you will understand, dear believer, that it will do your weary soul good when you are convicted of sin, to understand that God remembers you. As a believer, it does you good to know, in every stage of living your Christian life, that God has sent His Spirit to you, to give to you the sense of your adoption as sons and daughters. You remember that in the beginning, in Genesis 1: 2, it says, “The earth was without form and void and darkness was on the face of the deep.” “And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.” Here in this passage, we seem to find a similar work taking place for Noah, to give him the assurance that God was going to bring him out of this state of confinement in the ark.

The wind was the indication of this. The wind is often used as a symbol of the Holy Spirit working, in the Scripture. In John 3: 8 Jesus says, when speaking of the ministry of the Spirit, “The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes.” “So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” The Spirit is given to the Christian, sent into His heart and life to be a Comforter, and to be an Advocate. He is sent to be a witness to your spirit that you are the child of God. You see this in Romans 8: 15 & 16. “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba Father.” “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”

I believe that this is actually what we have here, in Noah, in the ark at this time. God was making a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters were being assuaged and being dried up. This is the picture of the Spirit coming to the heart of any troubled believer to take away their fears that God is not with them. He is sent into your heart so that you will see that God is for you. He is sent to your heart to make a way for you through your difficulties, either spiritually or physically. He comes to you and shows you that prayer will avail. That faith will enable you to look forward with confidence, that God will lead you, and He will sustain you. He will guide you into all the truth, because He has adopted you into His family.

You are His child, and He will make a way for you. God would not leave Noah feeling like an orphaned child. And He will not leave you to feel as an orphaned child either, when you believe in Jesus. He will come to your soul and give you that kind of assurance, that you are His child, as you trust in the Lord Jesus. He has promised that He will do this for every believer. Look at John 14: 15-18. “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot

receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you, and will be in you.” I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” This is definite assurance given to New Covenant believers. And Noah knew something of it, in the circumstances of the wind passing over the earth, and the waters subsiding.

2nd – God remembered Noah by giving him the assurance of his progress against sin.

(verses 6, 7)

It says in verse 6, that “It came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made.” “Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth.” The picture here is of Noah being unable to see the condition of things on the earth, very well, from inside the ark. He was trying to investigate. He used some birds to do some reconnaissance work for him. He first sent out a raven. And this raven kept going to and fro from the ark until the waters had dried up from the earth. I believe that this is a good picture of the believer making inquiries after the state of his own heart.

He says to himself – Has there really been a change in my heart? Has sin’s dominating power been broken in my life? Am I feasting my eyes on the dead bodies of my former sins? Am I able to put sin to death in my life? These thoughts of the new believer are, I think, the picture of the raven. The raven pictures the believer’s asking himself concerning whether or not he has died to sin, and is putting it to death in his life, or not. Elijah, in the time of drought, in 1st Kings 17: 6 was “brought bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening.”

This was because God had commanded that the ravens would provide for him in this way. So it is for you when you have believed in Christ. You will be nourished in your faith when you see progress being made against indwelling remaining sin in your life. Romans 8: 13 & 14 says – “For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live.” “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” This is a second line of evidence towards building assurance in your mind as a believer.

You can know that you are a Christian when you find sin’s power being subdued in your life. Listen to Micah 7, verses 18 & 19 – “Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?” “He does not retain His anger forever, because He delight in mercy.” “He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities.” What precious words these are! You will be making progress in holiness when you find yourself putting sin off, and putting it to death. You will tear at sin, you will pick at sin, and you will delight in its death in your life. The raven lives in this way. So does the true believer.

All this will take place by prayer on your part. It will take concerted effort. And it will take repeated attempts to do it; going back and forth to Christ the ark, and looking for strength, and rest, and peace, and grace from Him. And you will look to Him for your making progress in righteousness and holiness in living your life to Him. But you should understand that you will only really see progress, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Proverbs 30: 17 says, “The eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out.” Even so, the Holy Spirit of God will enable you to deal with your bad attitudes towards your parents, and other people around you.

You will learn to pray for progress against every sin. And you will cry out to God for the death of your sinful habits. You will, as it says in Psalm 147, verses 7 & 9 – “Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving,” because, “He gives to the beast its food, and to the young ravens that cry.” You will not become anxious or despair about the progress that you are making, because you will remember the words of Christ in Luke 12: 24 – “Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them.” “Of how much more value are you than the birds?” You see, this is the kind of assurance that God gave to Noah when he sent the raven out to see whether the waters were drying up. So too, you will be able to see the influence and power of sin be more and more subdued in you as time goes on. That is, if you will live seeking grace from Christ that this good thing will be taking place in your life.

3rd – God remembered Noah by giving him the assurance of his hope. (verses 8-14)

Verse 8 says – “He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground.” “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.” The assurance that was given to Noah, here in these verses, was that God would be working to show him that He, God, bring forth new and good things in Noah’s heart, as well as from the ground. Noah not only sent out a raven to check out the waters, and the dryness of the land, but he also sent out a dove. This, too, I think is of great significance to the believing, but troubled heart, which is looking for assurance. For there is no bird in the Scripture which so typifies a believer as a dove. And there is no bird in the Scripture which so typifies the Holy Spirit, as well. So let us look at both.

When Noah sent this dove out, it says that she returned to him. “So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself.” Even so, when Jesus Christ first takes you to Himself, dear believer, you are happy just to be with Him. You are happy just to have Him in your heart and life. But when you go out to do his bidding in the world, to keep His commandments and to do His will, you find that there is no place for your soul to rest in this world. And so you find yourself coming back to Christ, your ark, for rest, and assurance, and strength. He will put out his hand out to take you to Himself. And He will do it over and over again, because He is kind. He knows that you need this assurance that you are doing the right thing.

And so He will says to you, in the words of Song of Solomon chapter 2, verse 14 – “O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely. Our Lord Jesus Christ is indeed desirous to have fellowship with you. He wants to hear you tell him of all your difficulties. He wants you to relate to Him all the reasons that you think that your obedience to His commandments is impossible. He knows that He is well able to care for you. He is well able to care for you in the time of your discouragement and distress. He knows that a time will come when you will be able to go out on that mission, and by His power you shall succeed.

The reason that you will succeed in learning to do His will, is because He has been entirely successful in doing His Father’s will while He was here upon the earth. In Matthew 3: 16 it says, “When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.” “And suddenly a voice came from heaven saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”” This dove, representing the Holy Spirit, bore witness to the fact that the Father was well-pleased with all that Jesus did. This is why you must believe in Him and not in yourself.

This is why you must be baptized with His baptism. This is why, when you are lacking assurance, or are distressed with the length of your affliction, that you must pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show you if there is anything fruitful taking place in your heart, whether the life of Christ is developing and flourishing in you, as you take the cover off the ark and look over the side. What an encouragement to Noah it was, when after a few weeks, he again sent the dove out and in the evening she came back to him. She came back with a freshly plucked olive leaf in her mouth. Things were growing down there on the ground where only the waters of judgment had been before.

What great assurance came to Noah, that God would renew the surface of the earth. That He would allow good crops and flowers and trees to grow on it once again. So too, what great assurance will come to your heart when the Holy Spirit shows you that there are real indications of the life of grace in your heart, that God has caused to grow there. May it be that you will see the faithfulness of God in this to yourself, if you are trusting in Jesus Christ. The waters of sin are receding, and new life is growing, and many good things are coming for all of God’s believing people. May His grace renew each of our hearts this morning to expect great things from Him.

