

Noah's Ark Pt 3: The Flood Subsides

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning. Please turn your Bibles to Genesis 8, our sermon text for today.! If you need a Bible, you are welcome to take one from the back table and keep it as our gift to you.

But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth and the water subsided.

The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed. The rain from the heavens was restrained and the waters receded from the earth continually.

At the end of 150 days, the waters had abated. And in the seventh month of the 17th day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

[1 : 0 6] And at the end of 40 days, Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth.

Then he sent forth a dove for him to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth.

So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark.

And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth.

Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore. In the 601st year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth.

[2 : 2 5] And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. In the second month, on the 27th day of the month, the earth had dried out.

Then God said to Noah, So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark. Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, I will never again curse the ground because of men, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth.

Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.

[4 : 0 3] This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Lord, you have told us that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

And so God, this word this morning is bread. It's nourishment for our souls. And so Lord, I pray that you would nourish us as we feast on the abundance of your word, which ultimately points to Christ. Christ who is the word made flesh, whose glory we have seen, the only son from the father, full of grace and truth. So Lord, help us to feast on your word. Help us to feast on Christ this morning, I pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Good morning, everyone. My name is Mike, one of the pastors here at Shoreline. I'm just glad that you've joined us this morning. An anthem of the 16th century Protestant Reformation was the Latin phrase, Post Tenebras Lux.

Post Tenebras Lux. After darkness, light. After the darkness of the Middle Ages and the all but snuffing out of the light of the true gospel, which is salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, and Christ alone, which we were just looking at from Galatians this morning.

[5 : 29] After the darkness of that, there came a great recovery of that gospel. You know, God was overseeing the preservation of the gospel and the advancement of the church as he has been doing for the last 2,000 years and really for all of history.

But this phrase, Post Tenebras Lux, after darkness, light. This has been the pattern of history going all the way back to Genesis 3. After darkness, the darkness of sin, curse, there was light.

There was a promise that God made. After death, there's resurrection. And, you know, even the created world daily and seasonally preaches this message to us.

You know, every night our sleep is kind of like we're dying. And we wake up in the morning as this kind of resurrection. Every single day, you go to sleep, you wake up. There is a death. There is a resurrection.

Every single night, the earth is submerged in darkness. And yet, in the morning, the sun comes up. And it's especially great when we can see it over. I love living by the water.

[6 : 33] Every morning, if I drive down, you know, Pequot Avenue, I can see the sun coming up over the Thames River. It's a reminder. After darkness, there's light. You know, the gloom of winter.

We're in April right now. It's May. The gloom of winter every year in New England. It gives way to the vibrancy of spring. Creation is preaching this message.

After darkness, light. After death, resurrection. And this is seen so clearly here in Genesis chapter 8 in the account of the flood. So, if you haven't turned there already, please turn in your Bibles to Genesis chapter 8.

If you're joining us this morning, we are in the third of three weeks on Noah's ark. And here we see the flood subsides. And just to give you a little context here, in this section of Genesis, the camera has zoomed in on Noah.

As Moses, the author, is recounting the events of this global flood that God sent in judgment for the corruption of humanity. And just, again, if you're new here, we spent some time on the first week talking about, is this true?

[7 : 42] Is this real? Is this a historical event? And we've touched on that a little bit in the last couple weeks. So, I would encourage you to go back to that. But that was really just an expounding on what we talked about in our very first sermon in Genesis.

Where we talked about, is Genesis history? Is it, how does it relate to science? And so, if that's something you're interested in, I encourage you to go all the way back to our very first sermon in Genesis. But right here, so we see, we saw that God sent this global flood in judgment for sin. But in grace, God pledged to Noah that he would save him and his family and a remnant of the animals. And he gives them instructions for building this massive ark that will shelter them from the flood.

And so, Noah builds the ark, the remnant of humanity and animals. Enter, and the text said, and the Lord shut him in. And then, all the fountains of the great deep burst forth.

I'm at chapter 7, verse 11 right now. And the windows of the heavens were opened, and rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. And then we saw last week, the waters increased, prevailed mightily on the earth, such that every living thing on the face of the earth is blotted out.

[8 : 53] Every living thing that is, except the remnant of people and animals on board the ark. And so we saw how, with the language that Moses is using, in judgment, God has essentially decreed the world.

The earth has been returned to. It's this pre-creation state of chaos and disorder. And it remains in this state of just eerie, silent devastation for 150 days, with only the ark riding its waves.

Can you just picture that in your minds? Only water. I mean, if you've been out, I have not been out in the middle of the ocean, but some of you coasties have, Navy guys have, although you're often underneath the water. But some of you get to go on top of the sail and take a look.

Just imagine that. That's what we have here. But look in your Bibles at chapter 8, verse 1. But God remembered Noah. But God remembered Noah.

This is the first scene in today's passage as we're going to walk through the narrative together. God remembers Noah. But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark.

[10 : 06] Now, as we consider this verse, it's helpful to know that actually the entire flood narrative from chapter 6, verse 11, to chapter 8, verse 22, is in a chiasmic structure.

So Shoreline Youth, if you were here last year, I know that you learned about chiasmic structures when the Parkers aren't here right now, but Ben taught on Psalm chapter 5 in Sunday school. He then preached on it here in the service. And if you remember, a chiasm is formed when words or concepts are repeated in reverse order.

Now, sometimes there's a central axis about which that pivot happens. There's symmetry on both sides. But that central axis is sort of the turning point. And so this is what this looks like visually. And there's some different ways to conceive of this. But we saw God resolves to destroy corrupt humanity. And then Noah builds an ark. The remnant enters the ark. The flood begins.

[11:01] The waters prevail. And then God remembers Noah. This is the pivot point of this whole narrative. And then today we're going to go back down this kind of like X shape.

And it all mirrors what came before it. Now, why do I even mention that? Why am I talking about chiasms? Why are there this literary stuff? Well, first, I want you to see the beauty and intentionality of the Spirit-inspired writing of Moses.

You know, sometimes we think that people back then weren't all that smart. There is literary genius in the Bible. And, you know, it makes sense because God is the divine author.

And he's using human authors. The more that I, I've been a Christian now 35 plus years. I'm not that old, actually. But in the 30s. I'm too old to remember. I think 32 years.

The more that I read and study scripture, the more amazed I become at the masterpiece that it is. God writing through human authors to tell the truest and the greatest story ever told.

[12:07] And, you know, friends, brothers and sisters, this ought to lead us to worship. And to heed every word that God has spoken to us. Second, the thing that I want you to see is for yourself.

How the whole narrative turns on this all-important phrase. God remembered Noah. So what does this phrase mean? What does it mean that God remembered Noah? Had God forgotten about Noah, right?

Had he forgotten about the animals and Noah's family on board the ark for 150 days? And then all of a sudden, you know, he sits up straight like Kevin McAllister's mom, Kate, on Home Alone, if you know.

And cries, Noah! I re-watched that clip. It's so funny. In chapter 6, verse 6, we considered how the Lord regretted that he made man on the earth and it grieved him to his heart.

And we talked through how God's regret is not like man's. Well, God's remembering is not like man's. You know, we genuinely forget things like how old we are.

[13:14] Or things are just gone from our memory, right? So we forget in that way. It's just gone. It's out of the brain. Never remembering it again. Or we forget for a time, right? Things get lost in the brain.

And then we remember at a later time, like Kate McAllister forgetting about Kevin and then remembering on the plane. It's not that way with God, right? Nothing is removed from the mind of God.

God knows all. God sees all. God perceives all. God remembers all. God did not forget Noah and the crew on board the ark. So what does it mean that God remembered?

Well, this would be an interesting piece of homework if you want to do this. Look at all the times that that phrase God remembered is used in Scripture. We'll talk about a couple of them today. But what we see throughout Scripture in that use of the phrase, and that includes two more times in Genesis, God remembering his people speaks of his choice to act in love and grace on their behalf.

It's God moving towards his covenant people for their sake, for their good. Derek Kidner explains, when the Old Testament says that God remembered, it combines the ideas of faithful love and timely intervention.

[14:29] Faithful love, timely intervention. God has not forgotten Noah, his family, and the animals. At the right time, in faithful love, God now acts and intervenes on their behalf.

So look at the Bible, chapter 8, verse 1 still. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed.

The rain from the heavens was restrained, and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days, the waters had abated. And in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest in the mountains of Ararat.

And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen. So here's the next stage here. The flood recedes.

Now it's interesting here. We've learned in our study of Genesis that our English words, spirit, wind, and breath, they all come from the same Hebrew word.

[15:30] It's ruach. In Genesis 1, verse 2, in the earth's pre-creation state, the spirit, the ruach of God, was hovering over the face of the waters.

He was prepared to bring order into chaos. And now following the decreating waters of judgment, God again sends forth his spirit. It says the wind. He blows a wind over the earth.

He's sending forth his spirit to again bring order to chaos. And the parallels to the creation account don't actually stop there. Because as we progress through this passage again and again, it is alluding to Genesis 1.

God is recreating the earth following judgment. If you remember, in day two of creation, waters are separated from waters to form the sky.

And then in day three of creation, the waters are again separated from another. They're gathered together to form dry land. And so here, God restrains the waters from above and below.

[16:31] And he causes the waters to recede. So again, sky and land are emerging. And I want us to see again, note, the precision of the dating all throughout the flood narrative.

I talked about this more last week. But I just want to remind us here, this precision is an indication to us that we are not dealing with myth or legend. We're dealing with history.

Now, it's interesting to again compare this account of the flood with the one that most closely mirrors it, the Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh, which is kind of a fun read.

And you can find it online if you want. But in that epic, the whole ordeal lasts two weeks. That's it. Two weeks. There's one week for the flood to cover the earth. And then one week for the earth to dry out.

And it's just interesting because the timetable in Genesis is much more realistic. And just a reminder, this narrative does not bear the marks of fairy tale, but of space-time history.

[17:31] So as the waters recede, the ark comes to rest on the mountains of Ararat. And that's a mountain range in modern-day eastern Turkey.

And I think some of you might be upset if I didn't mention the fact that there has been this discovery of what could have been, what could be Noah's ark in Turkey. And some people make a really big deal about it.

And then others are like, no, there's not enough proof there. And I just want to say, if it is, that's really cool. And it would confirm things we've seen confirmed before. God's word is true.

If it's not, it doesn't change anything. Like, we believe this is a true account. If that particular archaeological find is not Noah's ark, I still believe this account and Noah's ark existed.

So some of you, I think, would have been upset if I didn't mention that. But anyway, number three, we move on. So the flood has been receding. And then in this next section of verses, 6 through 14, the earth dries out.

[18:31] Now, I'm not going to reread verses 6 through 12 here. But what is the deal with the birds? So Noah sends out a raven. He sends out a dove. And I just want to ask, why does the narrative spend so much time here?

And there are a few things that we can glean from these. I'm just going to mention three things that we can glean from these verses. First, in verses 6 through 12, the narrative really slows down.

So we've had a lot of time passing. And all of a sudden, we kind of zoom in even more on this part. And I think, first, Moses is just drawing us into the story. We are waiting expectantly with Noah in the ark.

We're sensing his anticipation. And just think about this. For 150 days, so submariners and coasties, basically the length of your deployments, right? 150 days.

The ark was riding on the water. And then two and a half more months until the mountaintops were visible. And this entire time, Noah and his family have been tending to all the animals and probably anxiously awaiting the day when they can finally again step foot on dry land.

[19:40] And so these verses are kind of taking us into that longing with them. Now, the second thing that this does, this scene sort of gives us a vignette of Noah. We see Noah exercising authority over the animals.

And he's doing so with wisdom and with compassion. And again, this is another difference between the Epic of Gilgamesh. The animals are actually flipped in reverse. The dove goes out first. Now, Noah sends out the raven first because the raven is a strong animal.

It can feed on carrion that it could find perhaps on the mountaintops. And then he sends out the dove, which is a more gentler, sensitive animal. We see Noah gently receiving the dove on his arm and bringing it back into the ark.

We also see here a really interesting thing. Noah, we see his patience and yet his activity at the same time. Noah is waiting on the Lord to be sure. He's waiting for God's command to disembark. But in the meantime, he's doing things. He's exercising leadership and resourcefulness to learn about the condition of the earth. We're going to talk about that later when we apply some things. The third thing, in this scene, along with Noah, we learn the earth is again producing vegetation. [20 : 54] This is day three of creation. The dove returns with this olive leaf in its mouth. And can you imagine the excitement? Again, after waiting for seven and a half months, the excitement of Noah and his family when they see there's life out there, the olive tree is growing.

I mean, this is a precious gift that the dove brings back. And so it makes sense, you know, that a dove with an olive branch in its mouth would become the universal symbol of peace. It makes sense that that's true.

However, in the flood account, it's really more a sign of newness and of life than of peace. But one olive leaf, not enough evidence that the earth is ready for this whole remnant of man and animals. And so Noah waits another seven days. He sends out the dove a second time and it doesn't return. And then he waits still another month until, look at verse 13 of chapter 8. In the 601st year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. If you're paying real close attention, you'll notice we have yet another look, behold, and then an assessment of the state of the earth.

[22 : 08] In chapter 1, verse 31, we've mentioned this multiple times, God saw everything that he had made and behold, it was very good. And then two chapters ago, God saw the earth and behold, it was corrupt.

And now Noah sees the earth and behold, it's dry. Right? It's dry. And yet, even though the earth appears dry, so there are actually two different words for this dry and dried out, Noah waits almost another two months until verse 14.

In the second month, on the 27th day of the month, the earth had dried out. So again, we saw Noah's activity with the birds, he's learning the condition of the earth, and yet he's waiting on God's instructions, which finally come in verse 15.

Then God said to Noah, after one year inside the ark, imagine how sweet these words would be to Noah's ears.

And again, submariners, you can relate to this much more than the rest of us can. Then God said to Noah, go out from the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you.

[23 : 18] Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh, birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. I hope some of you are memorizing Genesis 1, 26 to 28.

That's our corporate memory verse right now. If you haven't started working on it, start working on it this week. It's in the emails. So we see repetition of that language here. Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh, birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, that they may swarm on the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.

So Noah went out and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. Every beast, every creeping thing and every bird, everything that moves on the earth went out by families from the ark. And so the remnant had previously entered the symmetry here. Now the remnant is disembarking. We see that just as Noah had obeyed God's commands to build and to enter the ark, so now he's obeying God's commands to leave the ark.

And as he does, what's coming behind him? It's this new creation remnant. Day five of creation, the sky was filled with birds. And day six of creation, the land was filled with livestock and beasts and everything that creeps on the ground.

[24 : 27] And so now again, following the waters of judgment, following the flood, the skies are again filled with birds, the land filled with animals. And they're recommissioned, just as in Genesis 1, to be fruitful and multiply on the earth.

But remember, in judgment for sin, God has essentially recreated the world, but by grace and through his righteous servant Noah, this new creation remnant preserved in the ark, and now fills

the skies and the land of what is a kind of new Eden.

In the mountains of Ararat, I think we're supposed to see that here. It's a new kind of Eden. There's a new creation going on. And what is Noah's first priority?

Finally standing on dry ground. First thing that he does, builds an altar. Verse 20. Then Noah builds an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

Noah is continuing to show himself to be part of the godly line. The seed of the woman. The seed of promise. Abel, righteous Abel, had offered up a pleasing sacrifice to the Lord.

[25 : 46] And then in Seth's day, people began to call upon the name of the Lord. 4 verse 26.

Noah's first priority is worship. He's giving thanks and he's giving praise to God for who God is, for what God has done in saving him.

But this is more than thanksgiving. A sacrifice is also for the purpose of atonement. Atonement.

Now that's a word we throw around in church quite a bit because it's a very important word.

And so I want to define it for you here. Atonement is the act of bringing reconciliation between God and sinners. Think of it as at-one-ment.

Right? God and sinners previously separated from one another. They're made to be at one with one another. You know, Noah just witnessed a terrifying and unprecedented display of God's power unleashed in his wrath for sin in the flood.

Right? No doubt, Noah is sensing the weight of his own sin and that of his family. And so he's sacrificing to the Lord in repentance of his sin as an expression of faith in God in this humble submissiveness to God's word and to God's authority.

[27 : 06] Right? And then God responds here to Noah's offering. Look at verse 21. And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, I will never again curse the ground because of man.

For the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.

God resolves not to destroy humanity in these final verses of our text for today. Now, just like God would later be pleased with the offerings of the Jewish priests, God is here pleased with Noah's sacrifice.

Now, there's a play on words going on here in the Hebrew. The word pleased is related to the word Noah. Like both, Noah means rest. There's this sense of rest that's being conveyed.

God's anger for sin is being put at rest. God's anger is being appeased by the sacrifice of Noah.

Now, this is sort of confirmed by what God says next.

[28 : 20] God promises to never again wipe out humanity and the living creatures in the way that he just did. In other words, he's pledging to never again destroy the earth with a flood, which he says explicitly in chapter 9.

If you're not convinced that that's what he's saying here, it becomes more explicit in next week's text. But did you catch God's statement about the state of mankind? Did you catch what he said there?

For the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. God had just wiped out corrupt humanity from the earth. And yet, the problem of sin in the heart has not been dealt with, has it?

There is a deeper cleansing that is still needed. And God is promising here in Genesis 8 that despite the ongoing sinfulness of mankind, he is not going to send another flood to wipe out the human race.

Instead, while the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease. And the sacrifice of Noah, who stands here as a kind of new Adam, he's a representative for the whole human race, this sacrifice of his, it leads to God making this poetic promise.

[29 : 40] And it's not only to the righteous. This promise is to all of humanity and all the earth, right? That the cycles and the seasons of the world are going to carry on as long as the earth remains.

This promise, it's not a promise of forgiveness for sin, right? It's not a promise of rescue. It's not a promise of salvation.

But it is a gracious promise of God towards humanity that paves the way for all of those things. It paves the way for the fulfillment of the promise.

This promise in Genesis 8, 20 to 22, sets up the promise. So friends, what we see here is that the catastrophic flood in that humanity has been cleansed.

The earth has been renewed, in a sense, but sin still remains, right? Atonement, to deal with sin is still needed. A greater atonement, a more effective cleansing of the heart.

[30 : 42] If you remember in chapter 5, Noah's father Lamech had foretold, in verse 29, out of the ground that the Lord has cursed, this one, speaking about Noah, this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands.

And in a small way, that prophecy has come true. But in a large way, it has not. Sin remains. The curse remains.

It remains for humanity to re-enter that Sabbath rest that we talked about in Genesis 2, of perfect fellowship with God in paradise. But God had promised in the garden in Genesis 3, He promised to send a Savior through the line of Eve to crush the serpent, to undo the effects of the curse, and God always keeps His promises.

In fact, the account of the flood here and of Noah's ark, it's God's faithfulness to keep His promises writ large. The flood and Noah's salvation through the flood, it's like this giant memorial in human history that says, I always keep my promises, I always do what I say for the sake of my people, even though sin remains.

I just finished reading through Luke's gospel in my Bible reading plan this week. And every single time I get to chapter 24, I long to be on the road to Emmaus.

[32 : 11] When after His resurrection from the grave, beginning with Moses, that would be the law, the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses, which includes Genesis, beginning with Moses and all the prophets, Jesus interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.

I wonder, did Jesus take them back to this story? The account of the global flood. I wonder, did Jesus show them how the atoning sacrifice offered up by Noah, just like the later sacrifices of the Levitical priests, which could never take away sins, was pointing forward to His greater, more perfect, once-for-all sacrifice on the cross.

God's promise here in Genesis 8 is a guarantee that He will be faithful to bring about the promise of Genesis 3.15, which has now been fulfilled in the atoning cross work of Christ.

Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, John 1.29. Jesus Christ is He who gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God, Ephesians 5.2.

The ultimate appeasing sacrifice that was an aroma, a pleasing aroma to God. Friends, hallelujah! Through the atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross, in our place, for our sins, the words of the psalmist in Psalm 98, verse 3, have come to pass in a far greater way than he could have imagined.

[33 : 43] Listen to this. The Lord has remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Friends, in mercy, God remains faithful to His covenant people and promises despite ongoing sin. And that reality is seen most clearly, most fully in the cross of Christ, in the cross of Jesus Christ. So the first thing that I would urge you is to look to Jesus' atonement for cleansing and for renewal. Only in Jesus do we find forgiveness of sin.

It's only by His sacrifice that God's wrath towards you for sin is removed because Jesus absorbed it in Himself on the cross.

By faith in Christ, in Christ alone, you can be cleansed fully from your sin. a deeper, more effective, once for all, eternal cleansing of the heart.

[34 : 49] Not only cleanse, but you can be given a new nature. Noah and the animals come off the ark as a new kind of creation, but they're not actually a new creation.

Now in Christ Jesus, the old is gone, the new has come. We're remade after the image and the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. Jesus is talked about in the New Testament as the last Adam, as the firstborn from the dead.

And so all who come after Him in faith become part of that new creation remnant. All who repent of their sin and look to Christ and what He has done. This first point of application though, it's not only for unbelievers coming to Christ, it's also saints for believers who daily need to go to Christ and look again and again and again at His atoning sacrifice for daily cleansing, for daily renewal.

Christians, we are people of the cross. That sounds like foolishness to the world, 1 Corinthians 1. It's power. We're people of the cross.

We don't get over the cross. We don't get over the gospel of Jesus Christ. Do you think that Noah ever got over the salvation that God had won for him in the ark for the rest of his days on earth?

[36 : 18] I don't think so. I think Noah would continue to thank and to praise the Lord for that salvation and to live in light of that. We do not get over the greater salvific work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

On the cross of Calvary, we see the ugliness of our sin just like in the flood. We see the ugliness of human sin. On the cross, God's judgment poured out on Christ, the Son of God.

God in Christ died for us. It shows us what lengths He had to go to save us from our sin. It shows us the ugliness of our sin. So the cross humbles us.

On the cross, we not only see how our sin's been eradicated, but we see how we've been made new in Christ. The cross reminds us of our eternal identity in Jesus.

And we need both reminders daily, don't we? On the one hand, of our lowly, sinful state, we're no better than anyone else.

[37 : 22] The cross is level ground. And we need to be reminded of that. Our pride comes in in all kinds of ways. On the other hand, we need to be reminded of our exalted state as new creations.

We're chosen, loved, redeemed, adopted, filled with the Holy Spirit. And we're made new creations to put Jesus on display to the world.

We need to be reminded of that. And so whether for the first time or the 1,000th time, look to Jesus' atonement for cleansing, for renewal. Here's a second point of application.

Act in faith while waiting on God. Act in faith while waiting on God. We see in the text that this twin reality, it seems like a paradox.

Waiting patiently for the Lord, and yet at the same time, taking action in faith, as Noah was doing. Now these are not mutually exclusive things, though sometimes we think they are.

[38 : 23] One of my brother-in-laws has set an example for me in this area. He was working as an accountant in the corporate world. He was highly successful, but he increasingly felt like God was calling him out of that corporate world and into a Christian non-profit.

And so he left his job without the prospect of another job because he believed the Lord was calling him to do that. And then the season of waiting began for him. Door after door was closed in his face.

And months turned into a year, and one year turned into two. And in this far longer than expected season of waiting, though, he was active in his faith.

He was seeking the Lord. He was serving the church. He was pursuing potential job opportunities. He didn't just sit on his hands and wait for a job to just plop into his lap. He took action, but he did so in dependence on the Lord.

And just a few months ago, he did actually get a job with a Christian non-profit after over two years of waiting. And even if he hadn't gotten that job, what he realized is that all that waiting, God was doing a work in his heart right here.

[39 : 38] It was hard, but it was worth it. He was acting in faith even as he waited on the Lord. And so I want to ask, are there ways in which you are in a season of waiting this morning?

You're shut up in the ark not knowing when the Lord will finally say, go out. I want you to know that God is at work. God is at work.

You might not be able to see it, but he is at work. God wants to use this season of waiting to deepen your trust in him. So keep acting in faith in the ways he has revealed.

His word has revealed so many ways for you to act in faith. There are so many principles to be applied to your situation, so keep doing that. Waiting in faith. And the third thing, the thing that I most want us to remember today is know that God never forgets his children.

Know that God never forgets his children. But God remembered Noah. You know, in this account, God speaks to Noah seven days before the flood.

[40 : 51] And then, as far as we know, God doesn't speak to Noah until over a year later when he says, go out from the ark. Now, do you think in those intervening days that Noah and his family were tempted to doubt God's faithfulness?

Or do you think they ever wondered whether God had truly forgotten them in the ark as they waited day after day after day after day? Now, I'm sure the nation of Israel wondered the same thing when

years turned into decades turned into over 400 years of slavery in Egypt.

But Moses records in Exodus 2, 23 and 24, their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God and God heard their groaning and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

God saw the people of Israel and God knew. almost a thousand years later, the exiled people of Israel living in Babylon, they wondered the same thing.

But Zion said, it's a word for Jerusalem, for the Israelites, the Lord has forsaken me. My Lord has forgotten me. Do you know how God responds in Isaiah 49?

[42 : 10] Can a woman forget her nursing child that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.

Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands. Church, now the Lord Jesus Christ bears the nail scars in his hands, proving all the more God's faithfulness to that promise made to his children.

children. He will not forget you. He will never leave you or forsake you. Fear not, for I have redeemed you.

I have called you by name. You are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.

And through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

You are precious in my eyes and honored and I love you. Isaiah 43. Brothers and sisters, in mercy, God remains faithful to his covenant people.

[43 : 22] He remains faithful to fulfill his promises, even in spite of our ongoing sin. He remembers us. He has acted decisively in history, in Christ, on our behalf, and he continues acting all the time in ways that we can and can't see for our good.

You know, of course, the trouble is that we often want to define for God what it looks like for him to remember us. Or we want to define the timeline.

The thing is, though, God usually has a different and better idea of what it looks like for him to remember us and how long it should take.

I recently did a bunch of work on my Subaru Forester with the help of Carl Crabtree. Or really, I should say, Carl did the work and I helped him do a bunch of work on my car.

Now, I wanted this job to take, you know, no more than one day of work. Well, Carl, how long did it take? Four. Yeah, real funny.

[44 : 31] Spread out over a few weeks and now the car still needs to go to a mechanic because we can't seem to fix something. And Carl has been reminding me all this time, Mike, trust is built in perseverance.

Right? And if it were easy, we wouldn't learn to trust. Saints, God never forgets his children. He's faithful to fulfill his promises.

Right? God is ever, all the time, loving us, working for our good. And will you rest today in that beautiful truth? Right? Whether you're facing the low-level suffering of car issues or profound suffering like tragedy, like death, this family at Groton Bible Chapel whose daughter is now wheelchair-bound for life, that is profound suffering.

And those in this room have faced profound suffering and even are right now. Will we? Can we rest in this promise? God does not forget his children. He sees us. He knows us.

He loves us. We are precious in his eyes. And he will not forget us in this life or for all eternity.

Another thing I saw in Luke this week, even the thief on the cross, in the final moments of his life, he could rest in the knowledge of God's faithfulness.

[46 : 00] You know, recognize this thief, you had the two thieves hanging with Jesus, one railing at Christ, the other one on this side saying, don't you realize what's going on here? This man's innocent. And he said to Jesus, remember me, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

And Jesus said to him, truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise. Post to nebras lux, after darkness, light.

That is the pattern of history and the pattern of God's promises throughout history. We see that after darkness, light comes. That is the promise of the age to come. Because God is a God of mercy.

God is a God of faithfulness towards his covenant people. And so may we always rest in that promise. Heavenly Father, we look to you. You are a God who is faithful to your promises.

You will always remember your people. Oh God, you act on our behalf. We are so undeserving. We are so unworthy.

[47 : 06] And so it baffles us. What is a man that you are mindful of him? And yet you chose to send Jesus Christ in our place. God, you are a faithful God.

May we look at Christ and know that you always remember us. The righteous will not be forgotten. It's because we are righteous in Christ and Christ alone. Thank you, Lord, for your faithfulness towards us.

May it encourage us this morning. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.