

Introduction

The Apostle Peter wrote two New Testament letters to encourage you to persevere in your walk with Jesus while you are patiently waiting for Him to return from heaven.

In his two letters you often read of the catastrophic flood. In one of his letters, you are surprised to read of a contemporary flood!

1 Peter 4:3-4 "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles; when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you."

Peter's readers - which include you and I - live in what he calls "the flood of dissipation." The "lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries" that characterize the world of the unsaved are metaphorically described as a flood. The word for "flood" that Peter uses gives the picture of a liquid being poured out in an ever widening expanse. He is describing worldly living as an ever widening stream which soon becomes a flood of wild, immoral, selfish, idolatrous activities into which the unsaved plunge themselves.¹ "Dissipation" means *excess*; it came to mean one who is destroying himself by willful and deliberate fleshly excesses.²

The world around you is a "flood of dissipation." It is a rising, spreading, ever widening excess of fleshly immorality. Its currents seek to draw you in and entrap you in a deadly undertow.

Peter is a sensitive and caring pastor. After mentioning the Genesis Flood in 1 Peter 3, he realizes that the people he is writing to are in a flood themselves - "the flood of dissipation." Noah and his family were saved in the Ark during the Genesis Flood as the water dissipated. Peter wanted to be certain that the family of believers he was writing to was saved in Jesus Christ during "the flood of dissipation."

As the flood *dissipates* in our text in Genesis 8, you find encouragement to persevere during "the flood of dissipation" that surrounds *you* - -

#1 The Spirit Restrains You
In The Flood Of Dissipation

#2 The Scriptures Reassure You
In The Flood Of Dissipation

#3 Worship Restores You
In The Flood Of Dissipation

¹The Complete Biblical Library

²Ibid.

#1 The Spirit Restrains You
In The Flood Of Dissipation
(v1-14)

These opening verses set before us the power of God the Holy Spirit during the flood. In verse 1 it says, "And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided." In Genesis 1:2 & 9 we saw that this "wind" was God the Holy Spirit. It's in His power that the water is restrained. It's in His power that Noah is restrained during the flood - - waiting patiently though surrounded. An it's in His power that *you* find restraint from "the flood of dissipation," waiting patiently though surrounded.

Genesis 8:1 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.

Genesis 8:2 The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.

As the energizing power of God the Holy Spirit passed over the earth, a new world was set in order. The vapor canopy was gone; a new system of wind, waves, and evaporation was begun. Changes in the earth's geography occurred - -

Psalms 104:6-9 "The waters stood above the mountains. At Your rebuke they fled; At the voice of Your thunder they hastened away. They went up over the mountains; They went down into the valleys, To the place which You founded for them. You have set a boundary that they may not pass over, That they may not return to cover the earth.

This was the trigger for what we call the Ice Age.

"The sharp changes in temperature following the flood, occasioned by the precipitation of the vapor canopy that had maintained the greenhouse effect over the world, led to the buildup of great thicknesses of snow and ice near the polar regions. These eventually radiated out in the form of tremendous ice sheets, covering northern Europe and reaching down into the northern third of the United

States in this hemisphere. The Ice Age probably lasted several hundred or a thousand years...and undoubtedly had a profound effect on the earth's animal kinds."³

Was there really a global flood?

"Such a flood would have destroyed every physiographic feature on or near the earth's surface, redepositing the eroded materials all over the world in stratified sedimentary rocks of the earth's crust. Not only do such sedimentary rocks abound all over the world, but they give much evidence of having been formed by rapid and continuous [deposits]...most formations [can be shown] to have been formed within a few minutes' time."⁴

Genesis 8:3 And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased.

Genesis 8:4 Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

Genesis 8:5 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.

The time is carefully recorded and remembered. It was considered significant that the Ark rested on the seventeenth day of the seventh month. The seventh month of the Jewish civil year later was made the first month of the religious year, and the Passover was set as the fourteenth day of that month. Jesus was slain on that fourteenth day, but then rose three days later - - on the seventeenth day of the seventh month of the civil calendar! In Him you find you rest.

Genesis 8:6 So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made.

Genesis 8:7 Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth.

Genesis 8:8 He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground.

Genesis 8:9 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.

Genesis 8:10 And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark.

Genesis 8:11 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.

Genesis 8:12 So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.

Genesis 8:13 And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and indeed the surface of the ground was dry.

Genesis 8:14 And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried.

If my math is correct, Noah and his family spend seven months in the Ark after the waters have subsided. After the first two and one-half months they could see the tops of the mountains. Forty days later Noah sent out the raven and the dove; only the dove returns. Seven days later he sends out the dove and it returns with an olive branch.

³Dr. Henry Morris, The Genesis Record, p. 215-16

⁴Ibid., p. 204

Seven days later the dove is sent out without returning. This would be the 285th day since they first entered the Ark. They wait 29 additional days, then 57 more days, for a total of approximately 371 days on the Ark!

- - God's deliverance sometimes comes slowly...
- - There are always times and places of rest after the storm...
- - Noah did not steer through the storm, but was its saved passenger...

**God the Holy Spirit is described as "restraining" the flood in verse one and two. In 2Thessalonians you read that He restrains "the flood of dissipation" to a certain extent. One day soon, though, He will be removed and all restraint will be eliminated.

There is an important illustration in the text of how God the Holy Spirit restrains *you* during "the flood of dissipation" that surrounds you. Noah sends out two birds - - a raven and a dove. The raven is a scavenger, content to feast itself on the rotting flesh in the waters surrounding the Ark. The dove will not indulge itself in such a feast.

In spiritual terms, we would call the raven "carnal" and the dove "spiritual." In our hearts there remains a raven - - the old sin nature with its carnal appetites, seeking to feast on the rottenness of "the flood of dissipation." As you go out into the immoral, sensual, selfish flood all around you, the raven seeks to satisfy itself.

The dove is ever the symbol of God the Holy Spirit. When you are born again, He takes up residence in your heart. As you go out into the flood in His empowering, you are able to refuse the carnal feast that is offered you. You find no resting place and desire only to return to the safety of your Savior. You will find rest when the flood has totally subsided and the world is made new again.

You are surrounded by "the flood of dissipation." It is somewhat restrained by God the Holy Spirit, but it is awful and deadly nonetheless. Within you there is a raven and a dove. Yield to the restraint of the Dove! Don't be drowned in the flood.

#2 The Scriptures Reassure You In The Flood Of Dissipation (v15-19)

These verses record the first words God had spoken to Noah in over a year!

Genesis 8:15 Then God spoke to Noah, saying,

Genesis 8:16 "Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you.

Genesis 8:17 "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."

Genesis 8:18 So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him.

Genesis 8:19 Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, and whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

From these air-breathing species the world as we know it today was repopulated. The animals, awakened from their supernatural hibernation, gradually spread out. They migrated across then existing land bridges, multiplied over many generations, and mutated in varieties within their kinds according to various environmental conditions. All of the earth's present dry-land animals are descendants of those that were on the Ark.

**God commanded Noah and the others to "Come" into the Ark, and now He commands them to "Go" forth from the Ark. The one word assured them of salvation; the other word reassured them in their service.

In light of "the flood of dissipation," God commands all men everywhere to "Come" and be saved. The Scriptures assure them of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Even though surrounded by "the flood of dissipation," God commands His saints to "Go." You are to go and make disciples of others who are running to be involved in the excess of immorality and sensuality. You need the reassurance of the Scriptures for your service. You have it, many times over:

2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man [or woman] of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Noah's new life in a flood-ravaged world would not be easy. Wind and rain and storms would cause him much difficulty, perhaps even leaving him with doubts. He had God's Word to reassure him.

Your life in this flood-ravaged world is not easy. The storms of life cause you much difficulty, perhaps leaving you with doubts. You have God's Word to reassure you.

#3 Worship Restores You In The Flood Of Dissipation (v20-22)

Before he did anything else, Noah went to Church.

Genesis 8:20 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.

Genesis 8:21 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."

Genesis 8:22 "While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease."

There are many lessons to glean from Noah's worship:

- - While still on the Ark many of Noah's activities speak to us of worship: v6 after 40 days he opened the window. We can't say this with certainty, but this may have been a time of fasting. Many Bible characters go on 40 day fasts...
v10 & v12 he sent out the dove after 7 days. The reference to "7" indicates he may have been keeping the Sabbath - a regular time of organized worship with his family...

- - His first priority upon disembarking is spiritual, not physical. He builds an altar...

- - Worship cost Noah something. In effect, he offers one-seventh of his flocks - - trusting God to bless the remainder of his wealth and possessions...

- - Noah's worship was received as a pleasing aroma in heaven. It's sincerity affected the whole human race. Worship is not a means to the end of personal blessing...

There are undoubtedly other things we could learn about worship from Noah's example. For our purposes we would like to point out that God, in response to Noah's worship, revealed to him a continuing cycle of restoration upon the earth, from seedtime to harvest, from winter to summer, from day to night. As the seed dies, there is hope in the restoration of life; as the winter decays, there is hope for the restoration to life; as the night darkens, there is hope for the restoration of light.

As you worship Jesus Christ in the midst of "the flood of dissipation," God can remind *you* of the continuing work of restoration in your own life.

- - You will know seedtimes and harvests...

- - You will live through winters and summers, and everything in between...

- - You will experience dark nights, but they will be followed by wonderful bright days...

All of this is to prepare you for the day when you are totally "restored" - resurrected to be with Jesus!

Conclusion

God "remembered" Noah. That doesn't mean that He forgot him for a while. It means that Noah, in the flood, came to a new awareness of God's presence in his life. He became more aware of the power of God the Holy Spirit and of the preciousness of God's Scriptures. For Noah's part, he came to a greater passion in his worship.

God "remembers" you! That doesn't mean that He forgot you for a while. It means that you, in "the flood of dissipation," can become more aware of God's presence in your life.

- -You can become more aware of the power of God the Holy Spirit...

- - You can become more aware of the preciousness of the Scriptures...

You will know you are if you have a greater passion in your worship!