

In The Beginning: Session 16: Leaving The Ark

בְּרֵאשִׁית

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The Earth Dries (Genesis 8:5-12)

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 which 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.

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.

- It's interesting that although Noah was told when the Flood would come, he wasn't told how long it would last. Noah had to use natural wisdom.

- Notice Noah’s wise caution.
- The popular image of a door-type window is likely correct here.

About The Birds

- Noah used his wisdom by releasing different kinds of birds. First, he releases the raven. His unclean habits were of little use to Noah.
- The dove is different. She won’t eat a carcass and she likes nice, dry ground.
- The olive leaf was a good sign.
- A lot of people have speculated that these things are a spiritual picture. The raven is a picture of our useless, fleshly nature, which doesn’t want to stay in the Ark.
- The dove is a picture of the work of the Holy Spirit within the new man.
- It’s also a symbol of the Holy Spirit, bringing the olive, a symbol of peace.
- Finally, on New Year’s Day, Noah removes the covering sees that it is not completely dry, although the surface is dry.

Leaving The Ark (Genesis 8:14-19)

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.” 18 So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. 19 Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, and whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

Date	Event
600-2-17	The Flood begins
600-3-27	The Ark floats
600-7-17	The Ark resting on waters
600-10-1	The mountain tops are seen
600-11-11	The raven is sent out
600-11-18	The dove is sent out the first time
600-11-25	Dove is sent again, returns with a leaf
600-12-2	The dove is sent out but does not return
601-1-1	The face of the ground is dry
601-2-27	The ground is fully dry

The chronology of the Flood is difficult, and it's debated.

- Jewish writers have disagreed as to what time of year the Flood began.
- The Flood lasted a year and ten days... but it's more complicated than that! We don't know if the year involved is a normal Jewish year, of 354 days, or if it was our solar year of 365 days.
- Perhaps, as some people believe, it was an even longer year, a Jewish leap year.
- The symbolism of the face of the ground being dry on the first day of the year is that God is giving the human race a fresh start.

Time To Disembark

- Finally, God speaks to Noah to exit, and there is a command here again to be fruitful and multiply.

The Earth At Rest (Genesis 8:20-22)

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

- Notice that the first thing Noah does in the new world is build an altar.
- There was also sacrifice again. Noah knew that sin must be atoned for.
- God's will not pronounce any additional curses against the Earth.
- God was right when He said that our imagination is evil from his youth up.
- Then God says He will never again destroy every living thing.
- Finally, God promises that the seasons of human life and agriculture will never cease on the Earth.

God's Commands; New Conditions of Life (Genesis 9:1-7)

1 So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of

the sea. They are given into your hand. 3 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. 4 But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5 Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.

6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man. 7 And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply in it."

- Because of this, they were blessed, and so were you, through them.
- As the human race starts over, God issues some new commands which are suited to their new situation.
- God says that the animal world will fear us.
- Second, God gives us permission to eat everything that moves. This is also new.
- We were prohibited here to eat flesh with the blood.
- Notice that God says He will require punishment, even the death penalty, for every man or animal that takes a human life.
- In a very real way, this is the beginning of human government.
- Before the Flood, God allowed Man to organize himself, but ever since the Flood, God has insisted upon there being a form of human government.

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