

THE FLOOD COMES TO AN END

Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss

Lesson: Genesis 8

Can you imagine what it was like to be in that ark for one hundred and fifty days? Partly it must have been very comforting because all around you the rain would have been coming down and the water be over all the earth and you would be safe on the ark.

Then the rain stopped, and Noah and his family wanted to come out of the ark and start their lives. They wondered how long it would be before the waters went down upon the earth. But the waters seemed to go down a bit and then go up a bit. So Noah sent a raven to fly around to see if it could find dry land. The trouble was that the raven had strong wings and it could fly around for days until the land appeared. It didn't come back. Therefore Noah sent out a dove. The first time it came back. He waited seven days and sent it out again, and then it came back with a leaf in its beak, so he knew it had found a tree. After seven more days he sent it out again and it did not come back. Then he knew that the waters were really going down, and after a little while more the ark came to rest on Mount Ararat, and he and everyone and everything in the ark could come out.

What was the first thing he did? He built an altar to the Lord, didn't he? Why? Because the Lord had kept him alive. And the Lord was pleased with Noah and made a promise. He said He would never again send a flood on the earth.

“While the earth remains, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”

We can learn a lot of things from this lesson. For example, we can learn how to be patient when we're waiting for something to happen. Noah had to wait many days while the waters washed back and forth on the face of the earth. He wanted to come out of the ark, but he knew he had to wait until it was safe. Do you remember how the dove brought him a sign that the waters were nearly low enough—an olive leaf in her beak? That helped him to be patient.

We can learn what is the first thing we should do when something good happens to us. Noah came out of the ark. He could have gone about his business and just enjoyed being on earth again, without thinking of the Lord who had saved him from the flood. But he didn't. He remembered the Lord and the first thing he did was to build an altar and thank Him. So it should be with us. When something happens to make us very happy, then that night, before we go to sleep, we should remember to thank the Lord. After all, He is the one who gives us all things happy.

And the most important thing in this lesson is to realize that the Lord does take great care of those who trust in Him. If they let Him help them, He keeps them safe. Just as He kept Noah safe, not only during the rains, but also afterwards, so He looks after all the people who trust in Him and finds ways to make them happy.