

## Genesis Chapters 8-9 Summary - John Karmelich

For those of you who have been reading these studies for a while, you know my favorite expression is the phrase, "Now what"? As in I believe in Jesus, now what? That's the basis of this ministry. I'd like you to think about Noah after the rain stopped. He had to be thinking, "OK, now what? It has stopped raining and I've been floating in this thing for over a year taking care of "the zoo", so now what?" As I studied this passage, I noticed Noah didn't leave the ark till God said so! If I went through all of that, I doubt I'd make a move till God says so! Does that mean we don't leave our homes till God say so? No, my view is to pray for wisdom to start my day, and then make the best decisions we can based on what is "in front of us"! As many of us veteran Christians know, God will often "hold the hand" of believers as they start their new walk with Jesus and as we grow in our faith, God lets us walk on our own, so we can grow in our faith. I mention all of that as I see Noah doing that as well. He's obviously scared after going through a literal world changing event like that, and is pondering, "OK God, now what?" That is the question I'll focus on as I go through the text of these chapters and try to apply them to our lives!

I heard a question I pondered about the opening chapters of Genesis: God could have just made Adam and Eve sterile after they sinned. Why didn't God just start over then? Why kill probably millions with a flood to start over as opposed to just creating new world through Noah? I suspect it's so when there's bad weather it will remind us about the coming judgement on all people. I also think because He knew the demons would try the stunt of mixing with the human race would fail, therefore it was necessary to do it this way! Anyway, all those dead bodies caused by that flood would be a great reminder that we'll all be judged one day! Bottom line, God did it that way! It also means we're all descendants of Noah's family. I also suspect that those who settled all the way in central Africa and survived, had dark skin as it helped there. Same with people living in cold climate survived a lot better with lighter skin. In short, I never had a problem that all people came from Noah's descendants!

OK then, let's discuss these two chapters with an emphasis on Noah's "Now what decisions?" and I will also tackle how those decisions affect us as well. Enough stalling, let us begin: Chapter 8 begins with the flood still going strong. The opening verse says, "God remembered Noah". I must admit, I picture an old man slapping his forehead saying, "I forgot all about Noah!" What the text's refers to is from the perspective of Noah, things finally changed. He was probably rocked for months floating on that thing while rain constantly came down for five months. I wonder if God put all those animals in a deep sleep or did Noah's gang daily chore consist of feeding and cleaning cages! Remember a water vapor existed above the earth so it wasn't just 40 days of rain. I suspect a meteor struck the earth and it caused waters to rise up, but who knows? I just know after Noah dealt with it for 5 months, we get a reversal of all of that where water went below the surface again. I picture mountains being formed due to the moving of things, but I'm getting outside the point again. If one day the earth becomes like it was before the flood (as Isaiah and Revelation preach about life changing after the Messiah rules) we may see what life was like before the flood so in that sense, it's nice to read about this stuff!

One of the fascinating details we get in this story is specific dates. We get Noah's age at key moments as well as exact times when water went down. Remember God was there and was reciting all the facts to Noah as a "firsthand witness"! Anyway, Noah landed on a mountain top that is part of what is today part of Turkey. (Between all the time Paul spent in Turkey and where Noah landed, one must admit it's full of significant historical places! It also shows the vastness of the Roman Empire!)

Next, we read that Noah in effect didn't want to change his life till God said so. If I spent months living on a rocking floating barge with stinking animals for 5 months, I'd want out as soon as possible. All we

see Noah do was send out two kinds of birds to "test the waters". Why two? Ravens are unclean birds and are much less picky about what they eat. We don't read about the raven's response. Then God sent a dove. A dove is considered in Leviticus a "clean bird" plus they mate for lives. We just read the dove came back with a branch to show life exists. Doves are associated with the Spirit of God as a dove was what Gospels described the Spirit of God looking like. Speaking of the Holy Spirit the text says a great wind blew. In Hebrew "spirit" and "wind" is the same word. It's like when the earth was made, we had a reference to the Spirit working in Genesis 1. Bottom line, God told Noah time to get moving after he dealt with the flood for over a year. Of course, I ponder things like what happened to dinosaurs. (They couldn't survive well in a post-flood world) or how did kangaroos end up in Australia? (Land bridges?) I don't have those answers, I'm just speculating. Remember that all those creatures were in Eden, since Adam named them all!

Chapter 8 ends with what we call the Noah covenant. It's when Noah sacrificed some "clean" animals he brought on the ark (God must have explained that too him!) It's when God promised no world-wide flood would ever happen again and we get reminded of that every time we see a rainbow!

To me the fascinating thing about Chapter 9 is this is when "eating meat" was condoned by God. Until now I believe all animals were vegetarians. Isaiah writes about lions eating straw again one day, so it'll change back to pre-flood conditions. God said all animals are food (Jewish restrictions didn't come 'till centuries later!) There was a restriction against eating blood (symbol of life) and of course murder of a person is a sin. Below, I'll get into why God wanted those living in Israel at that time to be killed as it's an exception to His no murder law! Meanwhile back here, we get the famous rainbow verses! I briefly discussed that already, so let's move on!

The next thing we read is Noah got into farming. Remember he lived for 600 years before the flood. I suspect it's what he missed doing! It also said Noah got drunk from the wine that fermented. A Jewish view is Noah struggled with freedom and that's why he got drunk. Like a lot of people do when they're drunk, clothes come off. One of Noah's sons saw him and to me that doesn't seem like much of a sin. It leads to a big condemnation speech by Noah against one of his grandsons named Canaan. I don't know if he was born on the ark or after! We get a brief genealogy to finish the chapter and a longer one is the topic of Chapter 10 (next lesson). Chapter 9 gives a huge curse on Canaan. He became the father of all those living in Israel before they showed up! Remember, Moses wrote this book not to long before the Israelites were told to kill every Canaanite. Archaeologists have found evidence that these people were very sexually corrupt (use your imagination of the worst)! I suspect God judged them for that! All I'm saying is Noah's curse on his grandson became a preview of what happened about a 1,000 years later!

OK John, thanks for sharing some details of the flood story, that we probably did not know or consider until you mentioned it. Many of us know there are over 100 versions of a flood story around the world as evidence it was a true event! My view is God was the only eyewitness which is a reason why I'd say it's a literal story! That leads me back to my original question of, "now what"? First, it means we don't have to worry about the world ending till God says so! Ignore the environmental fanatics, because God made a promise it won't be destroyed 'till He says so! Just as I trust the Bible about Jesus, so I trust that there won't be another worldwide flood. In the meantime, our job is to be a good witness for Jesus. It's why we're saved in the first place! Therefore, the "now what" is not to worry about the world ending. I just need to remind you that's God's business! God just calls us to be a good witness for Him and that is hard enough as it is!

On the same page as this study is a more detailed study I wrote many years back. You are welcome to email me if you want or join my list to the get the latest lesson. Thanks for reading. John