

# **GOD REMEMBERS**

## **Genesis 8:1a**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **God's Sovereignty**

God is eternal. He is powerful. He is holy. He is unchangeable. He is omniscient. He is omnipresent. He is sovereign. He is in perfect control of everything He has created all the time.

Psalms 33:11 – “The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation.”

From generation to generation, the plans of the heart of God stand. Nothing changes because there is no further information, there is no contingency that God didn't know about. Nothing changes. He inexorably and perfectly works His plan to the end.

Isaiah 46:9-10 – “I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.’”

There is no one like Him because there is no one who can tell how it is going to end before it even begins. And it is not just that He knows how they will happen. From the beginning God determined the end, He planned the end and He works to that end.

Isaiah 46:11b – “Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.”

Numbers 23:19 – “God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good”

**MacArthur** – *“God is above and beyond all of the contingencies in the created universe. He is transcendent. He is high and lofty, majestic and lifted up. He is working to perfection His plan for the universe and for mankind. He has everything under control all the time. He’s in perfect knowledge and bringing to pass the plan which He ordained from the very beginning.”*

**Illustration** – 17<sup>th</sup> century mathematician and Christian, **Blaise Pascal**, wrote a letter of condolence to a friend who experienced the loss of a loved one. Instead of repeating ordinary platitudes of consolation, Pascal comforted him by reminding him of the Sovereignty of God: *“If we regard this event, not as an effect of chance, not as a fatal necessity of nature, but as a result inevitable, just, holy, of a decree of God’s providence, conceived from all eternity, to be executed in this very year, day, hour, and at such a place and manner . . . we will bless the acts of God’s providence; and uniting our will with that of God himself, we will want from him, in him and for him, the very thing that he’s willed in us and for us for all eternity.”*

## **READ Gen 7:17-24**

**7:13-24** → Storm of God’s Judgment – His people are protected through the storm and passed over by His judgment

God had given Noah, his sons, and their wives a century of energy to work, to build the Ark, according to His blueprint. Now, God gives them a year of waiting, a year of being 100% at the mercy of God as they float in the Ark.

What do you think it was like for Noah and his family, drifting on the endless sea for a year following the onslaught of the Flood?

Noah is a man of faith, “blameless in his time.” Gen 6:9.  
But he is human and the sea is a very lonely place.

Way down below the Ark lies the ruins of a dead and buried world. The Nephilim and the mighty men of old are gone. Everyone in

the world has died – the children they went to school with; their neighbors and family members – all except Noah and his family.

Imagine drifting in a large box for a year — with no steering, no navigation, nothing in sight, and no word from God. Don't you think, night after night, month after month, Noah must have begun to wonder had God had forgotten him? Had God forgotten his family? Had God forgotten the animals as they all floated like insignificant pieces of driftwood on the worldwide mass of water?

Noah, a righteous man, would have been sure to think of the spiritual considerations as well.

19<sup>th</sup> century Scottish pastor and expositor, **Robert Candlish**, puts Noah's possible train of thought like this: *“Far down in the unfathomable depths below, lies a dead and buried world. Noah, shut up in his narrow prison, seems to be abandoned to his fate. He cannot help himself. And in this universal visitation of sin, this terrible reckoning with sinners, why should he obtain mercy? What is he, that when all else are taken, he should be left? May he not be righteously suffered to perish after all? Is he not a sinner, like the rest? Does he not feel himself to be ‘the chief of sinners’?”*

Noah's righteousness would have opened him up these kind of feelings. And if he thought like this, he would have felt himself to be abandoned by his heavenly Father.

Do you know anyone like this today? Are you in this state even as you hear these words? Do you feel alone? Does God seem to have forgotten you? If this is the case, **Genesis 8:1** is for you. The message of our text is God has not forgotten.

**God remembers.**

**Gen 8:1a – “But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark;”**

Point – This verse is extremely important. All of Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching. This particular text is a massive turning point.

**Illustration** - The waters are swelling and prevailing, then they begin to decrease. The rising waters of chaos lift up the ark and then turn. There is a beginning of a new creation. In the same way, the narrative swells toward this climax.

**Umberto Cassuto** – *“The series of paragraphs is composed of two groups ... The first group depicts for us, step by step, the acts of Divine justice that bring destruction upon the earth, which has become filled with violence; and the scenes that pass before us grow increasingly gloomier until in the darkness of death portrayed ... there remains only one tiny, faint point of light ... the ark, which floats on the fearful waters that have covered everything, and which guards between its walls the hope of future life.”*

*“The second group shows us consecutively the various stages of the act of Divine compassion that renews life upon the earth. The light that waned until it became a minute point in the midst of the dark world, begins to grow bigger and brighter till it illumines again the entire scene before us, and shows us a calm and peaceful world, crowned with the rainbow that irradiates the cloud with its colors — a sign and pledge of life and peace for the coming generations ”*

**Gen 8:1** is the center point of the flood narrative and is emphasized by God.

**Illustration** – Joanne Weiss has a wonderful ministry taking my sermon notes and putting them in a form appropriate for posting on our website [Note: This is a very useful tool for you in your studies.]. A couple weeks ago, Joanne sent me the following question for clarification:

*“For the record, and from this point on, how do you want me to type godly - such as a godly father - is it Godly or godly?”*

My response: *“I normally do not capitalize godly. In my notes, I use a variety of methods to highlight words for my preaching (bold, underline, and capitalize). The instances here of capitalized godly were part of emphasis for my benefit, not a convention.”*

Today, when we want to emphasize something in writing, we can capitalize it. We can put it bold font. We can increase font size. We can underline it. We can italicize it. We can circle it. We can highlight it. We can do all kinds of different things writers of the Bible couldn't.

So God and His authors use something different to emphasize. One common method used throughout the OT is called a chiasm.

**Chiasm** = A-B-C-B`-A`

The authors would move from one topic (A) and then move to another (B) and then they will move to another topic (C). They will then return to the second topic (B) and then back to the first topic (A).

An example is found in **Genesis 3**

→ Adam – Eve – Serpent – Eve – Adam

The emphasis of the judgment in this passage of Scripture was on the serpent.

**Gen 8:1a – Flood Chiasm**

A **chiasm** is a writing style that uses a unique pattern of repetition for emphasis. **This is the most detailed chiasm that I am aware of in Scripture.**

|   |  |           |
|---|--|-----------|
| A | God resolves to destroy the corrupt earth                  | (6:11-13) |
| B | Noah builds an ark according to God's instructions         | (6:14-22) |
| C | God commands Noah to enter the ark                         | (7:1-9)   |
| D | The Flood begins   | (7:10-16) |
| E | The Flood prevails 150 days, and the mountains are covered | (7:17-24) |
|   | <i>E1 7 days of waiting for the Flood</i>                  | (7:4)     |
|   | <i>E2 7 days of waiting for the Flood</i>                  | (7:10)    |
|   | <i>E3 40 days of Flood</i>                                 | (7:17a)   |
|   | <i>E4 150 days of water prevailing</i>                     | (7:24)    |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>F GOD REMEMBERS NOAH (8:1a)</b>                      |           |
| E4` 150 days of water receding                          | (8:3)     |
| E3` 40 days of waiting                                  | (8:6)     |
| E2` 7 days of waiting                                   | (8:10)    |
| E1` 7 days of waiting                                   | (8:12)    |
| E` The Flood recedes 150 days, and the mountains appear | (8:1b-5)  |
| D` The earth dries                                      | (8:6-14)  |
| C` God commands Noah to leave the ark                   | (8:15-19) |
| B` Noah builds an altar                                 | (8:20)    |
| A` God resolves not to destroy man                      | (8:21-22) |

**Define** → “remembered” – Not like we might think of remember. We might “remember” where we left our car keys. Or we might “remember” the answer to a problem on a test. That is not what is being communicated by God here.

God’s remembering always implies action and movement on His part on behalf of the object He remembers.

God faithfully keeps His promise. In this case, He remembers His promise to Noah by intervening to end the Flood.

If you want one word to best describe God remembering, it would be “*intervention*”

- protection, deliverance, prevention of tragedy, rescue, mercy, kindness.

Noah may have felt abandoned. But....God acts again! God speaks again...according to His schedule, not Noah’s schedule.

God does not always spare us the distress because He has a purpose in such things both for ourselves and others. But He reassures us He has not forgotten. He remembers our distress. He is still working out all things for good to those who love Him.

**Application** – Beloved, You will obey God best if you have been practicing obedience during the dark hours.

**Proposition: 3 objects** of God’s movement and action in our text:

**God remembers:**

**I. The Animals**  
**II. His Promises**  
**III. His People**

We will begin with the simple and move to the profound.

**God Remembers ...**  
**I. The Animals**

Point – God cares for the animals - His creation.

Proof – **8:1a** – “**But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark;**”

Here, it is *Elohim* that remembers. We know that God does care for the animals.

Psa 147:9 – “He gives to the beast its food, And to the young ravens which cry.”

Jon 4:11 – “Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?”

Matt 6:26 – “Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?”

These passages rescue us from any kind of pagan, environmental, strange thinking that would take us to an extreme animal rights movement. We should not bring animals anywhere remotely close to the level of value as humans. Humans are made in the image of God, animals are not. However, these passages do remind us that God cares about the animals.

**God Remembers ...**  
**II. His Promises**

## Point – His Covenant

Gen 6:18 – “I will establish My covenant with you”

- this was the first time we came across the word covenant
- more to come later in chapter 9 – we will see it 7 times in 9 verses in that chapter → Gen 9:8-17

Gen 9:15-16 – “I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. <sup>16</sup>When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.”

Exod 2:24 – “So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Lev 26:42 – “then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land.”

Psa 105:8 – “He has remembered His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations,”

Ezek 16:60 – “Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you.”

Luke 1:72 – “To show mercy toward our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant”

**Illustration** – We know that part of Christ’s command to us, we need to make our “yes” be “yes” and your “no” be a “no”. Parents, this is part of how we shepherd our children. God is the standard. Because God’s “yes” is always “yes” and His “no” is always “no”.

**God Remembers ...**

**III. His People**

Point – God remembers His people in mercy in kindness, in crisis. Mark it! → **God remembers you in your affliction.**

Proof – **8:1a** – “**But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark;**”

**3 actions:** (1) wind (2) stopped the fountains of the deep (3) closed the windows ... because God remembered Noah.

Gen 19:29 – “Thus it came about, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived.”

Psa 98:3 – “He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.”

Psa 106:45 – “And He remembered His covenant for their sake, And relented according to the greatness of His lovingkindness.”

Psa 111:5 – “He has given food to those who fear Him; He will remember His covenant forever.”

**Illustration** – Childbirth – God remembers the barren wombs

Gen 30:22 – “Then God remembered Rachel, and God gave heed to her and opened her womb.”

1 Sam 1:19 – “Then they arose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD, and returned again to their house in Ramah. And Elkanah had relations with Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her.”

**Illustration**– Miller children names

- 1) Jadon - his name means “God will vindicate; judge”
- 2) Rebekah - she is named after **Gen 25:21**

- 3) Zachary - comes from rk;Z” + hwhy (zakar + YHWH)  
→Zechariah →which means “God remembered”

God doesn't always answer the prayer of a husband for the barren womb of a wife as he did with Isaac. God doesn't always answer prayers the way we would like or expect. But He does answer them perfectly.

### **Application**

Beloved, our view of God is the benchmark of our spiritual maturity. Understanding the nature of God is critical to spiritual maturity because in the end we rest in the reality of our God.

Superficial knowledge of God, a shallow knowledge of God, a limited knowledge of God contributes to limited understanding and limited faith and limited trust.

Having a right understanding of God as revealed in Scripture leads us to approach God boldly in prayer.

**Martyn Lloyd Jones** in a sermon entitled The Real Reason for Revival: *“This holy boldness, this argumentation, this reasoning, this putting the case before God, this pleading His own promises, this is the whole secret of prayer.”*

God takes pleasure when His children come to Him and please with Him and say “God, remember me”.

See the pattern of godly men and woman in Scripture going to the Lord boldly in prayer:

Samson → Jgs 16:28 – “Samson called to the LORD and said, ‘O Lord God, please remember me and please strengthen me just this time, O God, that I may at once be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.’”

Hannah → 1 Sam 1:11 – “O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life,”

Solomon → 2 Chr 6:42 – “O LORD God, do not turn away the face of Your anointed; remember Your lovingkindness to Your servant David.”

Hezekiah → 2 Kgs 20:3 – “Remember now, O LORD, I beseech You, how I have walked before You in truth and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in Your sight.”

Nehemiah → Neh 5:19 – “Remember me, O my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.” (13:14, 22, 31)

Job → Job 14:13 – “Oh that You would hide me in Sheol, That You would conceal me until Your wrath returns to You, That You would set a limit for me and remember me!”

David → Psa 25:6 – “Remember, O LORD, Your compassion and Your lovingkindnesses, For they have been from of old.”

Jeremiah → Jer 14:21 – “Do not despise us, for Your own name's sake; Do not disgrace the throne of Your glory; Remember and do not annul Your covenant with us” (15:15; Lam 5:1)

Habakkuk → Hab 3:2 – “LORD, I have heard the report about You and I fear. O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years, In the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy.”

Thief on the Cross → Luke 23:42 – “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!”

That is the pattern. That is the charge. That is what God commands of us. Throughout Scripture, Jesus commands us to come to God, to Christ, in prayer with confidence. Not with confidence in self, but confidence in the teaching of Christ, in the sacrifice that Christ paid on our behalf, confidence in the good, loving hand of

God. Shame on us for being weak and timid in our prayers to God. God remembers!

## CONCLUSION

**Illustration** – A faithful Chinese pastor and evangelist, Wong Ming-Dao, was imprisoned for his faith by the Chinese government from 1955 until 1980. He was thrown into prison at the time of the Cultural Revolution. He was kept in a cell for twenty-three years. He wasn't released until he was almost eighty. Throughout all these years, he waited and rested on the Lord. According to his testimony, one verse in the Bible had been particularly helpful to him, and this was Micah chapter seven and verse seven:

Mic 7:7 “But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me.”

If you are a Christian, a child of God, born again and adopted into His family, a joint heir with Christ, God will remember you and you need to go to the Lord through prayer with confidence and boldly ask God to remember you.

If you are here today and not a Christian, not forgiven, not trusting in Christ through faith alone, you have no demands of God. You have nothing coming from God except eternal judgment for your sin which is due you because of your sin. You are not worse than I am. I was once enslaved in the same lust and foolish thinking of rebellion that you are. But by God's grace, I am a beggar that has received the mercy and favor and gift of salvation from God - as are all children of God, all Christians here. God tells you that He will not hear your prayers if you ask for things. The one prayer that God will hear, if you come to Him and cry out, is a prayer asking for forgiveness. If you will admit that you are a rebel, that you have sinned against God, and ask for His forgiveness, He promises to receive you to Himself, forgive your sins and adopt you into His family. And, you would not be facing an eternity of God's judgment but an eternity in His presence.

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