Genesis 8:6-11 "Peace" (p.6) Ajax Alliance Church. Sunday March 10th, 2024.

Genesis 8:6-11. [6] At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made [7] and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. face of the ground. [9] But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. [10] He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. [11] And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So, Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. (ESV)

As conflict in Ukraine continues, Landmark cathedrals across Europe chimed in unison in a gesture of solidarity with Ukraine, as bystanders gathered to mourn those killed during Russia's invasion and pray for peace. One grandmother Veronique Delormel outside Notre-Dame de Paris., said: "I'm thinking of all the families and children suffering, suffering mentally, from their extreme fear from the sound of bombs, from having to hide in cellars," The European Association of Cathedral Master Builders said churches "from Norway to Malta and from Spain to Ukraine" participated. "Europe is burning," the association said in a statement. "With the ringing, we pray for all who are affected by this war. With the ringing, we pray for peace." (https://nationalpost.com/pmn/news-pmn/europes-cathedral-bells-ring-out-for-peace-in-ukraine)

Following the death of the majority of humanity in the flood, Genesis 8 recounts the end of waiting by Noah and his family. Justice had been executed against a guilty humanity and there is now a sense of peace in moving on with life.

How does one comprehend death? Every day we experience either first hand or through the stories of war and famine, someone suffering, often violently. Death and violence is the natural result of living in a world in rebellion to God. Dealing with traumatic events and the emotional turmoil that follows is an often slow, arduous process. The place that we turn to find comfort in these times makes all the difference.

Genesis 8 presents the aftermath of cataclysmic events of the flood. Noah, a man of faith, leads his family into a new world. After a period of great waiting, God offers hope and peace. Genesis 8:6-11, the promise of peace is seen in three ways. First we see the 1) Looking for Peace (Genesis 8:6), 2) Lacking of Peace (Genesis 8:7), and the 3) Locating of Peace (Genesis 8:8-11).

The Promise of Peace is seen first in the:

1) *Looking* for Peace (Genesis 8:6)

Genesis 8:6. [6] At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made (ESV)

The whole planet was under water. This is a universal global flood. It covers the entire earth. We learn from the Genesis 8:1-5 that when it was time for the flood to be over, God began to remove the water. And He did it, first of all, verse 1, by a great wind. "He

caused a wind to pass over the earth," and this wind began to blow the water away. And, certainly, the breakup of the canopy exposed the sun and its full, blazing brightness to the planet earth. And there, of course, was an evaporation going on, as well. As the water in verse 3 and 5 steadily is decreasing. The wind blows it. The sun evaporates it, and the great sea basins are created. The mountains are pushed up, and they force the water by gravity down into these great basins. The rain falls on the top of the mountain. It runs down. It forms snow, and then it runs down in little rivulets and finally becomes rivers, and the rivers run into the sea. And that's the hydrological cycle. The water in the sea evaporates into the clouds. The cloud goes over the mountain, drops the rain, drops the snow again, and the cycle goes on all the time.

Please turn to Psalm 104 (p.471)

The earth that appeared after the flood was very different from before the flood. It had these massive high mountains, and it had these deep, deep ocean basins. There were mountains that go as high as 30,000 feet, and oceans that go as deep as 35,000 feet. It was extreme from the comparison to the earth before the flood. Psalm 104 describes these phenomena:

Psalm 104:1-8. [104:1] Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, [2] covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent. [3] He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters; he makes the clouds his chariot; he rides on the wings of the wind; [4] he makes his messengers winds, his ministers a flaming fire. [5] He set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be moved. [6] You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. [7] At your rebuke they fled; at the sound of your thunder they took to flight. [8] The mountains rose, the valleys sank down to the place that you appointed for them. (ESV)

• These images express the magnificence of the God who made the world and continues to rule it. Therefore, God's people are to praise God for His works of creation and providence, seeing in them displays of God's power and goodness.

His power and goodness and blessing are supremely manifested in Christ (John 1:14; Eph. 1:3–14). (Crossway Bibles. (2008). The ESV Study Bible (p. 1069). Crossway Bibles.)

Scientists will tell you, most mountain ranges are made up of igneous rock. Igneous rock, is there because there was this explosive kind of volcanic movement on the crust of the earth. Igneous rock is typically in mountain ranges of the world covered with sedimentary stratified rock. If you go down deep into the mountain, you find this igneous...this almost volcanic kind of rock. Whereas, on the surface, you see layers of sedimentary kind of rock. Before the great flood comes: The mountains haven't been raised up. The seabeds haven't come down. That's not until the latter part of the flood time. The flood comes, and water literally drowns the whole earth. Since the mountains aren't that high, and the basins of the ocean, the valleys aren't that deep at that time, so the earth is completely submerged in water. This causes massive mudslides and movements of sediment. Sedimentary rock is not formed by one generation of rock and another and another over millions of years. It's formed in a holocaust by a tremendous force of water moving in this direction and pushing layers on top of layers on top of layers. This is just plain geological science. The great flood transported and deposited material in massive

layers all over the world. That happened in the first part of the flood...The earth was opening up. Massive amounts of water were coming out of the bowels of the earth. Rain was pouring down from the sky. These massive mudslides were forming, and sedimentary rock was literally being pushed and accumulated all over the face of the earth. Then, in <mark>the latter half of the flood.</mark> God begins to push the mountains up with volcanic movement. And, as the mountains push up, they push up the sedimentary rock so that what you find on the top of the mountain is the sedimentary rock. That is why in almost every mountain range on the face of the earth, you find marine fossils at the top of the mountain...because that's where the sedimentary rock was that once was at the bottom of the flood. And it was in those great mudslides and great stratification that burial of life took place. The ark rested in the mountains of Ararat 150 days after the rains began. Assyrian records may identify such a name in Armenia of eastern Turkey, but the precise location remains unknown. When Noah and his group came off the ark, they probably saw the bones of dead people all over the place. Dead animals, as well, that had dried, floated, bloated, decayed, and settled back to the ground. And there they were, lying on the ground decomposing in the sun. Many other bones, of course, were deposited and buried in the sediment. So when they stepped off that...that ark that day, when they walked into a post-flood world, the first thing they were extremely aware of was divine judgment. They would've seen a devastated earth. Different, high mountains, low valleys, ocean basins, stripped, death everywhere, and **nobody** there but them. No one alive. No one...No neighbors...And the flood would be stark, indescribable evidence of the judgment of God. Creation was a generation of life. This situation was a recreation, a regeneration. (Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). The Bible knowledge commentary: An exposition of the scriptures (Ge 8:4-19). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.).

• In regeneration you find the same thing. God brings life from what was previously dead.

At the end of forty days...that's forty days after verse 5, you have forty days after the water decreased steadily and the tops of the mountains became visible. The <u>allusion</u> to "forty" was also the period of <u>Israel's captivity in the wilderness</u> until <u>God's wrath</u> was satisfied (e.g., Num 14:33–34) (Mathews, K. A. (2001). *Vol. 1A: Genesis 1-11:26* (electronic ed.). Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (387). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.).

• There can never be peace until God's wrath is satisfied. The flood is a picture of consequences for sin. Since God is holy, He cannot allow sin to occur without consequence. The ultimate consequence is the execution of His wrath. For those who sin, until they repent of that sin there is no peace. A lifetime of failure to repent of sin, brings God's wrath.

For Noah and his family, the water's going down. The mountains are pushing up. Forty days later...It says that, "Noah opened the window of the ark." This would be in the six hundredth year of Noah's life, eleventh month, tenth day. He waited until the water, which had subsided, to reveal the tops of the mountains. Very patient man, by the way. You would think he would really want to get off that thing as fast as possible. But he had learned to be patient and obedient to the Lord. Now Noah doesn't move very far. It doesn't say he kicked open the door and they all ran out. It...it just says he opened the window. He didn't go very far without hearing from God. He didn't know anything about the new world. He didn't know what was out there, what to expect. He had developed a pattern of obeying the Lord for 121 years, and he wasn't about to change it. We must marvel at Noah's patience of faith. Although he and his family had been confined in the ark for 285 days, he waited still another month before removing a

portion of the ark's covering to get a better view of the situation from his mountain lookout. (Jeske, J. C. (2001). *Genesis* (2nd ed., p. 89). Northwestern Pub. House.)

This is a picture of **faith.** God **doesn't** promise to give us **all the answers** to what is **happening** or **going to happen.** <u>Faith is trusting in God</u> that **He is worthy to be trusted** especially when we **don't** immediately have all the answers. <u>God expects us</u> to **follow His instructions** and **use biblical wisdom** to <u>make decisions</u> that would **most please Him.**

Illustration: ("You Can't Organize It")

Woodrow Wilson's dream for world peace produced the League of Nations, but this organization did not achieve peace. Following World War II the United Nations was formed. This organization was intended to provide a forum for debate, but insofar as preventing war is concerned, it, too, is an exercise in futility. The idea is good, but its higher goals cannot be attained when the organization is controlled and engineered by finite, sinful persons. The world will never know a "just and lasting peace" until people and nations submit willingly to the absolute and benevolent will of Jesus Christ (Hobbs, H. H. (1990). My favorite illustrations (194). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.).

The Promise of Peace is now seen in the:

2) *Lacking* of Peace (Genesis 8:7)

Genesis 8:7. [7] and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. (ESV)

It is Noah's responsibility to ascertain whether the land is sufficiently dry so that he and the others may leave the ark. But the actual moment of departure awaits God's command (8:15–17) (Hamilton, V. P. (1990). The Book of Genesis. Chapters 1-17. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (302–303). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.).

• God has given us responsibilities and abilities that pertain to those responsibilities. We are to follow God's direction for action but that does not negate our responsibility to be aware of what is happening. Therefore, when God's command to act occurs, we will be sufficiently prepared, know the resources at our disposal and the situation we are being deployed into.

Now, why would Noah send a raven? Well, he would send a raven, because a raven was a scavenger bird. A Scavenger bird who would eat just about anything...It would be like the crow chewing on road kill......if there was any dead flesh bloating and floating on the water or lying around anywhere, the raven would sniff it out. They were able to eat anything. Its departure from the ark signified that the impurities of the past had been removed and the creation of the new world had a fresh start (Mathews, K. A. (2001). Vol. 1A: Genesis 1-11:26 (electronic ed.). Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (387). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.).

• Peace only occurs when the past is removed. When people hold on to guilt, they cling to the past. Faith in Christ is not only receiving His righteousness, but the realization that He suffered God's wrath for our sin. In faith, we release our

past sinfulness and realize that it has been atoned for, no longer to be carried by us.

Please turn to 2 Chronicles 16 (p.344)

In releasing the raven, Noah would be able to tell, at least in part, if the raven didn't come back, that the raven had found some flesh floating in the water. He wanted to know if that's what had happened. He wanted to get a little bit of preview of what he was going see when he got off. And, apparently, the raven did find some flesh, because "It went to and fro/flew here and there until the waters were dried up from the earth." It stayed out there. It just flew here and flew there until the water was completely dried up. That was several weeks later...In the Mosaic Law, the raven was considered unclean. It was unfit for food. They were not to eat it, and it was unfit for sacrifice (Leviticus 11:15, Deuteronomy 14:14.). (Courson, J. (2005). Jon Courson's application commentary: Volume one: Genesis—Job (p. 39). Thomas Nelson.)

It may seem strange at times when the Lord gives a directive in what and how He wants things done. He has a reason behind it, and when we look a bit closer, we see His purpose. In 2 Chronicles 16, we see that Israel is divided and at war between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Here we see an explanation of God for His directives:

2 Chronicles 16:1-10. In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. ² Then **Asa took silver** and gold **from the treasures** of the house of the LORD and the king's house and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying, ³ "There is a covenant between me and vou, as there was between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me." ⁴ And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they **conquered** Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and **all the store cities** of Naphtali. ⁵ And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and let his work cease. ⁶ Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them **he built** Geba and Mizpah. ⁷ At that time **Hanani** the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you. ⁸ Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, he gave them into your hand. ⁹ For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars." 10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison, for he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of the people at the same time. (ESV)

Here in the 9th Century BC, Asa's last five years are marked by spiritual and physical decline, stemming from his unfaithful response to a military threat from the northern kingdom. He became unequally yoked in an alliance with a foreign king and sold out his nation to do so. He forgot earlier victories granted to him when he trusted in God. A single-minded focus on victory at all cost blinded him to godly correction from Hanani.

• We often don't have peace because we have pursued fleshly aims in a fleshly way. People wander to and frow and don't find contentment or peace. Peace is only found in pursuing God's will, God's way.

Quote: The raven was sent out of the ark and finds no place to rest its foot, and so it roams endlessly and restlessly over the earth. It is as Daniel Defoe wrote in *The History of the Devil*: "Satan, being thus confined to a vagabond, wandering, unsettled condition, is without any certain abode; for though he has, in consequence of his angelic nature, a kind of empire in the liquid waste or air, yet this is certainly part of his punishment, that he is ... without any fixed place, or space, allowed him to rest the sole of his foot upon." (Freeman, J. M., & Chadwick, H. J. (1998). *Manners & customs of the Bible* (Rev. ed.].) (15–16). North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos Publishers.)

Finally, the *Promise of Peace* is now seen in the:

3) *Locating* of Peace (Genesis 8:8-11)

Genesis 8:8. [8] Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. [9] But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. [10] He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. [11] And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So, Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. (ESV)

What Noah needed to know was not only that there was death out there, but what he needed to know was that there was life out there. Right? Because they were going have to find some life in order to what? To eat...And while a raven was a scavenger bird **that ate flesh, <mark>a dove</mark> was a very docile bird, easily tamed, that ate vegetation... <mark>A rayen</mark>** didn't care where it was. It could just land on a corpse and pick away and fly and hit another corpse and pick away and fly and hit another corpse and pick away...didn't have to land anywhere. But that wasn't true of a dove. Doves were birds of the valley, according to the old rabbis, and they needed to find a settled place in a valley or a place on a low cliff, just above the ground. They would make their little nest in a low cliff. They would make their little roost there, so they could fly out that low cliff down and get the vegetation that was in the valley. The dove was able to be tamed. The raven was wild. The dove was a clean bird, according to the same passage, Leviticus 11:15, Deuteronomy 14:14. And the raven was unclean. The dove was the symbol of gentleness. Of course, later on in the Old Testament, symbol of beauty. It was used also for sacrifice, because it was **clean** and also **could be eaten**. It was also **viewed as a pet** and **a symbol of peace** and **joy.** "Noah with the dove in hand reflects the religious interests of the passage: the rayen, an unclean bird departs from the ark, but the dove, indicative of purity (cf. Matt. 10:16), is a welcomed resident upon the vessel" (Mathews). The picture of the dove's repeated returns and final release is one of lingering sweetness and beauty. (Hughes, R. K. (2004). *Genesis: beginning and blessing* (p. 143). Crossway Books.)

We see in verse 9 that "the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So, he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. (ESV). Noah had waited seven days to send that dove out. Noah likely wanted to check the bird's feet for

evidence of clay, which would indicate land (Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., Whitehead, M. M., Grigoni, M. R., & Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Ge 8:9). Lexham Press.).

This is a perfect example of the exercise of biblical wisdom. Biblical wisdom first looks to God in prayer, examines His instruction, discerns the time, determines how to best fulfill God's instruction, and then continues to persevere in faithfulness. We should not wait for God to give us a hole while leaning on a shovel. God expects us to use the resources that He has given us in faithfulness.

Now verse ten says: "He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark". (ESV). Noah is doing this for the same previous purpose: To see if the water had subsided so that plants begin to surface. The author here is specifying these time periods for a reason. Not only does it specify that we are talking about history and myth or fable, but it also corresponds to the rest of the narrative. Follow the chiastic chart in your bulletin or on screen: we see: 7 days of waiting for flood (7:4) 7 days of waiting for flood (7:10) 40 days of flood (7:17a) 150 days of water triumphing (7:24) 150 days of waiting (8:3) 40 days of waiting (8:6) 7 days of waiting (8:10) and 7 days of waiting (8:12). One can clearly see the importance of the "7 days" in this pattern. It is the same 7-day pattern that plays a central role in the Creation account of chapter 1 (J.W. Wenham (Genesis 1–15 Word Biblical Commentary [Waco: Word, 1987])).

Finally, we see in verse 11: "the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. (ESV). One of the trees in the world that can survive under water for a long time is an olive tree. In fact, olive trees are hearty trees. They have so much oil in them, olive oil, so much oil in them that when you cut a branch and you want to carve it, you have to let it sit for a long, long, long time, or it remains green and very difficult to carve. And even after you've carved it, it's liable to split and not give the effect that the carver wants. So it takes a long time to dry out, even a cut branch. They're very, very hearty trees. And so that fits into the account very well. This little dove found a freshly plucked olive leaf. The raven showed Noah there was death. The dove showed Noah there was...life. There was life...A freshly picked or plucked olive leaf. That meant the little hills were exposed. That meant the land was being dried. That meant the valleys were becoming clear. So Noah at the end of verse 11 knew the water was abated from the earth. As a fresh leaf, it was newly born and thus was confirmation that the earth again was yielding its herbage (as 1:11–12 30). Noah knew that the waters had receded to the lower elevations where olive trees commonly grow (Smith, J. E. (1993). The Pentateuch (2nd ed.) (Ge 8:1–19). Joplin, Mo.: College Press Pub. Co.). The sign of the dove carrying an olive branch was so moving that the symbol is used as a token of peace even today. (Boice, J. M. (1998). *Genesis:* an expositional commentary (p. 371). Baker Books.) Thus, it became symbolic of God's blessings of **regeneration**, **abundance**, and **strength**, which is most likely the function it serves here. In the present context the olive branch is invested with the idea of peace and reconciliation, and for this reason it was incorporated into the official emblem of the State of Israel. (Sarna, N. M. (1989). *Genesis* (p. 58). Jewish Publication Society.) Both anointing oil and dove had symbolic value in Israel for the empowering presence of the Spirit, especially the ministry of the messianic figure (e.g., 1 Sam 16:13; Ps 89:20; Isa 61:1). Jesus of Nazareth took up that ministry (Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38), and at his public baptism all four Evangelists note that the Spirit came upon him in the form of a descending "dove" (Matt 3:16 pars.). (Mathews, K. A. (2001). Vol. 1A: Genesis 1-11:26 (electronic ed.). Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (388). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.).

Please turn to Isaiah 61 (p.581)

The law was first sent forth like the raven, but brought no tidings of the pacifying of the waters of God's wrath, with which the world of humanity was deluged; therefore, in the fullness of time, God sent forth his gospel, as the dove, in the likeness of which the Holy Spirit descended, and this presents us with an olive-branch and brings in a better hope (Henry, M. (1996). Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: Complete and unabridged in one volume (Ge 8:6–12). Peabody: Hendrickson.).

Isaiah explains this hope in the beginning of chapter 61:

Isaiah 61:1-4. [61:1] The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; [2] to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; [3] to grant to those who mourn in Zion-to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified. [4] They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. (ESV)

Through the Spirit of the Lord, there is peace after devastation. You don't have to suffer for the sins of the past, you don't have to be discouraged, or fearful. There is liberty from the captivity of sin: that is the good news of the Gospel. Now is the time of the Lord's favour for those who repent of sin. God wants to turn your mourning to gladness, hope and peace. For those who God had given this liberty to, we are anointed to bring the good news to others in captivity. Now is the day of liberty, hope and peace. We are the anointed messengers with an anointed message of peace.

(Format note: some base commentary from http://www.gty.org/resources/sermons/90-261/gods-miraculous-restoration-of-mankind)

Closing Hymn -

Prayer Room Invitation

056 Benediction

May the bliss of this glorious thought—my sin, not in part but the whole is nailed to the Cross and you bear it no more, <u>May this comfort you in all your troubles</u> so that you may comfort those in trouble <u>with that comfort</u> you have received from God! In Christ we pray. <u>AMEN</u>. (cf. 2 Cor. 1:4. Hymn Reference: It is Well with My Soul, Horatio G, Spafford (1828–1888); TH p. 691)