

Title: "Noah Built an Altar"

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Text: Genesis 8:13-22

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Today, I would like to talk about Noah once again. This is a continuation of last week's message, and we will look at Genesis 8:13-22, verse by verse.

First, let's look at verse 13: "In the six hundred first year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from the earth, and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked and saw that the face of the ground was drying." The flood began on the 17th day of the second month, when Noah was 600 years old. About ten months had passed since the flood began. The rain fell for 40 days, and then the water slowly went down for many more months.

Verse 14 says: "In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was completely dry." So, according to the biblical chronology, about 370 days after the flood began, the earth was completely dry.

Then verse 15 says: "Then God said to Noah." Before the flood, God had spoken to Noah and told him to enter the ark. Now, after 370 days, God speaks to him again.

In verses 16-19, God says, "Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you." God also tells Noah to bring out all the animals so that they may multiply on the earth. And Noah did exactly what God told him to do.

There are two things I want us to learn from today's passage. **First, Noah was patient. He waited for the word of God.** Just imagine what life was like for Noah and his family inside the ark. It was a large ark, but with all those animals, it must have been crowded and uncomfortable.

After more than ten months, Noah opened the covering of the ark and saw that the ground was beginning to dry. Inside, there must have been animal waste everywhere. The smell must have been terrible. But outside, there was fresh air and a clear sky. Wouldn't you want to get out?

But Noah did not. He waited for God to say, "Go out." He waited another two months. Noah could have said, "It looks safe now. I think it is time to leave." But he did not follow his own judgment. He waited for God's word. That is not easy. Sometimes, after waiting for an hour, even five more minutes can feel like a long

time. Noah had already waited through 40 days of rain and many more months inside the ark. Yet when he saw the ground beginning to dry, he continued to wait.

Why? Because for Noah, God's word was more important than his own feelings or desires. Finally, the Bible says, "Then God said to Noah, 'Go out of the ark.'" And Noah went out.

Second, Noah valued worship. Look at verse 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." The first thing Noah did after leaving the ark was build an altar. He worshiped God.

Think about Noah's situation. He had been in the ark for **one year and ten days. One Year and Ten Days.** And what was the first thing he did when he came out? **He worshiped God.**

The flood was over, but everything around him must have been in chaos. There must have been a terrible smell, and there was so much work to do because of the remains of the corruption and violence from before the flood.

Noah had no house except the ark. He had no fields ready to harvest and many things to worry about. He had to begin a new life. Yet, in the middle of all those urgent needs, what did Noah choose to do first? He worshiped God.

For Noah, worship came first. He did not even have enough food for himself. Yet he took clean animals and clean birds and offered them to God. He did not give God the minimum because his situation was difficult. Instead, he worshiped God with the best he had. He gave God his very best.

Noah did not worship God carelessly, either. The Bible says that he offered **burnt offerings**. A burnt offering meant that an animal was killed and completely burned as an offering to God. Think about how difficult that must have been. Noah had just come out of the ark after living there for one year and ten days. He had to prepare a fire, prepare the animals, and burn them as an offering. It was not easy. **Physically, it was hard work.** But Noah did it. He worshiped God with all his heart. That is why verse 21 says: "And when the Lord smelled the pleasing odor." God was pleased with Noah's worship.

Dear friends, this is an important lesson for us. Worship is not something we do carelessly or only when life is easy. We worship God with our hearts, our bodies,

our resources, and our whole lives.

Romans 12:1 says: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship."

The Greek word for "body" is *soma*. It does not mean only our physical body. It can refer to the whole person and our whole life. It includes our hands and feet, of course. But It also includes our minds, our time, our possessions, and our relationships. In other words, it means everything we are and everything we have.

Paul calls this a **living sacrifice**. The burnt offering Noah gave involved an animal being killed and offered completely to God. In that sense, the Old Testament sacrifice was a dead sacrifice. But Paul speaks of something different: a sacrifice that is alive. **"A living Sacrifice."**

Our worship does not end when Sunday worship ends. From Monday through Saturday, from the moment we wake up until we go to bed, we place every part of our lives in God's hands. That is a living sacrifice.

I want to share something happened in Korea that became very important in the early spread of the gospel. Korea is a relatively small country. About 140 years ago, when Protestant missionaries first came to Korea, there were people who traveled from village to village selling goods. Some of these people became Christians. There were not many of them at first. But they traveled from village to village, not only selling things but also sharing the gospel, especially when missionaries did not have the freedom to travel in Korea. They carried and sold the Bible. The missionaries encouraged them to sell Bibles instead of simply giving them away. Because people often value something more when they have paid for it.

So, the Bible was sold very cheaply. These Bible sellers became known in Korean church history as *maeseoin*, or colporteurs. Imagine what happened. Someone bought a Bible. During the winter, when there was less agricultural work to do, that person began to read it. But there were many things he or she did not understand. Then, when the Bible seller came through the village again, the person would ask questions. At first, it might be one person asking one person. But then more people became interested.

So, the Bible seller might say, "Why don't you gather the people in the village

together?" Then they would sit together and study the Bible. A small Bible study group was formed. Some people were deeply touched by what they learned. They began meeting regularly. Some wanted to be baptized. Then missionaries could come and provide baptism and pastoral care, sometimes under difficult circumstances. And gradually, these small Bible-study groups became churches. This is one reason the Bible played such an important role in the early Korean church.

They remind me of what Paul says in Romans 12:1: "Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God." They did not simply say, "I believe." They gave their time, their resources, their energy, and their whole lives. They were truly living sacrifices.

And now, after three months at Liberty, I see something that encourages me. One thing I have noticed is that almost all of you are doing something for this church, whether people see it or not. From Paul, our oldest member, to our younger members, I see people serving in different ways.

In some of the churches I served before, there were people who simply came to worship on Sunday and then went home. That happens in many churches. But here at Liberty, perhaps because we are a small congregation and feel more like a family, I see so many people taking part and serving in different ways. And I want to say, **thank you.**

I do not know everything about how you live from Monday through Saturday. But after spending these months with you, I have come to know you better, even though we mostly see one another on Sundays. I can see that you value God's Word, like Noah did, and that you understand the importance of worshiping God through your whole life. That is a **living sacrifice.**

Dear brothers and sisters, may we continue to walk faithfully with the Lord, just as Noah did. May we value God's Word, put worship first, and offer our whole lives to God. And may we remain faithful until the day we hear the words of our Lord: "**Well done, good and faithful servant.**"

May our lives become a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.
In the name of Jesus Christ, I bless you.

Amen.