



Noah's Waiting Game – Genesis 6-9

We spend a lot of our time waiting – in lines, in traffic, or for the repair person. What about waiting for the doctor's report, or a job interview, or to mend a broken relationship? Noah had to wait while building the ark, while it rained, and again while the flood receded. What can Noah teach us about waiting on God, even during a storm?

Waiting in Obedience

Noah's first experience of waiting came after God told him to build the ark. Genesis 6 says every thought of man's heart was evil all the time. But Noah stood out as a righteous man who found favor with God. So God let him in on His plan to destroy the earth and mankind. He then told Noah to build an ark to protect his family.

God gave Noah detailed instructions for building the ark. Commentators say it could have taken over one hundred years to complete this complex construction project. Imagine Noah working every day, sawing, measuring, and building while the world around him jeered and made fun of him.

One kind of waiting is obedience: preparing without visible results. Noah had no proof that rain and floodwaters were even a possibility. His only assurance was God's Word. But Noah's faith was active, not passive. He did not just sit around and wait. He worked to build the ark based on God's promises and instructions, while he waited.

Waiting in Patience

When the ark was finished, God shut the door behind Noah and sealed them in just before the rains came. Genesis 7:11 tells us, "All the springs of the great deep burst open and the floodgates of the heavens were opened." Massive amounts of water deluged the earth for forty days and forty nights. Noah's waiting had only begun.

Genesis 7:24 says floodwaters covered the earth for one hundred and fifty days after the rain stopped. For nearly six months, Noah floated in an enclosed ark, surrounded by water with no land in sight. With no rudder or steering mechanism and nowhere to go, he could only drift at God's mercy.

A second kind of waiting is resting in God's perfect provision and protection, knowing we can't control our own circumstances. Even after the ark came to rest on Mount Ararat, Noah had to wait because the waters still covered the earth. Often the only thing we can do is trust that God is holding us as we wait.

Waiting in Worship

After waiting nearly one year, the waters receded enough that it became safe to leave the ark. But even then, Noah did not rush out. He sent ravens and doves to test for dry land. When the final dove did not return, he knew it was time to leave. But only then did God tell him to get out of the ark. The same God who shut him in the ark now let him out.

But Noah did not hurry out and celebrate his freedom. His first action, recorded in Genesis 8:20, was to build an altar and offer a sacrifice to the God who had been with him through this long ordeal. Noah created a sacred space to worship God who had worked so mightily in his life. Noah recognized and honored God for all He had done.

This third kind of waiting comes when we understand God's leadership and then worship the One who led us. God responded to Noah's worship with a promise that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood. And God sealed this covenant with a rainbow, so that every time we see a rainbow, we too can remember and worship God.

Our Waiting Game

When you are in a season of waiting, remember Noah's example. God sustained Noah through each period of waiting, and He wants to do the same for you and me. We wait best when we trust that God's timing is perfect, rather than running ahead of Him, and that His love is our safest place, even when we cannot see where we are going.



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