

The view from Mount Ararat

Scripture Readings: Genesis 6:5-8; 7:24-8:22; 9:12-17

Quote:

"The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority, they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up dainties at the table, cross their legs, and tyrannize their teachers."

This could be from today's newspaper but was written over two thousand years ago by a Greek author.

St Paul wrote in the first century AD in the letter to the Romans:

" For although (godless and wicked people) knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. ²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised"

If we look at Hogarth's paintings from the 1700s we see society at all levels depicted as depraved and given over to all kinds of bad behaviour.

It is a truth that since the fall humankind has a preference for sinfulness and we mess up.

Let's hear the story of the Bible told in this form . . .

THE STORY OF THE BIBLE

GENESIS

God: All right, you two, don't do the one thing. Other than that, have fun.

Adam & Eve: Okay.

Satan: You should do the thing.

Adam & Eve: Okay.

God: What happened!?

Adam & Eve: We did the thing.

God: Guys

THE REST OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

God: You are my people, and you should not do the things.

People: We won't do the things.

God: Good.

People: We did the things.

God: Guys

THE GOSPELS

Jesus: I am the Son of God, and even though you have done the things, the Father and I still love you and want you to live. Don't do the things anymore.

Healed people: Okay! Thank you!

Other people: We've never seen him do the things, but he probably does the things when no one is looking.

Jesus: I have never done the things.

Other people: We're going to put you on trial for doing the things.

Pilate: Did you do the things?

Jesus: No.

Pilate: He didn't do the things.

Other people: Kill him anyway.

Pilate: Okay.

Jesus: *Guys*

PAUL'S LETTERS

People: We did the things.

Paul: Jesus still loves you, and because you love Him, you have to stop doing the things.

People: Okay.

PAUL'S LETTERS PART II

People: We did the things again.

Paul: *Guys*

REVELATION

John: When Jesus comes back, there will be no more people who do the things. In the meantime, *stop doing the things*.

THE END

The truth is that left to our own devices we "do the things" But the wonder is that God, throughout history has made a way possible for us to come back.

So what about Mount Ararat? The mountain on which the Ark landed when the waters went down after the flood.

What can we learn as we stand with Noah and look around?

Genesis 6 tells us that God saw how wicked the people on Earth had become. It really grieves Him that that is what we prefer. - He's had enough - a clean sweep was the only answer.

God hates sin - he is a holy God and desires a holy people.

But Noah "found favour"

In God's sight the ungodly deserve destruction. But God is the God of last chances.

Flood - Sodom and Gomorah

So, as Noah came out of the Ark and stood on the clean mountain top he could look back at where he had come from. We can always look back at learn - not look back in longing for the past. But to give thanks for blessings and learn from mistakes.

Noah -

Righteous man - his righteousness was from nothing he did of himself, but because he sought after God. Like Abraham it was his faith - his belief in God which was counted as righteousness.

Our righteousness is only through Jesus 2 Cor 5:21

"God made him who had no sin to be sin^[a] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

Blameless - man of integrity before others

Walked with God a daily way of life

Obedient did what God asked

Patient 120 years to build the ark - 1 year and 10 days in ark

So with Noah we can look back and see that God is a Holy God who desires a holy people.

There is a clear division in God's sight between Sinfulness and Righteousness

Looking up to Father God

Noah kept his eyes fixed on God. The first thing he did was to worship.

We should give thanks for our **salvation** - God always provides a way of salvation. - Ark is a picture - Pitch = blood.

Rainbow - always a joy. Sign for us of God's blessing

Covenant making and keeping God. Types - strong partner - always keeps.

Promise keeping. His promise at this stage was never to destroy the whole Earth in one go and that there would always be the seasons in their order.

We need to learn and be confident in the fact that God's promises are true.

Faithful God . When we are faithless He is faithful.

Looking forward to Jesus

So God is a God of promise. 2Cor 1:20

²⁰ *For all of God's promises have been **fulfilled in Christ** with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory. (New Living Version)*

In the book of Revelation we read that when He rides out of heaven His name is "**Faithful and True**"

That's our faithful God come to get us.

Rev 4 - Around the throne

"A **rainbow** that shone like an emerald encircled the throne."

At the heart of heaven there is a complete rainbow.

Our covenant making and keeping God is on the throne and we can trust Him to bring us home to all that He has promised us. The one who calls you is faithful and He will do it.

And finally:

The view from Mount Ararat

Looking back . . .

Am I living my life my way or God's way?

Looking up . . .

Am I giving God the worship He deserves and trusting in His promises?

Looking forward . . .

Am I looking forward to Jesus coming for me and life eternal with Him in heaven?

