

Waiting Patiently?

Genesis 8:1-14; Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 98, 105

Have you ever had to stay inside because of rain—days and days of rain? And when it stopped, was the ground muddy? Perhaps you have heard the phrase “cabin fever.” It’s what happens to people who are stuck indoors for a long time. They become anxious and uneasy. They become irritable. They want to see and do something—anything. Noah and his family must have had the worst case ever.

The waiting started the day Noah, his family, and all the animals went into the ark. God sent an angel to close the door. They waited in the ark for seven days before anything happened. When it finally did, it happened big! The Bible says “the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened” (Genesis 7:11, NIV). Water poured down from heaven and shot up from the earth!

Only God knew if elephants would get seasick in a ship in the middle of a flood. Noah didn’t know. His wife and children didn’t know either. No one had ever needed to put elephants in a boat before.

Things were busy in the ark. Mostly there were animals to calm down, feed, and clean up after. Some of that wasn’t easy in a big boat tossing up and down on angry flood waters. It wasn’t too clean either, and it probably didn’t smell very good.

God had promised Noah that He would protect the ark during the Flood.

And He did. His angels kept the ark from capsizing (tipping over and going under).

Finally, after 40 days the rain stopped. Noah and his family must have wondered when they could safely leave the ark. But the wind still blew and the waves still tossed the boat around for five more months. Then the Lord made the ark float into a protected spot in the Ararat Mountains. He made a wind blow to dry up the



The Message

People in God's family wait patiently together for Him.

Memory Verse

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up"

(Galatians 6:9, NIV).

rest of the Flood waters. Two and a half months later Noah and his family could see the tops of the mountains near the ark.

By now they had been in the ark about eight months. They must have been tired of feeding animals and shoveling manure day after day. But still they did their work—and they waited.

"When do you think we will be able to get out on dry land again?" they must have asked each other.

"God will show us," Noah probably said over and over again.

Finally, to find out how dry the earth was, Noah let a raven fly out the window. Can't you just imagine how eagerly all the people in the boat watched as that raven flew back and forth? But it finally came back to the ark. It hadn't found a resting place.

Later, Noah sent out a dove. It, too, came back to the ark when it couldn't find a place to land. A week later Noah sent the dove out again. This time it returned with a fresh olive leaf in its mouth. After one more week Noah sent the dove out again. This time it didn't come back. Surely they must be getting out of the ark soon!

But even though the dove had found a resting place, the earth was still too wet for people. God knew that. So He didn't send the angel to open the ark's door yet. Noah and his family waited five whole weeks more! They were busy weeks, with all the chores they still had to do.



There wasn't any room to spare in the ark. There was a lot of work and plenty of "interesting" animal smells. Still Noah and his family were so glad they had listened to God and entered the ark. They were glad they were together and had each other to depend on.

Noah and his family waited a long time to see God's promise fulfilled. We, too, are waiting for God's promise to us to be fulfilled. Philippians 3:20 says, "Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ" (NIV). It seems we've been waiting a long time, doesn't it?

God has given us family and Christian friends to help us with the waiting. He has also given us a work to do while we wait. He wants us to share His good news. Let's encourage one another and work together while we wait for that wonderful promise to be fulfilled.



S A B B A T H

READ With your family, read and discuss Genesis 7. Describe the storm. How long did it last? Why didn't everyone leave the ark when the rain stopped?

DO Teach your memory verse to your family. Say it as fast as you can, but make it understandable. Did Noah and his family give up?

MAKE Make a list of things you have to wait for (your birthday, summer vacation, to get older, etc.). Share it with your family.

S U N D A Y

READ Read the Bible story with your family. Imagine that you are with Noah on the ark right after God closed the door. What are you thinking about during those seven days before it rains? What do you think it was like to live on the ark for a year?

DO Share the raven or dove you made in Sabbath School with someone. Tell them about Noah and his family waiting patiently in the ark. Remind them that you are also waiting patiently— for Jesus to return.

The ark came to rest in the mountains of the country called Turkey today.



M O N D A Y

THINK What would you like to ask Noah when you get to heaven? Make a list of questions to share with your family during worship.

DO Do you know someone who has been waiting a long time for something? Do something today to let them know that you are thinking of them. Ask God to help you.

T U E S D A Y

READ During worship today read and discuss Genesis 8:1-14. What happened after the rain stopped? Where did the ark touch land again? Find that place on a world map. In what country is it?

ASK Ask your family to tell about something they waited a long time for. Was it worth the wait?

DO Find out how much of the earth is covered in water today. (Hint: See an encyclopedia or use the Internet.) Thank God for water.

W E D N E S D A Y

READ With your family read Genesis 7 and 8:1-14 again. Try to figure out how many days Noah and his family were in the ark. How many months was that?

DO Play Simon Says with your family but give the commands very s-l-o-w-l-y.

ASK Ask someone to help you look up information about ravens and doves. What was a raven known for? What is a dove a symbol of today?

T H U R S D A Y

THINK

With your family list three things you can do to help at home when you are waiting for something or someone. Ask God to help you use time wisely.

DO

Look at a calendar. How many days are in 12 months? That's about the time Noah's family was in the ark. What do you think you will be doing one year from now?

ASK

Ask your family: How many bodies of water can you think of (rivers, lakes, etc.)?

F R I D A Y

DO

Act out life on the ark with your family. What had to be done every day?

THINK

Figure out how many Sabbaths Noah and his family would have celebrated on the ark.

SING

With your family sing "Soon and Very Soon" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 89) or "Jesus Is Coming Again" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 92) very slowly. Do it again even slower. Ask your family if they become impatient singing so slowly. Ask if they ever become impatient waiting for Jesus to come. Ask Jesus to help you to be patient as you wait for Him.

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PUZZLE

Directions: Place the following scenes in the correct order by writing a number from 1 to 6 in the circles.

