

The Great Flood (Part 5)

God Remembers Noah

Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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As I have done in previous sermons, I would like to begin with the introductory material found in those first few verses of Genesis 6. This time, we will begin in verse 4 so we can discuss the “giants.”

Genesis 6:4 There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

I have mentioned these giants a time or two as we have gone through these sermons, but today I would like to put it all together today in one package.

This word, “giants,” is translated from the Hebrew, “nephilim.” It means either, “a fallen one,” or “mighty ones.” A lot of the good commentators think that both of these ideas are present, “the mighty fallen ones.” The best lexicographers tend to think that the word suggests the idea of “heroes,” or maybe “fierce warriors,”—that they were soldiers of notoriety, warriors, and captains of armies.

We might wonder where the use of the word “giants,” came from, since we think of them as extraordinarily tall and large, even enormous men. This idea came from the Septuagint—the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. In this version, “nephilim” is translated into the Greek word, “*gigantes*.” This is the root to our words giant, and gigantic, etc.

This Greek word, “*gigantes*,” is strange, because in English we think of large, huge, or enormous things. But in the Greek language, the word does not mean that. The word means “earth born,” which has interesting implications for “nephilim.”

We are basically talking about the difference of “born from above,” as someone who is more heavenly in nature and spiritually oriented, as opposed to those who are more earthly, and physically oriented. So, these were earth born—spiritual versus carnal.

This word “nephilim,” is used in only one other place in the Bible, and that is Numbers 13:33.

I used this verse in my sermons at the Feast of Tabernacles. Here is where the twelve spies, including Joshua and Caleb, had gone into Canaan to spy out the land, and now have come back to bring their report. And these spies said,

Numbers 13:33 "There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."

The word is used twice in this verse, both times translated as "giants." The idea here that they were big comes from these Israelite spies, who said that, "we were like grasshoppers in their sight." Evidently the sons of Anak were very tall, large men, from which came the likes of Goliath, later. So, "nephilim" can give the idea of being physically large.

The idea that they were big men back there in Genesis 6 comes from Numbers 13, and the traditional English usage of the word. This is the reaction of the Israelite spies. That is how they felt.

Obviously these Anakim were not hundreds of feet tall. We know that if we use any of the various cubits the height of Goliath may have been as much as thirteen feet. That is an awfully big guy. That is twice the size of a tall man. Most think that Goliath was actually more like nine or ten feet tall. That is still huge! So, these men of Genesis 6 could have indeed been bigger men.

But, we cannot rule out that these "giants" were normal-sized people either. Like our English words giant, and gigantic, the Hebrew and Greek terms we have been talking about have both literal and metaphorical meanings. It could mean that they were physically large people, or it could mean that they were socially large people—the big men of their time and age. They had a large part to play on their world stage. They could have been the magnates of business and industry; they could have been military conquerors; they could be the elites and influential men of their time. Maybe, they were the so-called wise leaders in government.

They are also described by two other terms, "mighty men," and "men of renown." Their description as "mighty men" is from the Hebrew term, "*gibborim*," and suggests "victors," or, "conquerors," or even superior men—supermen. Supermen could actually be a proper translation of the term, if you did not take it to mean the Superman of comic books, television, and movies.

What it means, then, is a man who was, in one sense or another, head and shoulders above other men. He was superior. We have seen this term in other passages, and it implies, “to have power over others.” So, anybody—maybe even some pipsqueak—could be a “*gibborim*,” if he had power over you and other people just because of the circumstances. It could be a man kneeling in a winepress in fear of the people outside the winepress—just like Gideon—and what did the angel call him? “O mighty man of valor!” This is also “*gibborim*.” He called Gideon like one of these mighty men of Genesis 6, but at the time he was a youth, and he was shaking in his shoes—but he was still a mighty man of valor—*gibborim*.

We can see how it was used. Gideon’s story is a bit of a humorous way to use the term, while it is a more serious term of anyone who had wealth, power, and strength, and thereby had control and power over others.

Many of these mighty men of valor in Genesis 6 were probably later “upgraded” into demi-gods and such in the pagan mythology. It was often thought that many of these stories about these particular mighty men came through the Great Flood, and they became part of the mythology that is still taught in some of our schools.

The other descriptor is “men of renown.” This is literally “men of name.” This term suggests notable men. Because they are notable, they are given additional names or titles in order to recognize them. They are given these titles because they did certain exploits that people remember them for—and people liked—because it makes them feel good, or does something for their own nation, or what have you.

We have carried this tradition on through the Great Flood. We have “Alexander the Great.” He was not born as “Alexander the Great.” Philip of Macedon did not say, “This is my son, Alexander the Great. He is going to grow up to conquer the world!” No, he was given that title because he did march across Asia, and conquer a great part of the known world in his time.

Another is “Antiochus Epiphanes.” He, too, was not born with that title “epiphanes,” which means, “manifestations of the divine.” If you have an epiphany, that is the same term, basically. Antiochus gave that name to himself, and thought a bit too much of himself also.

In more recent times, we had “William the Conqueror.” He was given that title because he conquered England. There was Octavius Caesar who became Augustus Caesar. He was given that title because he was the great august emperor. Adolph Hitler became known by “Der Furher—the Leader. And then there was his sidekick, Benito Mussolini,

known as, “Il Duce.”

We still do this today, not necessarily to our military leaders or our political leaders, but rather to our sports heroes—Michael “Air” Jordan is a famous one. Of course, we have one from about a generation ago, Pete “Charley Hustle” Rose, because that is how he played baseball for the Cincinnati Reds. And you also have Greg “The Shark” Norman. And then, close to my heart, Dale “The Intimidator” Earnhardt of the NASCAR racing circuits.

These men are or were famous. They had reputations. They did things that other people enjoyed and so they stuck them with a moniker that made them memorable. That is what happened way back there. These people were given names that elevated them above other people because of their exploits.

What all of this means is that these men described here in verse 4 of Genesis 6 were powerful, famous men who dominated others and the society in which they lived. They were aggressive men. They were ambitious men. Evidently they crushed all who opposed them so that they got the positions of power. They sought power and fame. By the time that things were said and done, they were either highly respected and/or greatly feared for their reputations for getting their own way.

Many of them, as we see here as the chapter goes on, had a callous disregard for life and law. As humanity’s leaders—the ones that others looked up to, or envied, and who apparently had little opposition—their wickedness grew, and spread. And soon, it was throughout all mankind. We might call these “giants” as “the human engines of man’s corruption.” They were the ones who drove men inexorably toward what God describes as “only evil continually.” There seems to be a link here that these men were very influential and responsible for this movement of all mankind toward total wickedness. They pushed it on others. That is why I called them the human engines of man’s corruption.

There are two minor points on this verse that I would like to mention.

The first is, “When did the nephilim exist?” Let us read this verse.

Genesis 6:4 There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

You can read this verse in two ways, in the present tense or in the past tense. In other words, you can read it as things were at that time, or you can read it as it was written in Moses' day centuries later. What this means is that the first half of this verse can be read in two ways, either implying that there were nephilim both before and after the sons of God and the daughters of men came together.

So, what we have here is that the giants existed separately from the children of the sons of God, and the daughters of men—meaning, the giants, and those children produced by those unions, are not necessarily the same thing. That is the first thing it could imply.

The second thing is that the nephilim appeared after the unions of the sons of God with the daughters of men of whom all they chose. That would mean that they were the children of those unions. And then, this phrase, “and also afterward,” means that such men existed also after the Great Flood.

So, there are two different ways to read this. Both of these are possible, if we do not take nephilim to mean exclusively, “the offspring of the sons of God and the daughters of men.” It depends on whether we consider them to be the offspring, or a separate group.

Numbers 13:33 lends itself to showing that this passage in Genesis 6 is Moses' point of view, that he was using the nephilim in the context that they could exist at any time before the Flood, or after.

The idea of the nephilim and the offspring of these unions being two separate groups is plausible. The Hebrew grammar allows this. That there are nephilim—giants—and afterward, when the sons of God came into the daughters of men, and they bore children—these offspring became mighty men, men of renown. But what this implies, because these two ideas are right on top of each other, is that the children of the sons of God and the daughters of men took the giants as their role models. And then they exceeded their feats.

So, there were mighty men around during Enoch's time, and they had histories of these mighty men doing great deeds around the world. And then, the sons of God, and the daughters of men got together, and had these kids, being raised by these demon-inspired parents of theirs, taking these giants as role models and examples, and they tried to out-do them—a one-upmanship situation. And so they became driven to be even harder, crueler, more powerful, and wealthier than the giants had been—and then they became the giant themselves.

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Those are the two ways of looking at it, that the nephilim are the children of those unions. And then there is that the nephilim had begun first, and became role models for these children of these unions, who succeeded in outdoing them in their exploits.

And, because this is written so tightly and concisely, it is hard to say what is what. But, I have given you all the possibilities so you can form your own opinion. None of this changes what happened. Certainly, the earth became corrupt, and God had to step in.

We almost finished Genesis 7 last time. There are a few details from the last sermon to dispose of before we start chapter 8. I think that we will get a good start on Genesis 8 today.

To rehearse—remember that Genesis 7 is a four-part repetition of similar material. Using a water analogy, it is almost like successive waves of this information coming up four different times saying basically the same things. Each wave of information adds something more, or puts a slightly different emphasis on the same information. It adds detail and depth, and it also, with the repetition, added emphasis. The main reason for adding the emphasis was to give the reader the impression that this really did happen. It is not some fairy tale set in a time long ago. It is not a coloring book story for the kiddies. It is not mythology.

This really did occur. It rained for forty days and forty nights straight. Noah did everything as God commanded. He was working at the behest of the Great God of the universe. He did everything exactly according to the instructions that was given to him.

And, only eight people were saved. All—every last air-breathing animal—that survived the Flood was on the ark. Everyone and everything else died. Nothing lived through the flood on its own accord—except those people and animals that were on the ark.

All through Genesis 7, God keeps hammering this home. Basically it was those same few facts. There were some others, and we will get to those in a few moments.

I want to look at Genesis 7:19-20 again, and give you a thought. Moses writes,

Genesis 7:19-20 And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered.

God says here that all the high hills were covered, as were the tallest mountains. There

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was not anything that was up above the water. It says that it was about 15 cubits under the water. So, the tallest thing on the earth was itself 15 cubits under water at its peak. It has been presumed, because of this depth of 15 cubits, which is also about 22 or 23 feet, that it was almost certainly the draft of the ark. With the ark fully loaded, and sitting in the water, the water rose up along the side of the ark about 22 or 23 feet, which was about half of its own depth—half of the 45 feet or so it was tall.

I have mentioned before that this fact by itself, that half of the ark—this big barge—was down in the water, and a lot of its weight was down in the lower decks of the ark, below the water line, made it a very, very stable craft. It was not going to be thrown about in the violent seas during the deluge. And so, it was able to withstand the rough waves, and high waves, and rogue waves because it was down in the water about half way.

Modern engineers have looked at this, and they thought, “Hmmm. The ancient boatwrights were able to figure out that if they put a jutting stabilizer on the prow (the bow of the ship) that it would keep them from rolling very much.” They also knew that if you had a high stern, it would catch the wind, and keep it from pitching or rolling from that source. By putting a jutting prow into the water, and having a slightly higher stern, it kept the boat from rolling and pitching, and kept it more stable in adverse conditions. It is the two forces working together—the forces in the water, and the forces up in the air.

More modern drawings of the ark do not have it as just a rectangle box, but they have this jutting point down into the water in the front of the ark, and this slightly higher stern at the back to make it even more stable. These two elements, like I said, would work together to keep the ark from experiencing the worst of the rolling motions.

It is an interesting notion. I could certainly see that it could have been put onto the ark without much trouble. They have found ships from Roman times that have these stabilizers in the front. They thought that many of these were underwater rams. But now, once they have thought about it, they think that they were actually stabilizers. They could have been outfitted with rams, however, they were mostly trying to make sure that they stayed afloat.

And of course, forty days and forty nights were very stormy. And then they had 110 days more that the waters still prevailed. There was probably a great deal of sloshing and movement and who knows what, going back and forth across the world’s ocean, and they could have used something like that to keep them stable.

Now, we need to go back to verse 16 for another point.

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Genesis 7:16 So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; [and this is the part I want] **and the Loord shut him in.**

This phrase, “the Lord shut him in,” is literally, “the Lord shut behind him.” It is almost as if you get the idea of a mother hen shoeing along her chickens into the coop, and then shutting the door behind them herself. Well, this is God doing this same thing for Noah and his family, and all the animals on the ark. God did it Himself.

It is interesting here that it says, “the Lord shut him in.” It does not say, “and God shut him in.” It uses the covenant name of YHVH—the Lord shut him in. YHVH is God’s personal covenant name. It is the name that He used when He made the covenant with Israel. It is the same name that He uses with Abraham. And when He uses this name, it is like putting His personal signature on it. It just is not God, who many of us think of in an amorphous sense, but rather this is specifically YHVH—the Lord.

This tells me two things. One, it shows that God—the Lord—was personally involved in preserving Noah. It was not something that He gave to others to do for Him. God Himself did it. And of course, it was Noah and his family, and all the animals with them. The Lord shut them in, and sealed it Himself. It only says “shut” here, but obviously it means sealed. There would have been no way to survive all that with a leaky door in the side of the boat, especially when the ark was floating half down in, and half up out of the water. They would have capsized for sure.

It is interesting to note that when it says that He shut the door, and obviously sealed it, that He did not seal it with pitch. It does not say that He sealed it with pitch, but He may have. Who knows? Maybe Noah left a can of it out there. I do not know. It does not say that.

But, the implication that we get from reading this is that He did it with His own strength and miraculous power. He sealed the ark to make sure that they were watertight, that they would not die, and that they would not founder, and take on water—He did it. He used everything in His power, which is *everything*, to make sure that that ark was sealed, and would not leak. He did not entrust this job to an angel, but rather He did it Himself to see to their care. And He made sure that the ark was absolutely watertight.

We can also surmise that He also guarded the ark until the time that it floated off. I am sure that there were people outside the ark trying to get in during the deluge who realized that was the only thing going, and maybe they could somehow scale it and get

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up on top, or something. But we can be sure that since God had made His covenant with Noah and all those people and animals inside the ark, no one else could get aboard. Not the greatest superhuman feat of one of those giants would be able to get them on board the ark. So, He also guarded them, and kept them safe from the wicked people outside the ark who might try to catch a ride with “crazy old Noah,” who was not so crazy after all.

God, in shutting them into the ark, was their Preserver, and their Shield. Think of this next passage in Psalm 28 in terms of Noah:

Psalms 28:1-9 To You I will cry, O LORD my Rock: do not be silent to me, lest, if You are silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit. Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry to You, when I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary. Do not take me away with the wicked and with the workers of iniquity, who speak peace to their neighbors, but evil is in their hearts. Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors; give them according to the work of their hands; render to them what they deserve. Because they do not regard the works of the LORD, nor the operation of His hands, He shall destroy them and not build them up. Blessed be the LORD, because He has heard the voice of my supplications! The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him. The LORD is their strength, and He is the saving refuge of His anointed. Save Your people, and bless Your inheritance; shepherd them also, and bear them up forever.

Does that not fit Noah and the ark very well? I know it was not written because of Noah. I am sure that David had different reasons for writing this, but the feelings and the ideas sure do fit Noah. Even though they had that great ark there, and it was well built, it still would not have saved them without God’s help and intervention in shutting them in.

The second point is one that I will take a bit of time with. And that is, in shutting the ark Himself, God as YHVH, the Covenant God, was fulfilling His part of the covenant with Noah (Genesis 6:18).

What Moses is showing us here, and what God was showing Noah there, is that He is the Guarantor of success of any covenant that He makes. What Noah could not do—Noah could not lift up that great door, not even with his sons’ help. Who knows how big the door was, but it had to have been massive. And not only that, it would have been

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equally impossible with the rain coming down, and all that was going on, for him to go outside, and seal it with his sons on scaffolding, or ropes, or whatever, and they went down the sides from the top trying to smear some pitch on it, or even caulk it from inside. It still would not have been good enough.

God Himself did it. He had made a promise to Noah and his family, and for the animals that He would bring them safely through this event. There were things that they could not do to make that happen. And so, what they could not do, He did Himself. God filled in the holes to make it happen. God Himself, to bring them through the Flood, to bring them out on the other side just as He had promised to do, shut and sealed the door for them.

I want to make a New Testament parallel to this through the life of the apostle Paul. Turn to II Corinthians 12, which is Paul's "Thorn in the Flesh" chapter.

II Corinthians 12:7-10 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Let us add on II Corinthians 13:4, and notice how it affected Jesus Christ Himself.

II Corinthians 13:4 For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.

Let us get these two sets of circumstances lined up here. Could Noah have saved himself, his family, and the animals even on the ark without God shutting him in? The answer is no. He had a weakness and a need, and that need and weakness could only be overcome by the power of God. God had to do it. God had to come through. God, by doing it, gets the glory.

Even Jesus Christ, hanging on the cross, and later dead in the tomb, had a weakness

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and a need. And God, because of His promise and covenant sent forth His power, and did the work, and brought glory to Himself—raising Him from the dead.

And just as Paul was strong through God when he was actually quite weak, so was Noah saved through God when he was helpless. We should always make sure we get the horse before the cart, and not the other way around. Noah was a great man of faith. Noah did everything that God commanded him to do. But even so, in doing everything right, he was still helpless in that ark until God shut him in.

Then, and only then, was he saved. It is something to think about as we go through our lives, and ponder our weaknesses, and we think that things are or seem impossible. Well, that is the time that we actually should be so glad and full of joy and full of faith, because we should know from these examples—Noah, and Paul, and Jesus Christ Himself—that even when we are dead, if God says that He is going to raise us back up, then He will do it. That is as weak as we can get, as lost as we can get, as imperiled as we can get. But at that point, we are strong because of God's promises. That is what Paul learned. He had to learn it the hard way, through this thorn in the flesh of his, but he learned it, and it filled him with strength so he could go on and do the apostle's job that he had to do, giving glory to God.

Now, this leads right into Genesis 8:1.

Genesis 8:1 Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark.

This thought blends right into Genesis 8, especially the first four words, "Then God remembered Noah."

We should not at any point in reading these four words get the wrong impression that in all this activity—the rain, the fountains of the deep, the sloshing waters, and the inhabitants of the earth dying and drowning by the millions and billions, and the ark being cast to and fro by the rising waters—that God was so involved in all this cataclysm that he "forgot" about Noah, his family, and the animals. That is not the sense of the word "remembered" here, as if God had forgotten him somehow. That is not it at all. God does not forget. God can never be so busy that He forgets or forsakes His people.

He says that we are written in the palms of His hands, and that we are the apple of His eye. Do you think that He is going to forget all that? Not on your life!

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In Hebrew, the word “remembered” comes from “*zakar*.” It is a primitive root word, and it literally means to remember, or to bring to mind. So, it is translated okay. However, the Hebrew people back then had a different idea of remembrance than we do. And particularly in this case, it is a certain addition to the definition not in the root itself. This occurrence is the first in Scripture, so it is important. But it is, on its own, hard to understand what that intrinsic definition is. We need the second occurrence to help us along. This is God’s rainbow covenant with Noah and the animals.

Genesis 9:15 And I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

Ah ha! Now, we are getting somewhere with the Hebrew word “*zakar*,” or remember. This gives us an indication of what it means in relation to God Himself remembering.

“Remember” presupposes God’s covenant promises, and refers to an action, or actions on His part that will fulfill that covenant.

Do we understand now? His covenant with Noah was in Genesis 6. Let us read a portion of that:

Genesis 6:18-20 "But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive.

Basically the covenant here is that, “You’ll go ahead and make an ark for Me, and then I’ll send the animals to you, and you will go into the ark with the animals, and your family, and I’ll preserve you through this Great Flood, and bring you out alive on the other side of it.” So, the covenant is that He will bring them into the ark, and preserve them alive through the Flood, and bring them out of the ark.

What it means in Genesis 8:1 where it says that God remembered Noah, and his family, and the animals, means that God began to work to fulfill His part of the promise completely. It has almost nothing to do with forgetting them, and then remembering them again. It has the idea of fulfilling covenant duties and promises.

It is also linked with lovingkindness, because lovingkindness is the kind of covenant love that one would have for their partner in the covenant, as in a marriage where you have somewhat similar duties on each side of the covenant. God, of course, uses loving kindness in everything that He does.

There are some other uses of “*zakar*” in the Old Testament. Turn with me to Exodus 6.

Exodus 6:5-6 "And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

It goes on with all the things that He said—“Look! I'm remembering My part in this covenant that I made with your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And so, I'm going to fulfill the promise and covenant that I made with them.” What did He do? He told them that He remembered it, “So I will bring you out, I will rescue you, I will redeem you, and I will take you as My people, and I will be your God.” When God remembered, He acted on behalf of His people.

This next passage is toward the end of the Blessings and Cursings chapter of Leviticus. Verse 40 does have some end-time application.

Leviticus 26:40-45 'But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, and that they also have walked contrary to Me, and that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt—then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac; and My covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land. The land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; they will accept their guilt, because they despised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes. Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God. But for their sake I will remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.'"

Notice the use of the covenant name of God—the LOORD.

Even after hundreds and thousands of years, and the Israelites do all kinds of terrible things against God, He still says, “If they repent, and turn back to Me, I will remember them, and bring them back.” That is the kind of God we have. He is a faithful God.

Our next passage is in Ezekiel 16. This even gets better!

Ezekiel 16:60-63 "Nevertheless I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you. Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed, when you receive your older and your younger sisters; for I will give them to you for daughters, but not because of My covenant with you. And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I am the LOORD, that you may remember and be ashamed, and never open your mouth anymore because of your shame, when I provide you an atonement for all you have done," says the Lord GOOD."

This is getting into the New Covenant that He is going to make with Israel. It is interesting there where He says, “but not because of My covenant with you. And I will establish My covenant with you.” He is saying that there is another covenant that supercedes that covenant—the eternal covenant, the spiritual covenant—that is the one that He really likes to remember, and wants to fulfill completely!

The final scripture in this section is in Jeremiah 14. I thought this one interesting. I believe that this is Jeremiah speaking, although my New King James Version says that it is the people speaking. To me it sounds more like Jeremiah, but whatever the case:

Jeremiah 14:19-21 Have You utterly rejected Judah? Has Your soul loathed Zion? Why have You stricken us so that there is no healing for us? We looked for peace, but there was no good; and for the time of healing, and there was trouble. We acknowledge, O LOORD, our wickedness and the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against You. Do not abhor us, for Your name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of Your glory. Remember [zakar], do not break Your covenant with us.

The Great Flood (Part 5) by Richard T. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

God does not need to be reminded. But there are times when the people do remind Him when they are going through a bad spot, and He will answer. He will remember His covenant. Of course, there are other things that happen, or need to happen, but He is a faithful God. He does not forget. He can be trusted and counted upon to keep up His portion of the covenant without fail. It does not matter how long a time has passed, or how bad the people have been in the meantime. He still fulfills His part.

When He says in Isaiah 55:11,

Isaiah 55:11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

He is the God who keeps His promises. He does what He says He will do. We can take great comfort in this incontrovertible fact! God does not lie like a man will. If He says it, He will do it. And, He did that with Noah. It says in their covenant that He would bring him through it, and He did too.

Let us look at it from the other end. This passage in Exodus 13 is interesting. Notice the areas in which this word appears, and to whom it is addressed.

Exodus 13:3 And Moses said to the people: "Remember [*zakar*] this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten.

On the first Day of Unleavened Bread, they were to remember what God did for them in fulfilling His promise to Abraham. Remember, He said that they would go down into Egypt, and they would be slaves; that at the end of 400 years, God would bring them back. And Moses tells the people, "Remember this day." Remember—*zakar*—has to do with fulfilling covenant terms and conditions.

And so, when the shoe is on the other foot, what does that mean? The most simplistic meaning is that they had to keep the first Day of Unleavened Bread in perpetuity. But, the other thing that it means is that they had responsibilities in that covenant also, and in a much larger sense than just keeping the first Day of Unleavened Bread.

Let us turn to another one in Exodus 20, and the first giving of the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 20:8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Would any of you think that this is not a covenant responsibility? God Himself tells us to remember this day, and keep it holy. "It is your part of the covenant—not the only part, but it is part of what you signed up for."

Turn to the other giving of the Ten Commandments. It is amazing what appears in the Decalogue, whether in Deuteronomy, or Exodus. And this is in the same commandment.

Deuteronomy 5:15 And remember [hearkening back to Exodus 13:3] that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

The Sabbath day was a very large part of this covenant!

Let us leave that thought for a while and turn to Judges 8. At this point of the story we are just past Gideon's death.

Judges 8:34 Thus the children of Israel did not remember [*zakar*] the LORD their God, who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side;

This is just to show you what happens when the people dropped the ball on their end of the bargain. God is free to send in the bad people for punishment sake.

One final scripture—and I suppose that this one will hurt a bit—it concerns us.

Malachi 4:4-6 "Remember [*zakar*] the Law of Moses, My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

The Great Flood (Part 5) by Richard T. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

Can we see how important remembering our covenant duties is? And so many people want to do away with God's law! Here we have an end-time scenario, the Great Day of the Lord looming, and God instruction is to remember the law of Moses. It is very interesting.

People, we must remember that covenants have two sides. There are two parties in agreement in a covenant. Both parties have things to do. And for the covenant to be successful, both sides must do their parts. The whole idea of a covenant absolutely demolishes any idea of eternal security. This is because, since we have entered into the New Covenant with God, He has done His part, and continues to do His part, while we are required to do our part. It is far more than just believing in the name of Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. If that was all it took, our Bibles would only be one verse long!

This is only the beginning and as we have learned, even that is by grace. We would not believe unless God opened the mind, and turned the switch. Jesus Himself says,

John 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

In the next chapter, He says that His disciples bear much fruit. That hardly sounds like a no-works religion! Keeping and bearing takes work! It takes effort. As we know, after decades of being in the church of God, it is hard to do! And there is a reason why it is hard—character is hard to build. If it were easy, everybody would do it. But it is the rare individual who takes the time and effort to really apply what God has said, and grows.

Remembering not only tells us about God's desire and works to fulfill His end of the contract, it also applies to us in fulfilling our part of the covenant.

Getting back to Noah, we can be sure that his faithfulness upheld his end of the agreement—Noah was *very* faithful. Noah did **everything** just as God had commanded him. How many times did it say that in chapter 7?

God, then, responded to his faithfulness by putting into motion all of the processes that would return the earth to habitability once again. That is what is spoken about in Genesis 8:1. God remembered Noah, and his family, and the animals.

At this part of the story of the Great Flood, the pendulum swings from destruction to construction. God is finished destroying, so now He is going to make things new again and the earth can be inhabited.

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Genesis 8:1 Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided.

I want to take a moment to talk about this wind. This is the first thing that God did when He remembered. He sent a wind. What does this remind you of? If you had no other part of the Bible except these first 8 chapters, what are you reminded of? Genesis 1:2, “And the Spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters.” He did the exact same thing as when He began recreating the first time. Now, this is a clue to the insightful reader that God is beginning to create again—He is at work! He is doing what Gods do. He is renewing the face of the earth.

So, He sent a wind. Both wind, here, and spirit in chapter 1 is the word “*ruach*.” It should inform us that the same process of creation was beginning to take place just as it did in the first days of creation. God is at work, and making the earth habitable once again for humanity.

Another thing is what the wind does. It does not exactly blow, or move along, but rather passes over the waters. What an interesting term, is it not?—passes over—and then, in passing over, the waters subsided.

In Egypt, God passed over the Israelites while He slew the Egyptian firstborn. And what happened? Israel was saved. Israel was freed from captivity and bondage. They were redeemed. It is interesting also that at the founding of the church of God, the sound of a rushing mighty wind was heard. God was at work creating salvation in the midst of the earth. A wind passed over.

For reading later, you can jot down Psalm 74:12-13, down to about verse 20, because it is interesting to think of this passage also in terms of the Great Flood.

Genesis 8:2 The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.

What happened at this time is that the massive influx of water subsided both below and above the earth. God somehow dammed up the subterranean jets and geysers that had been blowing out adding to the rain. Most likely He did this through earthquakes and tectonic movements of the earth’s crust to get everything shut off.

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He also turned off the torrential rains from above. But, if you notice the verbiage here, it does not say that they stopped all together. It says that they were restrained. What I think that this means is that meteorological patterns began to form—allowing the rains to come in what we know as their natural progression. So, no longer was it raining at divine command, it began to rain from time to time naturally.

Genesis 8:3 And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased.

He is talking about the same 150 days that are in Genesis 7:24. The water prevailed 150 days, and then they began to decrease. So, they hit their apex, and lasted until the 150 day mark, and then they began to progressively decline.

What is interesting is that it took a great deal longer for the water to recede to dry land, than it did to totally inundate the earth. It took forty days and forty nights for the water to flood the earth until it was only a world ocean with no land protruding above it. And this lasted for 150 days. But it took 220 additional days for the waters to totally recede from the earth, and Noah was able to step out onto dry land once again.

If you did the math, it means that the entire period of time that they were in the ark was 370 days. Depending on how it is counted, some say 371. Moot point. This is a little over one year, maybe about a year and a week.

Evidently during this time, God was considerably deepening the ocean basins, and refilling the underground aquifers. And of course, as the wind was blowing across the water, it was evaporating some of it back up into the atmosphere, helping to dry it up. I am sure that it was a major reason for the wind, to enhance the drying of the earth.

I will need to leave the remainder of it for next time, God willing.