



Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus A Discipleship Journey

The OLD TESTAMENT- Their Story is Our Story

Noah

Genesis 6 – 8, Week 3

Most of us grew up learning the story of Noah and the flood: because of the evil in the world, God reset the world by sending a great flood to destroy almost all of creation. Finding one righteous man among all of humankind, Noah, God instructed him to build an ark, gather two of every kind of animal, and load them on the ark where they lived for a really long time until the flood waters receded and it was safe to walk the earth again.

Now, God could have completely started over - God is God after all – but He didn't. God saw something in creation worth redeeming. How He proceeds offers us much to reflect on:

God said to Noah, "You and your son's, your wife and your son's wives, shall go into the ark. Of all other living creatures you shall bring two into the ark, one male and female, that you may keep them alive with you. Of all the kinds of birds, of all kinds of beasts, and of all kinds of creeping things, two of each shall come into the ark with you, to stay alive. Moreover, you are to provide yourself with all the food that is to be eaten, and store it away, that it may serve as provisions for you and for them. This Noah did; he carried out all the commands that God gave him."

All living creatures were important enough to be saved; none were left behind. All were cared for, tended to, fed and nurtured, including Noah and his family. Have you ever wondered what life on the ark must have been like? All those birds, beasts, and creeping things living in the same space for months and months. Probably pretty noisy, stinky, and more than a bit unpleasant. Imagine, creatures that would otherwise have hunted and eaten each other living side by side for the entire duration of the flood. Every life on that ark was held sacred and preserved for the future of the world.

In many ways this image of the ark contrasts greatly with the image of our world today. Division at almost every level separates us from each other; conflict, angry words, disparaging posts on social media spread this division and hatred among us, between us, and all around us. If these things had happened on the ark, it certainly would have sunk! Perhaps in some ways they are causing humanity to sink as well.

What enabled peace to reign on the ark? God provided everything they needed, not only to survive, but to thrive. By trusting in God's promise, there was no need to fight over resources or be worried there would never be enough to go around or that one animal group received more than its fair share. God provided. By uniting amidst all that diversity, every living creature was guaranteed to someday leave that ark and re-populate the world, a world filled with God's goodness.

In what way can we bring that peace to our world? As different as we all are, can we see the goodness in each other? Despite our differences, what are we being called to do to bring about God's peace and unity so that we, too, can create a world filled with God's goodness?

