

**Read: Genesis 8:15-22**

## Faith that Overflows in Gratitude

### **Genesis 8:15,16,18,20**

Then God said to Noah, "Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. So Noah came out, together with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives. Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and he sacrificed burnt offerings on it.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Noah could hardly contain his excitement. It had been 1 year and 10 days since the last time he had done it. For over a year, he and his family lived on a huge wooden boat with every kind of animal imaginable. It kept them safe from the waters of a monster flood. Finally, the day came. God said, "You can come out of the ark now, Noah." He'd been waiting such a long time for this moment. With one final step, Noah's feet left the boat and touched soft, dry ground. It made him so happy, the first thing he did was build an altar. In as visible a way as possible, he wanted to say, "Thank you."

Two little words. One big meaningful phrase. Have your parents taught you it? Do they remind you of it when you forget? But "thank you" is more than words. It's the heart behind it. We say thank you to the person who serves our food or the stranger who holds a door open. Little selfless acts make us thankful. But to be thankful when faith is challenged? When something horrible happens in life? Do we think we deserve something better from God? Does God sometimes seem more generous to others than he does to me?

At that moment when you are feeling sorry for yourself or ungrateful, think of Noah floating on top a world of water, cooped up in an ark for an entire year, leaning on the mercy of God. Until one day he stepped off the ark... alive. God kept him and his family alive. He was so grateful—not just to get off on dry ground—but thankful for a generous God. He knew he didn't deserve God. So he brought an offering to express his thanks and appreciation to the God who kept him and his family alive.

Every time a winter is followed by a spring and a summer by a fall, it's a reminder that God still promises to give us undeserved blessings—even when we are not grateful. We live under that promise. And that makes us so grateful and thankful! God is generous. His blessings are undeserved. Look at all the things we have to be grateful for: Health. Home. Family. Friends. Especially Jesus.

So say it out loud with all your heart, "Thank you!"

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- What are the two words you are reminded to say after someone gives you something nice?
- What was the first thing Noah built after he stepped on dry ground? Why did he build it?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Noah's ark floated safely on top of the flood waters. What water saved you from sin's destruction?
- Recount at least two blessings of waking up every day as a baptized child of God. Be sure to say "thank you" to God!

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- When horrible things happen, some people think God is a monster. Even after the horror of the flood, Noah found reasons to thank a generous God. Name a few.
- The next time something horrible happens or you think you deserved better, what could you remember from today's devotion to pivot your thinking from complaining to thanking?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Lord, thank you for simply being a generous God. Help me find as many ways as possible to live and express my thanks for you. Amen.