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Genesis 8: Life after the Flood

By David DeWitt

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease (Genesis 8:20-22).

- Although Cain and Abel brought an offering to God (4:3-5) this is the first mention of anyone building an *altar* or offering a *burnt offering*. Noah killed and burned on the altar one of every clean animal and of every clean bird, which he had taken on the ark by sevens.

PT: God has welcomed the offering of animal sacrifices in every age of history (including the future millennial kingdom) except during this Church Age. For this age God defined sacrifice as praise to Himself and giving to others. *Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased (Hebrews 13:15-16).*

- This is also the first time a burnt offering is called a *soothing aroma* to the Lord. But it's certainly not the last. This phrase is used over 40 times literally or metaphorically to describe acceptable offerings throughout the Old Testament.

PT: In the New Testament, Paul used the metaphor to describe Christ's death as, *an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma* (Ephesians 5:2). He also described the contribution of the Philippians as *a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God* (Philippians 4:18).

- Then Moses made us privy to some of God's thoughts. There are two phrases that set the context for these thoughts, (1) because *the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth* – the moral context and (2) *while the earth remains* – the chronological context. With these two things in mind, *the LORD said to Himself:*

1. I will never again curse the ground on account of man.

That is, not *while the earth remains* but eventually the *elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up* (2 Peter 3:10).

2. I will never again destroy every living thing.

The future *great tribulation* will almost do that but not quite. Jesus said, *unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short* (Matthew 24:22).

3. Seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

This last thought introduced man to a whole new world. None of these existed, or existed to the same extreme measure, in the antediluvian earth. The new earth, no longer protected by a water (or a water vapor) canopy, will now get very hot and very cold. It will require planning and scheduling of days and nights and seasons, for hunting, farming, and manufacturing. With the dangers of things like earthquakes, volcanoes, severe weather patterns, and a 90% shorter life span. An ordered nature will provide a predictability with which people can work.