

HE WAITED TWO MONTHS

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The Flood which buried the world of Noah's day was a watershed event in human history and a key fact of Scripture. Rain began to fall when Noah was in his 600th year, month 2, day 17, and Noah finally left the ark in his 601st year, month 2, day 27 (cf. Gen. 7:11; 8:13-18). So, for roughly a year he was confined to the huge boat, along with his family and all the animals.

Perhaps the initial days on board were terrifying, with an unrelenting deluge that lifted the ark and set it afloat. We can only speculate what Noah and his family were thinking as the ark rose and reality sank in that all their kinsmen were drowned. Over a month of rain was followed by months and months of drifting in limitless ocean, no land anywhere. Not that there was any choice, but imagine being unable to leave a boat for that long a time. Thankfully, Noah's store of food for the animals was matched only by his reserve of patience.

Ten months into the ordeal comes this statement: "In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry" (Gen. 8:13, ESV). If the ark were already aground, Noah might have immediately let himself down on a rope to feel earth beneath his feet. Or, if the land were a little distant, he might have tried swimming to it. He might have begun letting animals off the ark that could swim toward the new beach. Or, he at least might have busied himself with preparations for an imminent exit off the ark. Finally. What did he do? Noah stayed put.

Even though he had been in a boat ten months, and even though the ground was dry, Noah sat tight and waited for nearly two months. "In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out. Then God said to Noah, 'Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you'" (Gen. 8:14-16). Rather than assume God's plan, or make his own plan, Noah waited to actually hear God's plan. It took about 57 days of waiting -- all the while being able to look out and see dry land!

Noah found grace in the eyes of God (Gen. 6:8) because Noah was a man who obeyed God (Gen. 6:22). The principle is as true today as then. In Noah's case, waiting for God's authority before leaving the ark meant staying on board with land in sight. He waited two months.