

4. A DRY PLACE

If you are interested in science, study Genesis 1:6-8. It describes the origin of the **atmosphere**, air and clouds. It's fascinating stuff! But we're looking for something more photogenic today. We need a dry place to stand to take our photographs. Read *Genesis 1:9-10*.

Land ho! That's what we're looking for. We're on a walking tour, remember? We'll need a dry place to stand, a place to take in all the beauty and wonder.

In today's text we see God gathering masses of mud and separating solid ground from water. He is forming islands and continents, hills and plains—places for creatures with lungs, and other places for creatures with **gills**. This is no small engineering project. God is reshaping the surface of the entire earth. Mountains are being thrust through the earth's crust to proudly stand above the valleys below. Great oceans surge forth as billions of tons of water are squeezed from the muck. Massive boulders crash around us. Land masses are uplifted to form the jagged contours of snow-topped mountain ranges and cool canyons. It sounds thrilling. Fantastic photos. But the earsplitting thunder of a planet groaning under these divine forces would be enough to make anyone tremble in fear. You and I are much safer using our imagination to envision the separation chaos.

As breath-taking as it is to imagine God moving the planet's land and water masses around, there is a more significant reason for focusing on these verses. Finding the right *place* for his people to live is very important to God. We are his family; he is our dear heavenly Father. He has already chosen the place where we will live together in eternity. This theme of God giving us a place echoes throughout Scripture, starting with a blissful garden place called **Eden** and ending with the last chapter of Revelation (22:1-5). Then we will be living forever in a place where the darkness of evil will be banished.

Centuries later, when the waters subsided after the Great Flood, God provided a dry place atop Mount Ararat for Noah and his family to exit the ark. A few hundred years after Noah, God promised to set a place aside for Abraham's **offspring** (*Genesis 15:18-21*). This place called Canaan became known as the *Promised Land*. God repeated that promise to Abraham's son,

Isaac, and to Isaac's grandson, *Jacob*. In Leviticus 20:24 we hear God reminding Moses, "You will possess their land; ... a land flowing with milk and honey. I have set you apart from the nations."

And why is this so important? To answer that question we will return to another promise that God made to Adam and Eve. Right after they fell into sin, God promised to send an offspring to defeat Satan and overcome the curse of their sin. Jesus would be that descendent. The Son of God would leave his heavenly throne to live among his own human creatures. Ironically, when Jesus came to earth as a baby in Bethlehem, the only place Mary could find to lay his infant body was a feed box for animals. There was no place for God's Son in the inns of Bethlehem. This baby grew up to be the Savior that God promised to Adam and Eve. But in our world, Jesus never owned a place to call his own (*Matthew 8:20*).

One day, Jesus told his followers that he was soon going to return to his heavenly place, adding, ... *I am going there to prepare a place for you (John 14:2)*. He is doing that for us right now. You and I have a place waiting for us in heaven. It is the eternal home with God that Jesus is preparing for us. This eternal place, where we can be with him forever, has always been an important part of God's plan.

END VIDEO. BEGIN CONVERSATIONS.

REMEMBER WHEN ...

See if you can recall all the places you have called home during your lifetime.

WORD POWER: **atmosphere; gills; Eden** (Garden of Eden); **offspring**

FROM THE TOUR

Can you remember any other times in the Bible when God found a place for his people?

Why is it important for us to know that Jesus never owned a place that he could call his home?

What kind of place has Jesus promised to anyone who believes that he is their Savior?

LEARN MORE

Read *Psalm 24:1*. Explain how knowing God made all things helps you appreciate our world?

Read *Genesis 13:15*. How did Abram's faith in God promise shape his life on earth?

Read *John 14:2*. How does this text, spoken by Jesus, offer comfort and hope to you?

TAKE-AWAYS

Take a moment to thank God for his promise to give you a place in his eternal, heavenly home.

Talk more about what living with God in eternity will be like.

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He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and mire;
he set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand.

Psalm 40:2b