

## SESSION 6

# GOD DESTROYED THE EARTH WITH A FLOOD

In Genesis Chapter 5, God's story tells us about each generation<sup>52</sup> of Seth's family. You can read the names of the men who were the heads of each generation, the number of years each one lived and the names of their sons. God wanted us to know the names of the people in Seth's family so he made sure they were written down in the Bible. Seth's family listened to God and came to him in the way that he had said they should come.

For each man in Seth's family it says *and then he died*. Death was now part of life on the earth. The people who were born on the earth were born with death and sin in them. Sin means to disobey what God has said. They were born separated from God, outside of the garden God had made for them. So they grew old and they died.

The list of generations begins with Seth and goes to a man named Noah. There were ten generations from the time that Adam and Eve had disobeyed God to when Noah lived. God's story tells us that by that time people had become very evil. People did not listen to God. The way that they lived was very, very bad.



GENESIS 6:5

<sup>5</sup> The Lord observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil.

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52. **generation** - a set of members of a family that are alive at the same time; the time in a family when children are born, grow up and have children of their own

## HIS STORY: THE RESCUE

God's story says that *the Lord observed the extent of human wickedness<sup>53</sup> on the earth*. People were not listening to God at all. They were just doing what they wanted to do. God's story says that everything they did and everything they thought was evil. People were so evil that they planned and thought about evil things all the time. God knew what they were thinking. God knows everything and so he knew all about them.



GENESIS 6:6,7

<sup>6</sup> So the Lord was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart. <sup>7</sup> And the Lord said, "I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them."

God said that he was very sorry he had made people and put them on the earth. God had made people and he loved them. God wanted to have a real and close relationship with people. He wanted what was best for people. But they had turned away from him. They did not listen to him. God knew that this would be very bad for people. They would just think of themselves first. They would hurt and kill other people. They would not take care of the earth or the animals like God wanted them to. Then, after people died, they would go to the place of death. So God decided to stop all of this. He decided to destroy all the people and all the living things on the earth.



GENESIS 6:8-10

<sup>8</sup> But Noah found favor with the Lord.

<sup>9</sup> This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God. <sup>10</sup> Noah was the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

The people on the earth were evil and did not listen to God. But there was one man who did listen to God. That man's name was Noah. God's story says that Noah was a *righteous man*. God says Noah was righteous because Noah had come to God in the way that God said he should come. Noah was born outside of the garden, like all the other people, but Noah had listened to God. He had believed<sup>54</sup> that what God said was true. So God was happy with Noah and he was close to him. Noah had three sons called Shem, Ham and Japheth.



GENESIS 6:11-17

<sup>11</sup> Now God saw that the earth had become corrupt and was filled with violence. <sup>12</sup> God observed all this corruption in the world, for everyone on earth was corrupt.

<sup>13</sup> So God said to Noah, "I have decided to destroy all living creatures, for they have filled the earth with violence. Yes, I will wipe them all out along with the earth!

<sup>14</sup> "Build a large boat from cypress wood and waterproof it with tar, inside and out. Then construct decks and stalls throughout its interior. <sup>15</sup> Make the boat 450

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53. **wickedness** - to do very bad or evil things

54. **believed** - to believe is to think that something is true

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feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. <sup>16</sup> Leave an 18-inch opening below the roof all the way around the boat. Put the door on the side, and build three decks inside the boat—lower, middle, and upper.

<sup>17</sup> “Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing that breathes. Everything on earth will die.

God saw that the earth was *corrupt*. Corrupt means that it was evil, rotten and ruined. God had decided to destroy all people and all living things on the earth. But God wanted to save Noah and his family. Noah and his family were born outside the garden into the world of sin and death. But Noah had listened to God, and he had come to God in the way God said to come. He had a close relationship with God. Noah knew that he and his family were born into the world of sin and death. He knew that without God’s help they were going to die and go to the place of death. He knew that only God could save them. Noah agreed with God that everything God said was true. So God planned to rescue Noah – to save him from death.

God told Noah to build a large boat. He told Noah how to build it, what wood to use, how long it should be, how high and how wide it should be. He told Noah it should have one door on the side. God told Noah that a great flood was coming to the earth. He said the flood would cover the earth and that every living thing would die.

God told Noah everything very clearly. He gave Noah and his sons this important work to do. They would need to work very hard. It would take a very long time. Only God could plan how the boat should be. Only God knew how bad the flood would be. So Noah needed to listen to God and do what he said. This boat would have to be built just like God said. It must have just one door. God wanted to save Noah and his sons, but they must do everything as God said.



GENESIS 6:22

<sup>22</sup> So Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him.

Noah listened to God. He did everything just like God said he should do it. Noah knew that what God said was true. He knew that only God could rescue them.



GENESIS 7:1-15

<sup>1</sup> When everything was ready, the Lord said to Noah, “Go into the boat with all your family, for among all the people of the earth, I can see that you alone are righteous. <sup>2</sup> Take with you seven pairs—male and female—of each animal I have approved for eating and for sacrifice, and take one pair of each of the others. <sup>3</sup> Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird. There must be a male and a female in each pair to ensure that all life will survive on the earth after the flood. <sup>4</sup> Seven days from now I will make the rains pour down on the earth. And it will rain for forty days and forty nights, until I have wiped from the earth all the living things I have created.”

<sup>5</sup> So Noah did everything as the Lord commanded him.

## HIS STORY: THE RESCUE

<sup>6</sup> Noah was 600 years old when the flood covered the earth.

<sup>7</sup> He went on board the boat to escape the flood—he and his wife and his sons and their wives. <sup>8</sup> With them were all the various kinds of animals—those approved for eating and for sacrifice and those that were not—along with all the birds and the small animals that scurry along the ground. <sup>9</sup> They entered the boat in pairs, male and female, just as God had commanded Noah. <sup>10</sup> After seven days, the waters of the flood came and covered the earth.

<sup>11</sup> When Noah was 600 years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, all the underground waters erupted from the earth, and the rain fell in mighty torrents from the sky. <sup>12</sup> The rain continued to fall for forty days and forty nights.

<sup>13</sup> That very day Noah had gone into the boat with his wife and his sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—and their wives. <sup>14</sup> With them in the boat were pairs of every kind of animal—domestic and wild, large and small—along with birds of every kind. <sup>15</sup> Two by two they came into the boat, representing every living thing that breathes.

One week before it started to rain, God told them it was time to get into the boat. Noah and his three sons and their wives went into the boat. They went in through the only door. They took the animals in just like God said.



GENESIS 7:16

<sup>16</sup> A male and female of each kind entered, just as God had commanded Noah. Then the Lord closed the door behind them.

God says that he, the Lord, *closed the door behind them*. God was taking care of them. He was making sure that they were safe. He would rescue them. He shut the door so they would be safe from the flood that was going to destroy all other living things.



GENESIS 7:17-24

<sup>17</sup> For forty days the floodwaters grew deeper, covering the ground and lifting the boat high above the earth. <sup>18</sup> As the waters rose higher and higher above the ground, the boat floated safely on the surface. <sup>19</sup> Finally, the water covered even the highest mountains on the earth, <sup>20</sup> rising more than twenty-two feet above the highest peaks. <sup>21</sup> All the living things on earth died—birds, domestic animals, wild animals, small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the people. <sup>22</sup> Everything that breathed and lived on dry land died. <sup>23</sup> God wiped out every living thing on the earth—people, livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and the birds of the sky. All were destroyed. The only people who survived were Noah and those with him in the boat. <sup>24</sup> And the floodwaters covered the earth for 150 days.

The flood came just like God said it would. The people outside the boat could not get inside. The door was shut so they could not escape the water. God always does what he says he will do. He saw

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the evil on the earth and he decided to destroy the people and all the living things. He said he would do it and then he did it.

Everything on the earth was covered with water. Even the high mountains were covered. The boat that Noah had made floated safely on the top of the deep water. Noah and his sons and their wives were safe. The animals inside the boat were safe. All the people and all the living things outside the boat were killed. Like everything in God's story, this is all true. It really happened to real people and animals at a real time and in a real place.



GENESIS 8:1-4

<sup>1</sup> But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and livestock with him in the boat. He sent a wind to blow across the earth, and the floodwaters began to recede. <sup>2</sup> The underground waters stopped flowing, and the torrential rains from the sky were stopped. <sup>3</sup> So the floodwaters gradually receded from the earth. After 150 days, <sup>4</sup> exactly five months from the time the flood began, the boat came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

God did not forget the boat floating along with Noah and his family inside. God had planned to rescue them and he did. God made a wind to blow until the waters went down. The mountain tops appeared out of the water. Five months after the flood began, the boat came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. Ararat is in the country we call Turkey today. It took a long time for the earth to dry out. You can read about that in Genesis 8:5-14. After the earth was dry, God told them to leave the boat. He said they should let all the animals out, too. So Noah and his family and all the animals left the boat.



GENESIS 8:15-19

<sup>15</sup> Then God said to Noah, <sup>16</sup> "Leave the boat, all of you—you and your wife, and your sons and their wives. <sup>17</sup> Release all the animals—the birds, the livestock, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—so they can be fruitful and multiply throughout the earth."

<sup>18</sup> So Noah, his wife, and his sons and their wives left the boat.

<sup>19</sup> And all of the large and small animals and birds came out of the boat, pair by pair.

Noah wanted to thank God for saving them from death. He wanted to come to God in the way that God had told people to come to him. Because people had disobeyed God, and were born with death and sin in them, they had to come to God by killing an animal.



GENESIS 8:20-22

<sup>20</sup> Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and there he sacrificed as burnt offerings the animals and birds that had been approved for that purpose. <sup>21</sup> And the Lord was pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice and said to himself, "I will never again curse the ground because of the human race, even though everything they think or imagine is bent toward evil from childhood. I will never again destroy all living things. <sup>22</sup> As long as the earth remains, there will be planting and harvest,

## HIS STORY: THE RESCUE

cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night.”

Noah built an *altar*. An altar is a pile of stones with a flat top. Noah killed some animals and birds and burnt them there on the altar. These animals were special ones that God had told Noah to bring in the boat. They were meant for Noah to kill and burn for God.

The animals and birds that Noah killed on the altar had not done anything wrong. They had been in the boat with Noah and his family. Now, these animals and birds were killed. God had created these animals. He did not want them to die. But he wanted Noah and his family to have a way to come to him. Noah and his family were born with death and sin in them. The only way that they could come to God was for them to kill these animals and birds that had not done anything wrong. The animals had to die so that Noah and his family would not be separated from God. The animals had to die so that Noah and his family would not. Noah was showing that he agreed with God and that only God could save them. God was pleased with what Noah had done.



GENESIS 9:11-13

<sup>11</sup> Yes, I am confirming my covenant with you. Never again will floodwaters kill all living creatures; never again will a flood destroy the earth.”

<sup>12</sup> Then God said, “I am giving you a sign of my covenant with you and with all living creatures, for all generations to come. <sup>13</sup> I have placed my rainbow in the clouds. It is the sign of my covenant with you and with all the earth.

God said that he would not destroy the earth with a flood ever again. He made a rainbow<sup>55</sup> in the sky so people would remember what he had said. Now the flood had finished and the rain had stopped. God put a rainbow in the sky as a sign to Noah and his family. We can still see this sign today.



GENESIS 9:18,19

<sup>18</sup> The sons of Noah who came out of the boat with their father were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham is the father of Canaan.) <sup>19</sup> From these three sons of Noah came all the people who now populate the earth.

God’s story says that Noah’s three sons, Ham, Shem and Japheth, are the ancestors of all the people who are now on the earth. In Genesis Chapter 10, you can read about the families of each of Noah’s sons. It tells us about their children and their children’s children. It talks about some of the nations<sup>56</sup> that came from each of Noah’s three sons.

Now God’s story moves forward to a time more than three generations after the flood. A large group of people had settled in a place called Shinar.

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55. **rainbow** - an arch of many colors that can be seen in the sky

56. **nation** - a large group of people who all share one ancestor

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GENESIS 11:1-4

<sup>1</sup> At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. <sup>2</sup> As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there.

<sup>3</sup> They began saying to each other, "Let's make bricks and harden them with fire." (In this region bricks were used instead of stone, and tar was used for mortar.)

<sup>4</sup> Then they said, "Come, let's build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world."

These people wanted to build a large city with a high tower. They wanted to show everyone how great they were. They wanted the tower to be so high that it would reach the sky. They were following God's enemy, Satan, who had wanted to take the place of God. They thought that if they built a high tower it would make them great. God had given people the work of spreading out over the earth. But these people decided to stay where they were and to build a great city instead.

These people had forgotten what God had done only three generations before. They had forgotten the story of the great flood, and how God had saved Noah and his three sons. They had stopped coming to God in the way he said, by killing animals. They did not listen to God or believe that what God said was true. They did not want a relationship with God and did not care about what God said.



GENESIS 11:5-9

<sup>5</sup> But the Lord came down to look at the city and the tower the people were building. <sup>6</sup> "Look!" he said. "The people are united, and they all speak the same language. After this, nothing they set out to do will be impossible for them!" <sup>7</sup> Come, let's go down and confuse the people with different languages. Then they won't be able to understand each other."

<sup>8</sup> In that way, the Lord scattered them all over the world, and they stopped building the city. <sup>9</sup> That is why the city was called Babel, because that is where the Lord confused the people with different languages. In this way he scattered them all over the world.

God knew what these people were planning to do. He did not want them to stay where they were. He did not want them to keep showing everyone that they thought they were great and that they didn't need God.

God *confused* the people by making them speak different languages. Because they could not understand each other, they could not keep building the city or the tower. They had to spread to other places all over the earth, just like God wanted them to. The name of the place was called Babel. Babel comes from the Hebrew word *balal* which means 'confuse'.

## HIS STORY: THE RESCUE

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1. What do you think about God destroying all living things in the flood?
2. Why do you think God saved Noah and his family?
3. Why did God make the rainbow?
4. Why did the people want to build the tall tower?
5. Do people today still think that they don't need God?
6. Why did God confuse the languages of the people who were building the tower?



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