



BIBLE STORIES EVERYONE OUGHT TO KNOW

Main and Oklahoma Church of Christ ^ Adult Bible Studies ^ Winter-Spring 2010

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Noah, Genesis 6-9

Getting Started

Bible class teachers tell children how Noah led the animals into the ark two by two. However, the story of Noah and the flood is much more disturbing. Its truth makes it more difficult. If God loves mankind, how could he destroy His creation? It seems hard to believe to 21st century people, but Moses and the Israelites had a much different view of God. The same God that destroyed the firstborn of Egypt also destroyed the earth in a flood as judgment and salvation.

What's the Story?

Are you still listening to the story? It is still easy to lose focus in the details. Who are the Nephilim? What is the relationship of the "sons of God" to the "daughters of men"? There are many questions with few good answers.

Nephilim, meaning those that fall upon, existed before Noah. Moses later records their presence in Canaan (Keil & Delitzsch, 86-7; Num. 13:33). The marriages of the "sons of God" with the "daughters of men" could be similar to Israel's temptation to marry Canaanite women that worshipped idols. The offspring of these marriages may be men of "renown", but C. F. Keil says they could also be "notorious" (86- 7). The exact meanings are difficult and disputed. Moses describes a world so corrupt that God is ready to destroy it all, save for one man, his family, and a few of every animal on earth.

For forty days after they enter the ark, water comes from springs in the ground and rain from the sky. Forty is a number of completions. The flood account contains many numbers and dates to show God's detail in planning and carrying out both judgment and salvation. Unclean animals go two by two, but clean animals by sevens. This fills the need for both food and sacrifices after the flood. On God's timetable, the flood comes and goes. At exactly the right time, God allows Noah's family and the animals to leave the ark and sets his bow in the sky as a covenant that He would never again bring this kind of judgment upon the earth.

What does this Story say about God?

In the flood account, God is very active. He sees the world's corruption and though in grief, prepares a timetable for judgment. Matthew and Luke record Jesus' observation that the people of Noah's time were surprised by the arrival of the flood (Matt. 24:37; Luke 17:26). Jesus compares their surprise with the surprise of non-believers when He returns. In addition, God

prepares a way of hope that not all will be lost. Much later, Peter will compare God's salvation of Noah's family in the flood with baptism (1 Pet. 3:20). He tells Noah what to do in order save a remnant of creation. God works in the flood to release the waters and to dry them up. He makes a covenant with Noah that the earth will never flood again.

Now, what about our faith?

There are three things that Noah's story has to say about God to 21st century Christians. First, God judges disobedient people. His purity requires that he condemn man's sinful acts; yet, He is patient. Second, God acts in creation. He sets timetables. He orders physical nature to respond to His commands. He communicates with those that love Him and seek to obey Him. He plans and He can change the order of things. Finally, God is compassionate. Despite the need for justice, God saves and provides hope. God's demand for justice and obedience will lead Him to make the ultimate sacrifice instead of destroying sinners.

Noah's story is much more than a story for children on Sunday morning. It is a description of God's working in creation and it compels the reader forward through God's plan. In the end, God took the consequences of our corruption in order to restore a relationship where we can walk with God.

Monday - Read Genesis 6 and *Getting Started*.

1. How does God describe the earth in Noah's time?
2. How different is Noah's time than today? How is it similar?
3. What kind of relationship did Noah have with God?

Tuesday - Read Genesis 7 and *What's the Story?*

1. List God's actions in this chapter.
2. Why do you think the author repeats several times that Noah did everything God commanded him to do?
3. What does your list say about God?

Wednesday - Read Genesis 8

1. What are God's actions in this chapter?
2. Does Noah's waiting in the ark until God commands have any relationship to obedience of Christians today? Why or why not?

Thursday - Read Matt. 24:36-44; Luke 17:22-37; 1 Peter 3:18-22 and *What does this story say about God?*

1. How does Jesus use the story of Noah?
2. How does Peter use Noah's story in his letter?

Friday - Read Genesis 9 and *Now, what about our faith?*

1. What are the conditions of God's covenant with Noah?
2. Do any of these conditions still apply?
3. Why would it be important for the reader to know about Ham's sin and his descendants' slavery to Shem's descendants?