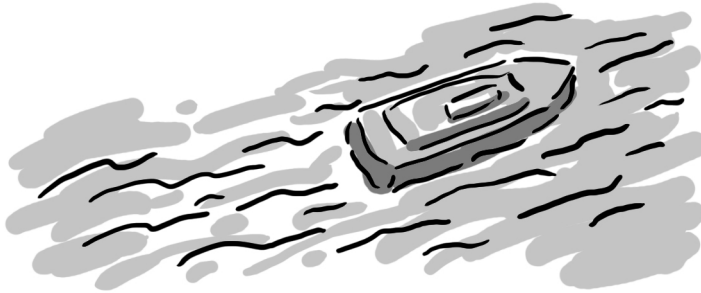


Destroyed and Renewed



SABBATH—OCTOBER 28

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Genesis 5:32–9:29.

MEMORY VERSE: “When the rainbow appears in the clouds, I [God] will see it. I will remember that my covenant¹ will last forever. It is a covenant between me [God] and every kind of living thing on earth” (Genesis 9:16, NIV).

“HAVE YOU HEARD THE LATEST ABOUT NOAH, THAT RELIGIOUS NUT?”

“Noah, religious Noah?”

“Well, Noah’s religion has made him crazy. He says water is going to drop out of the sky.”

“Water from the sky?”

“He says it is going to create a flood and kill everything on earth, except people who go into the ark.”

“The ark?”

“The ark is a thing that floats on water, like a boat. Noah says only people who get into the ark will survive the rain. He is building it now. Noah says water is going to be God’s judgment upon us for all our sins. We are not all that bad, are we?”

“Water from the sky? Why would a nice guy like Noah make up something so crazy?”

“Because he is crazy. And he is such a legalist.² He should know we are saved by faith alone. And standards,³ standards, standards. He is always complaining about standards.”

“Noah’s gone a bit too far. But he is basically an honest good guy.”

“Fine. But why should we believe in something that has never happened before? The scientists say it is not possible. The philosophers say it breaks natural law. Water rises from the earth each morning as a mist. It does not drop out of the sky, right?”

“Right . . . I guess.”

¹covenant—a promise or agreement.

²legalist—a person who believes we must obey God to be saved.

³standards—rules for living.

SUNDAY—OCTOBER 29**“SINFUL IN GOD’S EYES”
(Genesis 6:11, NlrV)**

Adam and Eve had children after Cain and Abel, including Seth (Genesis 5:4). Seth’s family begins the history of the pre-Flood leaders who were loyal to God. Noah was part of Seth’s family (Genesis 5:28, 29).

What picture does Genesis 6:1-13 give about the condition of sinful people? In what ways might we see the people of our time and even ourselves in these verses?

Some people suggest that the “sons of God” (Genesis 6:2) mean the people of heaven. But further reading suggests the future children of Seth. The “daughters of men” (the “men” who multiplied in Genesis 6:1) would then be Cain’s future children. The “sons of God,” means the people of faith married unbelievers. Then they were influenced by those unbelievers.

Genesis 6:1-13 shows that humans before the Flood were very wicked. Notice the words *every*, *only*, and *continually* (Genesis 6:5). The Hebrew word translated “imagination” comes from the verb⁴ “to form” (Genesis 2:7). This shows “thought-out [planned] action.” In the Old Testament, the word *heart* describes the complete inner life of a human. The word *heart* also means the seat (center) of emotion

⁴verb—a word that shows action.

⁵mercy—kindness we do not deserve.

(desire), will, and understanding. The words *corrupt* (dishonest) and *violence* (rebellion) in Genesis 6:11-13 make the picture of Genesis 6:5 clearer.

How does Genesis 6:6, 7 show God’s sadness about what was happening?

The author describes the human heart. Then he turns to the sadness and suffering of God’s heart. The author describes God in such a way that we can understand. God is not some far-off idea. He is a feeling and knowing God. He is open to the sadness of sin, prayer, and weeping over human guilt. These words help us understand how difficult it is to explain the fast growth of sin.

What do Genesis 6:8 and Matthew 23:37 tell us about how God is tied “emotionally” to this world? What other verses show this tie? (For example, read John 3:16.) How do these verses help you understand God’s ties to you?

MONDAY—OCTOBER 30**NOAH AND THE GOSPEL OF
GRACE (Genesis 6:8-22)**

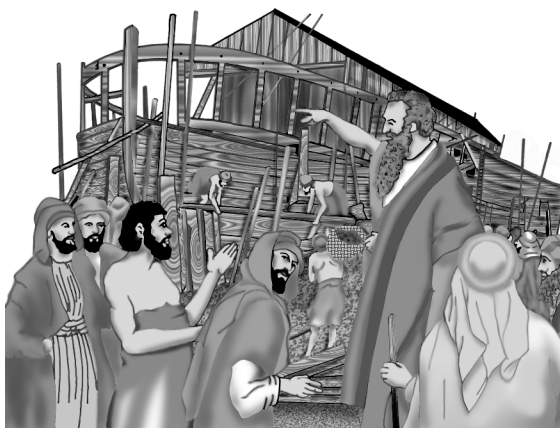
Read Genesis 6:8. Notice that Noah finds “grace” in the eyes of the Lord. This is the first time the word *grace* appears in the Bible. Grace is God’s mercy⁵ poured out upon

unworthy sinners (Romans 4:14-16; Ephesians 2:5, 8; 2 Timothy 1:9).

What does the Bible say about Noah's character and life? Genesis 6:9, 22; Hebrews 11:7; 2 Peter 2:5. Noah was a very righteous (holy) person. Why did he need God's grace? Also read Genesis 9:20, 31; Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8.

A sinner like the rest of us, Noah lived a life of faith and obedience. We see his faith and obedience in the fact that he obeyed God's command to build the ark.

What do Genesis 6:22 and Genesis 7:5 tell us about how saving faith is shown in a believer's life?



Noah showed his faith by doing what God told him to do.

In the middle of a dishonest, rebellious world, God has Noah. Noah's works clearly showed his faith. This is a very important point for all faithful people to remember about salvation through faith in Jesus. Noah could

have had all the faith in the world. But if he had not acted on that faith by obeying God's commands, he and his family would have been swept away in the Flood (Hebrews 11:7). This is an important lesson for all of us who accept the righteousness (holiness) of Jesus as the only hope of our salvation. Faith that is not shown in obedience is not really faith.

Think about your life this past week: How have your works shown your faith? What works showed a clear lack of faith? What changes do you need to make?

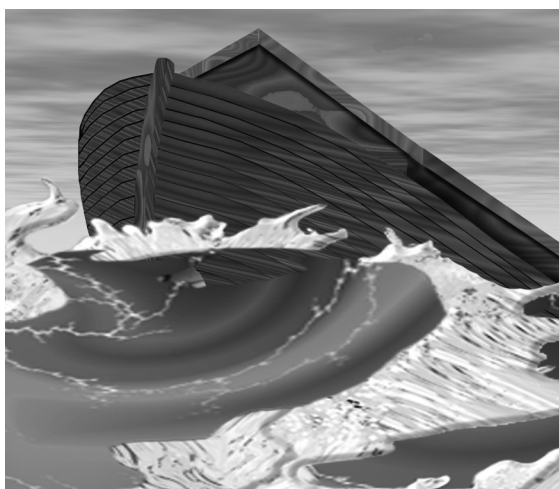
TUESDAY—OCTOBER 31

THE FLOOD (Genesis 7:1-16)

What do "clean" and "unclean" animals suggest about the knowledge Noah already had? Genesis 7:2, 3, 8; Genesis 8:20.

God separated "clean" and "unclean" animals *long* before Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 explained the difference. This suggests the clear knowledge of the separation between "clean" and "unclean" animals from earliest times. It certainly happened long before the Jewish nation was established.

What proof can you find in Genesis 7:7-24 that shows the whole world was destroyed by the Flood? Compare Genesis 7:19 with Daniel 7:27 and Job 28:24.



The Flood covered the whole earth.

The Flood covered the earth. The world returned to the way it was before God had made it a beautiful place (Genesis 1:2). The only exception was Noah and his family in the ark. Read Genesis 7:18-20. These verses show a worldwide flood. All the people on the earth were killed except Noah and those in the ark. Proof of a worldwide flood also comes from the support of many flood legends around the world. Fossil remains found in many areas give further proof. The Flood was not just a local event.⁶ This point is important, because many Christians are influenced by some scientists who claim there was no worldwide flood. These Christians think that the Flood was only a local event. But the Bible is clear that the Flood was worldwide.

Have you ever had an animal that you had to put to sleep? How does that experience help us understand

the sadness God must have felt about destroying so much of the “good” world He had created? What “good” in your own life must you carefully guard from becoming “only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5)?

WEDNESDAY—NOVEMBER 1

THE LOST GENERATION⁷ (Genesis 3:14-19)

Read the Genesis story of Noah and the Flood in Genesis 6:1-21 and Genesis 7:1-13. These verses seem to be saying that no one but Noah and his family could get into the ark. But some New Testament verses hint at something else. Read Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5. Ellen White is very clear that Noah’s work of the ark was to warn the world of the Flood. She also said that Noah “entreated [begged] them to seek a refuge [safety] while it [a refuge] might be found”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 97. We know God wants all the people to be saved (1 Timothy 2:3, 4). So it is not surprising that He was offering the people of Noah’s time a chance to be saved.

But it shows the sinful character of those people when only Noah’s family, and the animals, got on the boat. They would have to have been very humble and willing to face mockery to be on Noah’s side. Believing Noah would have made them unpopular. It would have meant having faith in

⁶event—thing that happens.

⁷generation—all the people born about the same time.

something that they did not fully understand. It would have meant admitting they could not save themselves. Trusting God was not a character trait⁸ you would have found among the evil generation in Noah's time.

Think about what the people in Noah's day needed to do to be on Noah's side. How is this the same as what we must do to follow Christ and His commandments?

God is always offering people a way out. He is always offering people a chance to go into the ark. The same Jesus we see weeping over Jerusalem is the same Jesus who was begging through Noah for people to repent.⁹ The same Jesus is pleading with us today. He is calling us to get into the ark before people are swept away and taken away in the final judgment (Matthew 24:38-41).



God is always offering people a way out of sin.

⁸character trait—qualities of character such as being honest and faithful or dishonest and unfaithful.

⁹repent—to say you are sorry for your sins and then to turn away from your sins.

What things keep you from being faithful to Jesus? What is the best defense against the things that would turn you away from Him and the truth for this time? What useful steps can you take to avoid these things?

THURSDAY—NOVEMBER 2

COVENANT AND RENEWAL (Genesis 8:20-22)

How did Noah show he was faithful, respectful, and thankful to God upon leaving the ark? Genesis 8:20.

“Here was a lesson for all generations after Noah's time. Noah had come forth upon an earth destroyed by the Flood. But before preparing a house for himself, Noah built an altar to God. The number of Noah's cattle was small, and had been taken care of with hard work. But Noah cheerfully gave a part of his cattle to God as a way of letting Him know that all was His. In the same way, it should be our first care to give our freewill offerings to God.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 106.

How did God answer Noah's devotion and worship? Genesis 8:21, 22.

God had destroyed the world because the thoughts of the human heart were evil (Genesis 6:5). That

same idea is repeated in Genesis 8:21, 22. God is explaining the sad fact that even after the Flood, people were not going to change for the good. What is interesting about these verses is that they show God's decision not to destroy the earth again after Noah made a sacrifice to Him. This blood sacrifice is connected with the promise. It is not the goodness of people, but what is in the sacrifice that leads to the new promise. God is going to save them from a flood even if the people were evil. In some ways, this shows what the gospel is all about. God saves us not because of ourselves. He saves us because of His mercy¹⁰ and grace toward us.

What promise is in Genesis 9:8-19? Who is included in this covenant? What can we learn from this covenant about the “new covenant” promise of salvation we have in Jesus? Genesis 9:12; Genesis 17:7; Psalm 105:10; Hebrews 13:20.



God made a covenant with every living thing that He would never flood the whole earth again.

FRIDAY—NOVEMBER 3

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 90–104.

“At first, many people in Noah’s time appeared to receive the warning. But they did not turn to God with true repentance.¹¹ They were not willing to turn away from their sins. During the time before the Flood, their faith was tested. They failed to pass the test. Filled with unbelief, they finally joined their friends in refusing to accept Noah’s preaching. Some were deeply touched, and would have listened to warning. But there were so many to laugh and mock that they accepted the same spirit. They refused to accept the invitations of mercy, and were soon among the boldest and most rebellious mockers. This is because none are so wild and sinful than those who have accepted truth, but have refused to accept the Holy Spirit’s leading.

“The people of Noah’s time were not all idol-worshippers. Many claimed to worship God. They claimed their idols represented God, and that through these idols, people could have a clearer understanding of God. These people were the first in refusing to accept Noah’s preaching. As they tried to represent God with idols, their minds were blinded to His rulership and power. They stopped understanding that God’s character was holy and that His law was unchangeable. As sin became more common, it appeared less and less sinful. They finally declared

¹⁰mercy—kindness we do not deserve.

¹¹repentance—being sorry for your sins, wanting to stop sinning, and turning away from your sins.

that God's law was no longer good. They decided that it was not within God's character to punish sin. They denied that He would punish the earth. If the people in Noah's time had obeyed God's law, they would have recognized God's voice in Noah's warning. But their minds had become so blinded by refusing to accept light that they really believed Noah's message to be false."—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 95, 96.

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

① Have people in the class put themselves in the mind of someone who lived in Noah's time. Then, have them give all the reasons they should not believe in the Flood. What lessons can we learn from their thinking? Their thinking can help us understand the thinking of others who do not take seriously our warnings about the end of time.