

Beginnings and Belongings
The Earth after the Flood

Lesson #6 for November 11, 2006

Scripture: Genesis 9-11.

1. What did the human race learn from the flood? Why is it so hard for human beings to learn from the mistakes of others? What ***should we have learned*** from the flood?
2. How different was the earth after the flood as compared to before the flood?

The entire surface of the earth was changed at the Flood. A third dreadful curse rested upon it in consequence of sin. As the water began to subside, the hills and mountains were surrounded by a vast, turbid sea. Everywhere were strewn the dead bodies of men and beasts. The Lord would not permit these to remain to decompose and pollute the air, therefore He made of the earth a vast burial ground. A violent wind which was caused to blow for the purpose of drying up the waters, moved them with great force, in some instances even carrying away the tops of mountains and heaping up trees, rocks, and earth above the bodies of the dead. *Patriarchs and Prophets* 107, 108

3. What did God expect Noah and his family to eat when they first came out of the ark? Did they have enough food stowed on the ark to supply their needs up to this point?
4. Why do you think God allowed them to eat meat at this point? They were first given fruits, nuts and grains (Genesis 1:29,30) and then after sin were given vegetables (Genesis 3:18) and now they are given everything except blood (Genesis 9:3,4) and later asked not to eat fat. (Leviticus 3:17)
5. What change took place in the relationship between human beings and animals at this time? (Genesis 9:2) Why?
6. **Why do you think God specifically forbade the eating of blood? Are there substances in the blood that should not be eaten? What evidence do we have even today that God's original diet is still the best?**
7. Read Genesis 9:4-6. What do you think is the meaning of this passage? What does God intend for us to learn?
8. Why do you think God allowed human beings to eat meat following the flood? Is it because there was nothing else to eat? Or was this an intentional plan by God to shorten the individual life-span of human beings?
9. Why was blood forbidden as food? Do you think there was a ceremonial reason, or a health reason, or both? (Look at Leviticus 17:11; Acts 15:20,29; 1 Peter 1:19). Why do you suppose this common theme of not eating blood is mentioned throughout scripture from just after the flood to the end of New Testament times?
10. Why does God say, (Genesis 9:5,6, *GNB*) "If anyone takes human life, he will be punished. I will punish with death any animal that takes a human life. "Human beings were made like God, so whoever murders one of them will be killed by someone else." Is this the earliest recitation of the law of retribution? (Exodus 21:4; Leviticus 24:7; Deuteronomy 19:21)
11. Why do you think that people before the flood were not acquainted with the rainbow? What did God do to place a rainbow in the sky after the flood? It is interesting to note that in the Old Testament there are three different symbols and only three that were

used to represent a covenant: the Sabbath (see, for example, Exodus 31:16), the rainbow (Genesis 9:13), and circumcision (Genesis 17:11).

12. What similarities do you see between the circumstances of giving the Sabbath covenant and the rainbow covenant?

The rainbow covenant not only points back to Creation week; it directs our attention forward to God's call of Abraham and the covenant that God makes with him. It ties the first 11 chapters of Genesis (often called the Primeval History) with the rest of the book. In both covenants God "establishes" them (*Genesis 9:9,11,17; compare Genesis 17:7,19,21*). The two covenants are eternal (*Genesis 9:16; compare Genesis 17:13,19*) and, as we have already seen, both have a sign (*Genesis 9:12,13,17; compare Genesis 17:11*). Also the Lord wants those with whom He made it to "remember" (*Genesis 9:15,16*) and to "keep" the covenant (*Genesis 17:9,10*). *Adult Teacher's SS Bible Study Guide*, p. 69

Does Genesis 9:5,6 impress you that God is trying to point out the sacredness of life? Who only can give life?

13. **We see repeatedly in these stories that God seeks to communicate with human beings but we have a hard time getting the message! Why do you think this is?**
14. Read Genesis 9:18 -29. What are we supposed to learn from this story about Noah and his sons? What do you think actually happened to Noah in this story? Did he intentionally prepare alcoholic wine? What did Ham do? How do you understand Genesis 9:22?
15. Why did Noah's curse fall on Canaan rather than on Ham? Does this teach us anything about heredity? Ham had a lot of other descendents besides Canaan. Does this mean that the curse that should've fallen on Ham did not affect them but only Canaan? What do we know about the descendents of Canaan? Where were they and what were they doing in the days of Moses? As Moses was writing the book of Genesis in the wilderness of Sinai or Midian, did he know any of these descendents of Canaan? What did he know about their religious practices?
16. Do you think the example of Noah corrupted his son Ham?

The sin of Ham was not an unintentional transgression. He may have seen his father's shameful condition accidentally, but instead of being filled with sorrow over his father's folly, he rejoiced in what he saw and found delight in publishing it. *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 266.

17. Do those in responsible positions such as parents and church leaders have special responsibilities because they are examples to others?
18. There is a lot of debate and discussion and differences of opinion about capital punishment. Does God condone capital punishment?
19. **How long after the flood did it take before human beings had basically returned to the same sins that led to the destruction in the first place? Compare the Jewish exiles who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile!**
20. What are we supposed to learn from the story of Babel? What were the people of Babel trying to accomplish for themselves? Were they trying to make a name for themselves? Were they trying to set up leaders in opposition to God? Were they trying to protect themselves from another flood? Did they believe God's statement that he would not send another flood? Or were they primarily trying to reach the clouds to determine

where all that water had come from!?

21. Read 2 Peter 3:1-12. Does Peter believe in the stories of Genesis? What was driving these scoffers in their beliefs and claims? How is Peter responding and what is he trying to say? Do you have any questions or doubts about the Genesis stories?
22. **What lessons do you think we should learn from the flood story which might be applicable in our day? Did they seem to learn any long-lasting lessons? What do we know about the Tower of Babel from extra-biblical sources?**
23. Try to put yourself into these stories. How do you think you would have responded before the flood; after the flood; at the Tower of Babel? God is planning to destroy the earth once again, only this time with fire. Are we getting ready?
24. **Why did God direct that people should scatter throughout the earth and repopulate it? Does this imply that gathering together in one location to form communities in cities naturally promotes sin? Is the world today building another Tower of Babel? Are we attempting to build several of them? What aspects of scientific advancement have led to confusion and misunderstanding and led some to set aside the biblical record?**
25. **We have now completed the period of prehistory. Beginning with Abraham we will talk about events which can be documented or parallels can be found in archaeology, etc. Are you comfortable with the biblical account of prehistory? How would you like it to be different? Why do you think God did not give more detail? Approximately one-half, or perhaps even more, of this earth's history is included in these first 11 chapters of Genesis! How much do you think Moses actually knew about this time period?**

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