

## ***Beginnings and Belongings*** ***Destruction and Renewal***

Lesson #5 for November 4, 2006

Scripture: Genesis 5:32-9:29.

1. **After the entrance of sin, there was a rapid decline in the moral condition of the world. How do you think this was viewed by the beings in the rest of the universe? Did they think God had made a mistake by creating this world? What kind of interaction do you think there was between the descendants of Cain and the descendants of Seth? Was God's Holy Spirit at work to restrain evil? These people could still visit the entrance to the Garden of Eden. They could talk to Adam and Eve. Why did evil become so predominant so quickly?**
2. The little bit of information we have about the antediluvian world tells us that men and women lived long lives. Why do you think this was? Heredity? Diet? Environment? Lifestyle?
3. Between the time of Adam and the time of Noah, one man stands out. What was different about Enoch? In what way did God communicate with people like Enoch? See handout on ***Enoch***.
4. Who were the giants living on Earth in Noah's day? And where did they come from?

There were many giants, men of great stature and strength, renowned for wisdom, skillful in devising the most cunning and wonderful works; but their guilt in giving loose rein to iniquity was in proportion to their skill and mental ability. {PP 90.2}

God bestowed upon these antediluvians many and rich gifts; but they used His bounties to glorify themselves, and turned them into a curse by fixing their affections upon the gifts instead of the Giver...They [91] sought only to gratify the desires of their own proud hearts, and reveled in scenes of pleasure and wickedness. Not desiring to retain God in their knowledge, they soon came to deny His existence. They adored nature in place of the God of nature. They glorified human genius, worshiped the works of their own hands, and taught their children to bow down to graven images. {PP 90.3; BEcho, July 1, 1887 par. 4; ST, November 27, 1884 par. 5}
5. Read Genesis 6:1-13. Who were the sons of God? Some translations have "heavenly beings." Was it true, as many pagan religions teach, that "gods" from the heavens came down and cohabited with human women producing giants? Ellen White states:

**The descendants of Seth were called the sons of God—the descendants of Cain, the sons of men.** As the sons of God mingled with the sons of men, they became corrupt, and by intermarriage with them, lost, through the influence of their wives, their peculiar, holy character, and united with the sons of Cain in their idolatry. Many cast aside the fear of God, and trampled upon his commandments. But there were a few that did righteousness, who feared and honored their Creator. Noah and his family were among the righteous few. {1SP 66.1}
6. What were the spiritual conditions like in the days of Noah? "When the Lord saw how wicked everyone on earth was and how evil their thoughts were all the time...but everyone else was evil in God's sight, and violence had spread everywhere... God said to Noah, "I have decided to put an end to all people. I will destroy them completely, because the world is full of their violent deeds." Genesis 6:5,11,13 (*GNB*)
7. **What does Genesis 6:6,7 mean when it says, "God repented" or God "was sorry" that he had created the earth?** Is this an emotional response on God's part? Does God have emotions like ours? If so, are his emotions always under full control? Or is this an

expression in human terms so that we might understand God better?

8. Like Enoch, Noah was faithful. Genesis 6:9-10 says: “This is the story of Noah. He had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Noah had **no faults** [perfect, blameless] and was **the only good man** [just, righteous] of his time. He lived in fellowship with God.” (GNB)
9. Noah was described as righteous (just) and blameless (perfect). Does this mean that he was not a sinner? (Genesis 6:22; 7:5; compare Genesis 6:9,22; Hebrews 11:7; 2 Peter 2:5) We know that everyone who has lived on this earth, except Jesus, has been a sinner. (Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8) Wouldn't this include Noah? We are told that Noah also walked with God. Review the experience of Enoch above. Could we have this kind of experience with God in our day?
10. **In light of the conditions on the earth and the rapid decline that we have seen in the moral condition of humankind, what do you think would have happened if God had not sent the flood?**
11. **If you had been appointed a counselor to God, what would you have advised him to do at this point? What do you think the angels and the beings from the rest of the universe were advising God to do? When we think it is necessary to punish our children for some “evil deed” they have done, do we expect them to straighten up their lives immediately? Did the beings in the rest of the universe expect that this disastrous flood would cleanse the earth of evil?**
12. Read Genesis 6:8: “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” (KJV) “But the Lord was pleased with Noah.” (GNB; Compare Matthew 24:37; Luke 17:26; 1 Peter 3:20) Is this a legal expression (compare Genesis 15:6) telling us that God had placed Noah's name in the Book of Life, or is this just a description of how things were?
13. What happened as a result of Noah's faith and his walk with God? (Hebrews 11:7) Noah's faith led directly to action. Did God especially bless him financially so he could afford to build such a boat?
14. **If we walked with God in the way Enoch and Noah did, would God bless us in the same ways? Does your faith result in action every day?**
15. **As we all know there is great doubt among the scientific community and the news media in our day whether a worldwide flood ever took place. What scientific evidence could you cite for a worldwide flood?** Scriptures suggest that water covered the highest mountains more than 25 feet! Where did all that water come from? Where did it go after the flood? Should we have some secret doubts about the worldwide flood? What Biblical evidence is there for a worldwide flood? (Genesis 7:19 Daniel 7:27; Job 28:24)
16. It's interesting to note that the description of the events of the flood follow a course which is in reverse order from those of creation week.

Gen. 1	World created	Genesis 7	World destroyed
Gen. 1:6-8	God separates the waters above and below	Gen. 7:11	God mingles the waters again
Gen. 1:9,10	Dry land emerges	Gen. 7:19,20	Dry land vanishes
Gen. 1:20-26	All creatures created	Gen. 7:21-23	Almost all creatures destroyed

17. Just as it says in Genesis 6:7 that God was sorry he had created this earth, it also says in Genesis 8:1 that God “remembered” or “had not forgotten” Noah and all the animals with him in the boat. Once again God is pictured in human terms (anthropomorphic). Biblical history and numerous stories seem to suggest that when God “remembers” he intervenes in human lives and history. (Genesis 19:29; 30:22; Exodus 2:24; 6:5,6)

18. **What is the basic difference between the “clean” and “unclean” animals that were taken into the ark? Is there a scientifically verifiable difference between these types of creatures?**
19. Our lesson does not mention dinosaurs. How do they fit into this story? Did they inhabit the earth before the flood? Where did they come from? Were there any water dwelling dinosaurs that survived the flood? Or did God specifically make certain that none of these creatures of such enormous size and strength survived the flood?
20. Does the fact that we find fossils of sea dwelling creatures worldwide prove that there was a worldwide flood? How do we explain the legends about floods in primitive tribes throughout the world?
21. **How do you think God really felt about sending a flood? Was it truly necessary? How did Satan respond to the sending of the flood and the events that followed?**  
**Satan himself, who was compelled to remain in the midst of the warring elements, feared for his own existence...He now uttered imprecations against God, [100] charging Him with injustice and cruelty. Many of the people, like Satan, blasphemed God, and had they been able, they would have torn Him from the throne of power. {PP 99.3}**
22. What do you think Satan had to say when the flood was over? Did he try to speak to the beings in the rest of the universe about what kind of God they were worshiping?
23. **There are no comments in the book of Genesis about Noah’s preaching. Why do you think this is? Do we have evidence that Noah sought to convince others?** Furthermore, it looks as if Noah built the ark just for himself, his family and the animals! Does the rest of Scripture teach a different picture? (Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5) Ellen White of course paints a different picture.  
 “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” Hebrews 11:7. While Noah was giving his warning message to the world, his works testified of his sincerity. It was thus that his faith was perfected and made evident. He gave the world an example of believing just what God says. **All that he possessed, he invested in the ark.** As he began to construct that immense boat on dry ground, multitudes came from every direction to see the strange sight and to hear the earnest, fervent words of the singular preacher. Every blow struck upon the ark was a witness to the people. {PP 95.1}  
**Many at first appeared to receive the warning; yet they did not turn to God with true repentance. They were unwilling to renounce their sins. During the time that elapsed before the coming of the Flood, their faith was tested, and they failed to endure the trial. Overcome by the prevailing unbelief, they finally joined their former associates in rejecting the solemn message. Some were deeply convicted, and would have heeded the words of warning; but there were so many to jest and ridicule, that they partook of the same spirit, resisted the invitations of mercy, and were soon among the boldest and most defiant scoffers; for none are so reckless and go to such lengths in sin as do those who have once had light, but have resisted the convicting Spirit of God. {PP 95.2}**  
 The men of that generation were not all, in the fullest acceptance of the term, idolaters. Many professed to be worshipers of [96] God. They claimed that their idols were representations of the Deity, and that through them the

people could obtain a clearer conception of the divine Being. This class were foremost in rejecting the preaching of Noah. As they endeavored to represent God by material objects, their minds were blinded to His majesty and power; they ceased to realize the holiness of His character, or the sacred, unchanging nature of His requirements. As sin became general, it appeared less and less sinful, and they finally declared that the divine law was no longer in force; that it was contrary to the character of God to punish transgression; and they denied that His judgments were to be visited upon the earth. Had the men of that generation obeyed the divine law, they would have recognized the voice of God in the warning of His servant; but their minds had become so blinded by rejection of light that they really believed Noah's message to be a delusion. {PP 95.3}

24. What factors kept the antediluvians from accepting Noah's message? 1) They would have had to humbly face the scorn of the majority of their fellow man. 2) They would have been ridiculed and have become very unpopular. 3) They would have had to place their trust in God rather than in all the scientific and philosophical claims in the world around them. 4) They would have had to trust in God to save them and not to depend upon themselves.
25. What factors keep people from accepting the gospel call today? What can we do to help people overcome these factors and this resistance?
26. **It is very sad to note in the words of Ellen White that many who had at first accepted Noah's preaching later rejected it with vehemence. "...Their minds had become so blinded by rejection of light that they really believed Noah's message to be a delusion."** (PP 96) How many people in our day are deluded and believe that the truth about God is false? How can we make certain that this is not describing us?
27. **Will everyone who drowned in the flood be lost? Was everyone who entered the ark a saint? (Genesis 9:25-27)**
28. What groups of people in our day are particularly vulnerable to peer pressure? Why do you think this is? Can we help children, teenagers, and our associates see the importance of resisting this peer pressure?
29. Almost as soon as Noah left the ark, he set up an altar and offered a sacrifice to God. Genesis 8:20-22 suggests that there was "an odor pleasing to the Lord". God promised, through giving a rainbow, never again to destroy the earth with a flood. What does "an odor pleasing to the Lord" mean?
30. Look at the covenant promise given by God to Noah. (Genesis 9:8-19; 17:7; Psalms 105:10; Hebrews 13:20) Compare this covenant with the one later given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (Genesis 12:3) What similarities and what differences do you see?
31. **If you were speaking with an associate or a friend who was not a Bible believer and who did not know much about Scripture, what would you say to him about the flood and the material in this lesson? Can you give a cogent believable explanation?**
32. **Were the members of Noah's family saved because of Noah's faith or because of their own faith?**

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