

Noah Genesis - Bereshit (6.9-11:32)

Generations after Adam and Eve, God saw human wickedness increasing on earth. Every day, all day, people were plotting evil, and God regretted creating humans and decided to destroy all the living.

But Noah found favor in the eyes of God. Noah was a righteous man in his generation. Noah walked with God. God said, "Noah, because the earth is filled with wrongdoing I am going to destroy it. Make an ark for you and your family and fill it with two of every living thing, male and female. Bring pairs of clean and unclean animals, birds and creeping things for in 7 days, I shall bring waters to flood the earth and destroy everything." Noah listened to God and built the ark and stocked it. And the animals, male and female, came, two by two, to Noah. On the 7th day God, God sent the rain for 40 days and 40 nights, flooding the earth, covering even the tips of the highest mountains, destroying everything.

After 150 days God remembered Noah's Ark and the waters began to lessen. To see if the earth was dry, Noah sent out a dove but it returned with an empty beak. Later, the sent dove came back with an olive leaf. The third time Noah's dove did not return. And God spoke to Noah, "Go forth, you, and all the living creatures in the ark. Go and be fruitful and multiply." Noah left the ark with his sons, his wife and his son's wives. Every animal and every bird, all that walk the land, left the ark by families.

Immediately, Noah built an altar to God and made an offering. God took note of Noah's offering, thinking, "Never again will I destroy every living thing when humans are evil in their ways. Continuous shall be the seasons, and the days and nights shall not cease." Then God blessed Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. God said, "All living things shall fear you, but in your hands, in your care, are they given. I will demand an account of every life on earth, but for humans, I will demand the soul, for in the image of God, God made humans. No-one is to shed the blood of another. As for Me," God continued, "I will establish My Covenant with you and every living creature that I will never again destroy the earth by flood. The bow you see after My rains, My rainbow, will be an eternal sign of this Covenant between Me and all flesh on earth."

After Noah died, his sons and their families spread over the earth after the flood. The earth was only of one language and used the same words. As they migrated, the people stopped in a valley. One human said to another, "Let us build us a city and a tower whose top reaches heaven. Let us make ourselves famous." When God saw people seeking heaven in this way, God confused their speech, so they spoke different languages. God named that city Babel, and then scattered humans across the earth.

Noah's good son Shem fathered Terah, the father of Abram. Abram wed Sarai but they had no children.

Questions: 1) How are humans made in the image of God? 2) Does God still create and destroy? 3) What's wrong with trying to build a tower to reach heaven? **Illustration Ideas:** Noah and his family building the ark...the pairs of animals getting on board...the boat during the storm...the dove, a rainbow...heaven...the city of Babel