

## 7 - The Flood

Before your group meets - Read Genesis 6 – 9.

Watch this video by the Bible Project, “Justice” - <https://youtu.be/A14THPoc4-4>

### **Discuss together (each person to share):**

What injustices does our society tolerate and what injustices do they hate?

Why do you think such injustices get tolerated?

### **Think on this:**

Lots of questions are raised by the Noah story. Many of these can be answered, a few are harder, yet there is a clear point God wants us to grasp. This reminds us that we must let God’s word set the agenda for our questioning of it. What is the question the Noah story is answering? How can a broken and sinful humanity (Genesis 3-5) continue on the earth before a Holy and Righteous God?!

### **Look at Qu.1 - 6 in pairs or smaller groups:**

**Qu.1** - Re-tell the story of Noah, capturing all the main parts, in 1 minute or less.

**Qu.2** - In light of how bad things had become (6:1-13), do you think God’s reaction is expected or unexpected (7:4)? Why/Why not?

**Qu.3** - Noah’s not perfect, as the story exposes at the end (9:20-25). What makes Noah righteous and acceptable to God in 6:8-9 and how should we understand that in light of Romans 3:10-12 and Hebrews 11:1-7?

**Qu.4** - In what ways do we see God as judge AND as saviour in Genesis 6-9?

**Qu.5** - What are the similarities and differences between the initial command to Adam and Eve in 1:27-30 and the command to Noah’s family in 9:1-7?

**Qu.6** - From Genesis 9:8-17, How would you explain why rainbows exist to a friend who doesn’t know God?

**Read together in main group:**

The overwhelming point of the flood story is that God hates sin, but loves humanity. He was so grieved by sin that He destroyed all living things in judgement of it. However, out of His amazing love, He is still committed to saving people. Sin does not overturn God's good plans for His creation. Sin does not win. Mercy triumphs over judgement (James 2:13). Some people have claimed that the Old Testament God is angry, losing his temper and acting rashly, while the God of the New Testament is gracious and loving. But the Gospel shows us that God's character never changes. God is both just (judges rightly) and merciful (forgives sin) and we see this most clearly in Jesus. On the cross our sin was justly punished in Jesus and, in that moment, God was also ensuring our forgiveness, demonstrating His mercy and justice (Rom 3:21-26).

**Qu.7** - What sins do you treat as “not that bad” in your life or the people around you?

**Qu.8** - How should God's justice and mercy affect your relationship with:

- God
- Other Christians
- Unbelievers

Bonus Question if time allows:

**Qu.9** - Jesus taught that the days of Noah before the flood are just like our days before Jesus comes back to judge. People were eating, drinking, having parties and getting married – **“they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.”** (Matthew 24:36-44)

- How can you help others get ready for Jesus' return?

**A reflection for prayer time:**

*John 3:16-18: 16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*

**Further reading this week:**

Read 2 Peter 3 and reflect on these 3 things:

1. Does your life reflect the reality that Jesus is coming back anytime?
2. How does this chapter help us keep looking forward to Jesus' coming?
3. How are rainbows a sign of God's patience (2 Pet 3:9)?
4. Have you warned the people around you who don't know Jesus about His coming and about His patience and salvation? If not, why do you find it hard?

Share your reflections with your Growth Group.

Further reading if you, like everyone else who's ever read this story, had questions regarding the Nephilim.

"Who Are the Sons of God in Genesis 6?"

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/who-are-sons-of-god-genesis-6/>

## 8 - The Tower of Babel

Before your group meets, read - Genesis 10-11

Watch this video on the historical background - <https://youtu.be/3qwTymwN-74>

### Discuss together:

What are some ways people try to make a name for themselves today?

### Think on this:

The flood was a judgement sent from God. He sent it because of the corruption of the human heart. Yet he was gracious towards Noah and his family and preserved them through the flood. A new beginning for humanity awaits. Will they learn their lesson? Where does the human heart turn when it's free?

### Look at Qu.1 - 2 in pairs or smaller groups:

**Qu.1** - Chapter 11 seems to be explaining what happened between chapter 9 and 10. What problems do you think could arise from the events in chapter 10, particularly in verses 5, 20, 31?

**Qu.2** - Keeping in mind everything that has happened in the first 9 chapters of Genesis:

- a) **What is the problem with building this tower?**
- b) **How are the actions of these people similar to other characters we have met in Genesis so far?**
- c) **How is God's response similar and different to His previous responses?**

### Read together in main group:

God confuses the very thing that enabled these people to work together against Him – their language. As a consequence of their attempted overthrow God disperses them, which was exactly what they were trying to avoid! God's act of judgement, however, is also an act of grace. Instead of destroying, he disperses them. Hope still exists for humanity! Yet, hope would not be found in more cities and more buildings. Man's great technological advances cannot achieve a place in God's presence.

Hope would only be secured through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Philippians 2:10 tells us that only at the name of Jesus will every knee bow. His name is the only one that will be known as great!

After Jesus rose and ascended to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to reunite people from all languages together under one word - His word. Now He sends us out with our different languages to make His great name known in all the earth.

**Qu.3** - How can you be more involved in God's mission to reach all nations for Jesus' name? Are there particular things you can start doing to support our link missionaries (personally or as a group)?

**Qu.4** - Technology has achieved some amazing things in our world. It truly is a gift from God through the minds of people. But it is at the same time, a blessing and a curse. It can cause overworking, anxiety and pride. How should the tower of Babel story affect our attitude towards technology? In what ways have you/do you use technology to replace God?

**Qu.5** - How can we celebrate the diversity of cultures and unity we have in the gospel? How can we make the most of it for Jesus' name?

***A reflection for prayer time:***

*Revelation 7:9 - After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.*

## 9 - God's BIG promises - The Abrahamic Covenant

Before your group meets - Read Genesis 12:1-9

And watch -

"Covenants" - Bible Project - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ferLlsvlml>

### Discuss in main group (each member share):

Have you ever made a promise so big that you couldn't keep it? Or had someone make a big promise to you but then let you down?

#### Think on this:

"Blessing" is a word that's thrown around in many different circles. It is usually used to mean something unusually good has happened to someone. When God promised to bless all people, He was talking about something much greater than how we use that word. He was talking about humanity having a restored relationship with their Maker, achieving the goal of their existence!

### Look at Qu.1 - 3 in pairs or smaller groups:

**Qu.1** - In vs1-3 what are the promises God made to Abram (Abraham)?

**Qu.2** - How would these promises answer the problem of the Tower of Babel and other problems we've seen so far in Genesis 1-11?

**Qu.3** - In vs4 Abraham responds immediately, expressing faith in God's promise. He's 75 years old, with a wife, a nephew, hired hands and a load of stuff! This move wouldn't have been "comfortable". Share a time when responding to God in faith was "uncomfortable" for you.

### Read together in main group:

The life and blessing God's people had in the garden was replaced by death and curse. Yet God promised to restore that blessing through Abram's family. God ultimately achieved that through Abram's descendant, Jesus Christ. Jesus' death and resurrection replaced the curse with blessing. Now through Christ, God still extends the same promises to us and expects the same response of faith.

***Galatians 3:7-9 - Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.***

***Galatians 3:13-14*** - Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole." He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

God's promises are not empty, but are based on the solid work of Jesus Christ:

***2 Corinthians 1:20-22*** - For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."

**Qu.4** - What makes it hard for you to trust God's promises in big or small things?

**Qu.5** - A promise can be described as trusting someone with the future. How would you encourage someone who finds it hard to trust God at the moment?

Bonus Question if time allows

**Qu.6** - Reflect on the following 3 passages about God, then share: What are people saying about God if they don't believe his promises?

***Joshua 23:14*** - "Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.

***Numbers 23:19*** - God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfil?

***Psalms 89:34*** - I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered.

**Share one thing that has encouraged you from working through Genesis this term.**

**Reflection for prayer time:**

*Psalms 117:1-2* - Praise the Lord, all you nations; celebrate him, all you peoples. For great is his love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord.