

GROUNDS OF FAITH CAFÉ: “Genesis” (Subtitled: Is there a snake in your Garden too?) Further subtitled: Lessons from the Garden! Lesson 8. (Gen 6:1-22). For lesson copies, go to <http://www.montgomerychurch.org/resources8.html>

Introduction: Last week, we read two genealogies that contrasted lineages faithful to God (Seth’s) and lineages in open defiance of God (Cain’s). This week we will see that the tension that led to marital strain (Adam & Eve, chapter 3), then to fratricide (Cain & Abel, chap 4), now becomes full blown social violence. God’s response to a violent society bent on violent self-destruction is the “flood” – a violent response as well.

Explanatory overview: In our first lessons, we described a literary device called “ring composition” which, when used, helps us realize that blocks of material need to be read together to really get the overall meaning. Thus, we saw that chapters 2 & 3, when read this in this manner, clearly depict a climax to God’s creation and the subsequent unraveling as a consequence of mankind’s actions. Similarly, **Genesis chapters 6 – 9** record a second “ring composition” depicting a reverse action – the complete disintegration of mankind, and the re-creation of the earth by God! (Marrs, *Embracing the Call of God*, p. 68). This literary device helps us keep the larger framework in mind as we read various aspects of God’s corrective action. As you review the following framework, note: the second half is presented in reverse fashion to the first half. In the first half, the waters rise; in the second half they recede. The “hinge” is God’s “remembrance” of Noah:

- (A) God’s creation is riddled through completely with violence (6:11-12)
- (B) God’s opening declaration – His resolution to “destroy” (6:13-22)
- (C) God’s second address – the command to enter the ark (7:1-10)
- (D) The flood begins (7:11-16)
- (E) The floodwaters rise (7:17-24)
- (F) GOD REMEMBERS NOAH (8:1)
- (E) The floodwaters recede (8:1-5)
- (D) The earth dries (8:6-14)
- (C) God’s third address – the command to leave the ark (8:15-19)
- (B) God rescinds resolution to “destroy” and resolves to preserve order (8:20-22)
- (A) God’s final declaration – a call for blessing and peace (9:1-17)

Read: Genesis 6:1-22 completely through. As we enter the “flood” chapters (6-9), three areas seem to stand out in chapter six. The first scene seems both unimaginable, and apparently even not easily explainable. The second narrative details just how evil humanity has become which is contrasted to one “righteous” man. A follow-on narrative explores God’s motive for His actions.

- **Re-read 6:1-4. The theme that follows from the first 4 chapters is the continued dysfunction and degeneration of God’s creation. Good luck with these passages, but please do not spend a lot of time here! What do you think is meant by these verses?**
- **Re-read 6:5, 7, 11-13, 17. Whereas in chapter one, God seven times “saw” what He had made and pronounced it “good,” what do these passages say God now “saw”? What does God determine to do to the earth as a consequence of what He “saw”? In previous chapters, God’s punishment appeared to fit the crime. Do you think that is true in this instance? Explain your answer.**
- **Re-read 6:8-9, 22; 5:29; and 7:1. How does Scripture describe Noah (whose Hebrew name [‘n-h’] is “favor” [‘h-n’] spelled backwards)? What do you conclude equals a “righteous” life in God’s sight based on these Scriptures? Be specific. How can you apply this lesson to your own life, or can you?**
- **Re-read 6:6-7. What do you conclude is God’s motivation for His actions based on these Scriptures? Do you think it is reasonable to conclude that God has a “heart” problem with man? Explain. Put another way, is it possible to think that the evil heart of man (6:5) actually troubles the heart of God (6:6)? What does this thought mean to your life?**
- **Re-read 6:18-22. This is the first mention of “covenant” in Scripture. The “covenant” with Noah will receive more treatment in 8:21 – 9:17. According to 6:18-22, what do you believe is included in God’s covenant with Noah?**