

THE WHOLE STORY

From Genesis to Revelation

Introductions:

One of the tremendous benefits of reading through the Bible in a year is that you can start to trace the connection that Biblical writers make to the earlier parts of Scripture. Genesis is like a fountainhead of crucial themes that weave their way into all parts of the Bible. In Genesis 8:20-9:29, the author is already referring back to the chapters that came before in significant ways.

This Week's Main Focus

**Sin multiplies and brings inevitable judgment.
God has a plan to save man; to give hope and a future.**

You can most clearly see these connections to Genesis 1-4 in chapter 9:1-7. God has cleansed the earth with judgment and Noah's family can start again. God reiterates what he told Adam: "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." (9:1, 7) Noah is also told that he has dominion over creation. However, there is a darker tone to God's words this time around. Allusions to the curses from chapters 3 and 4 and the violence that inevitably comes from man's evil heart show up too. It is almost as if God is bracing Noah's family for the violence and pain to come.

Despite this, God reiterates that his image is firmly implanted deep within man. He makes an unconditional covenant with Noah, humanity, and all of creation. He will not again wipe away life from the earth, despite the evil that he anticipates. Some of the covenants that God will make later with his people are conditional - like a contract with two sides. However, this covenant in chapter 9 is a promise to unconditionally give grace and mercy to his creation. God will deal with man's sin some other way in the future.

Noah's family starts their new life with this great promise. They sacrifice to God and get to work as gardeners, just as Adam was intended to do. But just a half chapter later, at the end of Genesis 9, the evilness of man returns. Pastor J.D. in the sermon this weekend, likened it to a computer rebooting ... only to find that the virus is still in the computer. God will have to eradicate man's sin in another way.

Sermons Response Question:

1) In the sermon this weekend, Pastor J.D. talked about how different the story of Noah is in the Bible compared to the "children's version" we often tell at bedtime. Ask your group how their Bible reading plans are going. Give them an opportunity to share ways that God is using the daily readings to shape (or reshape) how they view him.

Bible Study Questions:

2) Sometimes we are so familiar with something that we don't know it as well as we think we do - it's like when you can't find your glasses because they have been on top of your head for so long. We do that with familiar Bible stories too. This week, instead of reading Genesis 6-9, have your group tell the story of Noah, as a group, like they are explaining it to someone who has never read the Bible on a mission trip - you can assume that on this mission trip someone has already told them about Genesis 1 to 3. Your leader can check to make sure you are on the right track!

3) Read Genesis 8:20-9:28. Connect your study of Genesis so far (especially chapters 1-3) with this week's study of Noah (Genesis 6-9). Find and write down all the references to earlier chapters that you can. What do you think the author is communicating by repeating these same themes and ideas or contrasting them?

4) The big questions so often asked of this passage in the Bible are 1) Why did God destroy everything and everyone? and 2) Why did God spare Noah? Based on your study this week, how would you answer these two questions to someone trying to understand God and the Bible better?

5) Earlier we asked about why God would bring such widespread judgment on the world. In Genesis 9:8-17, God grants an "unconditional" covenant. Why does God promise now to preserve his creation?

6) In Genesis 9:18-28, we see a shameful, odd story about Noah and his family. Why is this story included here?

Group Application Questions:

7) God saved Noah, even though Noah ended up sinning again (and again, and again). When is a time that you have seen God save you from destruction - like Noah from the flood? What are some ways that you still struggle with sin even after seeing God save you from destruction?

Prayer:

- Have one person read Psalm 119:17-24.
- Have one person pray that the eyes of your group would be open and behold the wondrous things of God's law. (v. 18)
- Have one person pray that your group would be consumed with longing for holiness in their personal lives, families, jobs and every relationship. (v. 20)
- Have one person pray that your group, together, would delight in God's word this year. (v. 24)