

# THE GOSPEL PROJECT CHRONOLOGICAL

## THE STORY BEGINS

### GOD THE CREATOR

### *The Creator Destroys and Redeems*

As we follow the lives of the early history of mankind we see how the inclination towards disobedience against the LORD begins to grow. Adam said in **Genesis 3:10 (ESV)** <sup>10</sup> ... *“I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”* The first couple’s disobedience brought shame to their hearts. In the second generation, after Adam’s son, Cain, murdered his brother Abel, we find a heart of indifference towards sin. **Genesis 4:9 (ESV)** <sup>9</sup> *Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?”* As time progressed, Cain’s great-great-grandson, Lamech, killed a man and boasted about it. **Genesis 4:23-24 (ESV)** <sup>23</sup> *Lamech said to his wives: “Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me.”* <sup>24</sup> *If Cain’s revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech’s is seventy-sevenfold.* Lamech displayed an attitude of entitlement to do as he pleased with no regard for righteousness or pleasing his Heavenly Father. In just a few generations, boasting about sin had become the norm replacing indifference and shame.

Undoubtedly after Adam and Eve lost one son to death and lost another son to the results of sin, the promise of a coming Redeemer must have felt bleak. God’s promise in **Genesis 3:15** that the offspring of woman would crush the head of the enemy and the offspring would merely have a bruised heel is known as the Adamic Covenant. Don’t despair, my friends, the LORD God always keeps His promises.

**Genesis 4:25-26 (ESV)** <sup>25</sup> *And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, “God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him.”* <sup>26</sup> *To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD.*

It would be through the line of Seth that the Promised Redeemer would eventually come to earth. One of Seth’s descendants, Enoch, had a special personal relationship with God. Recall his story in **Genesis 5:24 (ESV)** <sup>24</sup> *Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.* Enoch is one of two men (the other was Elijah) in Scripture who never died. Enoch’s son, Methuselah has the distinction of being the oldest living man by living 969 years. Just like Cain had a descendant named Lamech, Seth had a descendant by that name as well. He was the son of Methuselah and the father of Noah. It would be wonderful if we could say that the line of Seth remained godly down through the generations but that did not happen.

**Read Genesis 6:2 (ESV)** <sup>2</sup> *the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose.*

There are several views regarding this passage. Some take this verse to mean that the *sons of God* were fallen angels. The term sons of God is used to describe angels in the book of Job. I personally have always

wondered about this passage. However, as I look at it in the framework of our recent lessons and visualizing the progression of sin, I have come to believe that a simple explanation of the passage is best. The sons of God would have been descendants of Seth and the daughters of men would describe descendants of Cain. One of Satan's most successful devices is compromise. What was Satan's plan for defeating God's people in Noah's day? To entice the godly line of Seth (*the sons of God*) to mix with the ungodly line of Cain (*the daughters of men*). These unions would cause the sons of God to abandon their devotion to the Lord. This sin of compromise is the temptation that faces Christians today. **James 4:4 (ESV)** <sup>4</sup> ... *Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.* I suspect that compromise by the sons of Seth is part of the reason that sin became so rampant by the days of Noah. In fact, things got so bad that God was grieved as He judged the wickedness of the world.

**Read Genesis 6:5-7 (ESV)** <sup>5</sup> *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* <sup>6</sup> *And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.* <sup>7</sup> *So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them."*

For a logical mind, one might ask, "if God is All-Knowing why would He do something that would cause Him to be regretful?" Even though God knew from the beginning what terrible little sinful creatures His humans would turn out to be, He chose to create us and give us His breath of life because He knew He knew from eternity past that He would love us no matter what we do. **Ephesians 1:4-5 (ESV)** <sup>4</sup> *even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love* <sup>5</sup> *he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ...* Ponder what the Apostle John said in **1 John 4:19 (ESV)** <sup>19</sup> *We love because he first loved us.* As we go continually through the Bible chronologically, we will discover God's love for His creatures in every situation despite all the evil things we do.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 4:30 (ESV)** <sup>30</sup> *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.* When we love God, we should keep in the forefront of our hearts that our sin grieves our heavenly Father. The LORD who had created a beautiful world with humans to tend it regretted that he *made man on the earth.*

Each man and woman's eternal destiny is determined by the choices that each individual makes. In the days of Noah, God said: *I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land.* Unlike in the beginning when Elohim looked upon His creation and saw that it was very good, this time when God looked upon His creation He saw that those to whom He had given His own breath had corrupted His good world. Remember God looks at our hearts. He saw only one heart on His good earth that was willing to be obedient to Him; therefore, God showed favor to a righteous man's family.

**Read Genesis 6:8-22 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup> *But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.* <sup>9</sup> .... *Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.* <sup>10</sup> *And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.* <sup>11</sup> *Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence.* <sup>12</sup> *And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.* <sup>13</sup> *And God*

said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”<sup>14</sup> Make yourself an ark of gopher wood...<sup>15</sup> ...<sup>17</sup> For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.<sup>18</sup> But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.<sup>19</sup> And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female.<sup>20</sup> ...<sup>21</sup> Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them.”<sup>22</sup> Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

Noah's obedience in building a huge ark in a time when no one had seen or heard of a flood must have generated a lot of “jokes” at his expense. Noah’s actions warned of impending doom for the world and coming events proved that Noah was right! Jesus used this experience to warn people to be ready for His return. **Matthew 24:37-38 (ESV)**<sup>37</sup> *For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.*<sup>38</sup> *For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark.*

Noah's faith brought about the salvation of his whole family. Even from the earliest days of human history, we find pictures of the coming promised Redeemer. Noah’s family was saved because of Noah’s obedience – picturing how those of us who belong to God’s family are saved from eternal death through the obedience of Jesus on the cross.

The mention of Noah being righteous in verse 9 is the first mention of the word in the Bible. Later, it would be said of Abraham in **Genesis 15:6 (ESV)**<sup>6</sup> *And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.* Because Abraham believed God’s Word, he was credited by God for being righteous. It was the same situation with Noah – Noah believed God when God said a flood was coming. Noah’s righteousness was a gift from God Himself because of Noah’s display of genuine faith through obedience in building an ark!

It is easy to make the mistake of thinking that God selected Noah because he was a righteous man. And yet, in the New Testament, Paul said in **Romans 3:10 (ESV)**<sup>10</sup> *as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one.* We need to understand that it was not because of anything that Noah had” done” that God chose him. From the beginning of the world, our salvation always goes back to God’s grace. **Ephesians 2:8-9 (ESV)**<sup>8</sup> *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,*<sup>9</sup> *not a result of works, so that no one may boast.* The truth of the story of Noah is that God bestowed His grace on Noah not because Noah was “perfect” in the sense of being sinless but it is revealed that Noah *walked with God.* Noah walked a path of life that respected and honored God in the midst of a sinful world.

Even after the sinful world was all gone, Noah still had the same old sin nature that had come into the world through Adam. After the flood Noah began farming. We get a glimpse of Noah’s sin nature in **Genesis 9:21 (ESV)**<sup>21</sup> *He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent.* Some would like to say that Noah did not realize the effects of wine claiming that the Flood brought about a change in the earth's atmosphere that caused grape juice to ferment for the first time. Let’s accept what happened for what it was – Noah’s righteousness was not his own.

God's commissioned Noah's family – the first family to walk on the earth after the flood just like He had commissioned the first family in the Garden of Eden.

**Read Genesis 9:1-11 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. <sup>2</sup> The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. <sup>3</sup> Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. <sup>4</sup> But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. <sup>5</sup> ... <sup>8</sup> Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup> “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. <sup>11</sup> I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”*

God blessed Noah because of his faith. Noah was commanded to be fruitful and fill the earth just as his forefather, Adam, had been commanded to do. Prior to this time, there was no indication that animals feared man. We read in **Genesis 2:19 (ESV)** <sup>19</sup> *Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.*

Before the flood, man ate fruits and vegetables. Now, God was permitting man to eat meat. We cannot be sure why the change. Common sense tells us that after the flood, it would be some time before a harvest would be produced, and there would have been considerable reproduction among the animals during the time spent in the ark. Eating animals would be a natural way for Noah and his family to sustain life.

There is coming a time after Christ's return that man and the animal kingdom will once again be at peace. It is among the prophecies of Isaiah which is yet to be fulfilled. **Isaiah 11:8-9 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup> *The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. <sup>9</sup> They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.* This will occur when Christ is reigning supreme in the world, not man.

Blood is symbolic of life itself. Since blood represents the gift of life itself, the blood would symbolically go back to God. It is because of the shedding of Christ's blood on the cross that we receive life.

In verse 9 we read of another covenant known as the Noahic Covenant: *I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.*” This covenant is unconditional and it is commemorated by the rainbow every time we see it in the heavens. God is concerned about His creation more specifically God is concerned about YOU! **Psalms 150:6 (ESV)** <sup>6</sup> *Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!*