



READ: Selections from Genesis 6-9 (ESV)

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. And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 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." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD." (Genesis 6:5-8)

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. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch....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. 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.... Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him. (Genesis 6:13-14, 17-18, 22)

And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights....The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth....He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. (Genesis 7:12, 17, 23)

But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided...Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. (Genesis 8:1, 20-21)

"Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after 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." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. (Genesis 9:9, 11, 12-15)

ENTER THE STORY:

Do you remember a few days ago when we talked about how God created Adam? He knelt down on the ground, took a bunch of dirt and mud, packed it together, and formed it into a dirt-man. It was only when God breathed his own breath into Adam's nose that Adam came to life. He was alive because he had the breath of life in him.

In this story, God takes the breath of life away, but not because he stopped loving people. He never stops loving people. God's heart for his people never changes – it is always the heart of the people towards God that changes.

No – God was taking away the breath of life because wickedness was consuming the land.

Hatred, violence, pain, and suffering were everywhere. People were hurting each other and rebelling against God. As people strayed further and further from the perfection of the garden, it showed only one thing – there is no end to how far man's wickedness will go. It went so far that God's heart was grieved and he was sorry he had ever made man.

- God doesn't always unleash the full force of His anger and wrath towards sin, but this time He chose to act. The result was
- a world-wide flood to punish all of mankind and wipe the slate clean. God hit the reset button. He did this so we would
- know how serious it is to turn our backs on God and run toward the darkness, and so we would know how offensive our
- sin is before a perfect and holy God.

- But God did not totally destroy His creation. Noah found favor with God. *2 Chronicles 16:9* says, "For the eyes of the LORD
- range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him." Everywhere God looked,
- people were turning their backs on him, but not Noah. Noah didn't care what people thought of him. His heart was
- committed to God, and in the midst of one of his greatest acts of judgment, God showed his mercy by saving Noah, his
- family, and a selection of animals that would be part of a new world.

- In this story, we see God punish mankind for their sins and save only *ONE* family. Soon we will see God punish only *ONE*
- man to offer salvation for all mankind. And after Jesus finishes the work God gives Him to do, he will return to heaven –
- but he will not leave us without God's presence. He promises to send another helper; one who will guide us into all
- truth, convict of us our sin and remind us of the things Jesus told us. This helper is the Holy Spirit – who is the very
- breath of God.

-  **PRAY:** *Lord, we admit that it is difficult for us to understand your wrath and anger towards sin. We believe that you*
- *are good and always make the right decisions, so we put our full and complete trust in you. Forgive us, Lord, when our*
- *hearts go astray and we start loving the things of this world more than you. Thank you for your mercy and grace and*
- *sending us your Holy Spirit , the breath of life, who draws us close to you. Amen.*