

Lesson 3: A World Struggles with Sin

Introduction: Family Growth

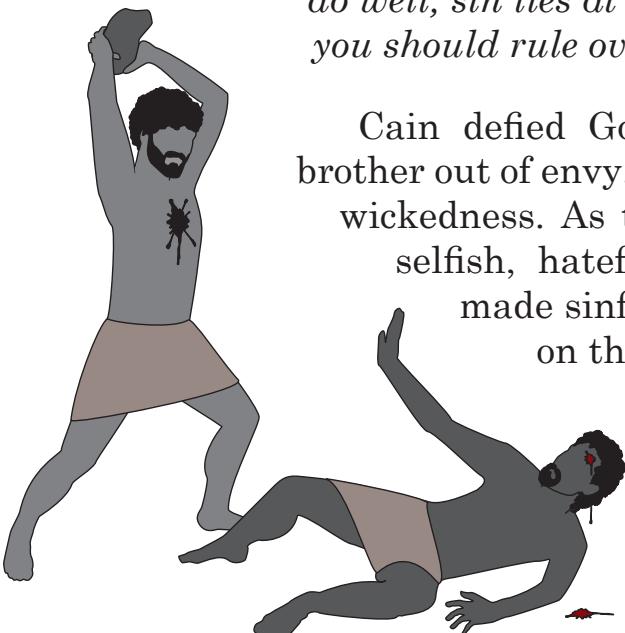
After being expelled from the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve began their new life in a harder and crueler world. Soon, two sons were born (Cain and Abel) and the family grew. Adam and his family tried to maintain a connection with God through the sacrifice of animals. The joy of their simple life with children would soon be spoiled by sin.



A Descent into Sin

Adam and Eve suffered heartbreak when their firstborn son, Cain, fell greatly into sin. God had warned Cain that sin would manipulate him, if he was not careful.

If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.¹



Cain defied God's call for peace when he murdered his brother out of envy. This act was the first in a trend toward total wickedness. As the world was populated, people grew more selfish, hateful, deceitful, murderous, and continuously made sinful choices. God looked with sadness and pity on the spoiled creation He loved. The Bible says:

Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.²

A Family of Faith

With each new generation, it appeared that the honor of bearing God's image was more and more tainted by sin. While all seemed lost, there was one family that still served God among all the wickedness of the world. This family group was made up of a man named Noah, his wife, three sons, and their wives. In a generation of evil, these eight souls were doing their best to live by faith and obey God.

¹ Genesis 4:7

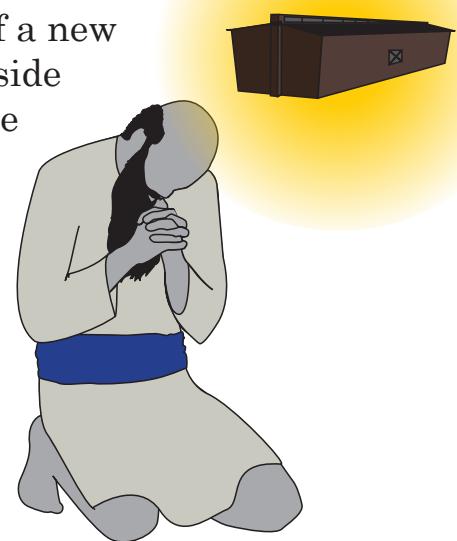
² Genesis 6:5

Discussion Questions:

- What do you know about Cain's envy? (Read about it in Genesis 4)
- How do you think Adam and Eve felt when they learned what Cain did?

God appreciated Noah's faith. He revealed a plan to Noah. God would send a great flood of water that would cover the whole earth. All of the wickedness would be destroyed, and God would start fresh again with Noah's family being the beginnings of a new human race. God would save Noah and his family inside of a giant boat called, "the ark."³ Noah was to build the ark. God would send animals of every species to the ark. Noah and his family would care for them. This may have seemed very strange for Noah. But even if he didn't understand why, Noah listened and obeyed. The Bible says that Noah's faith was great:

"and Noah did everything, just as God commanded him."⁴



We can learn from this kind of faith. Sometimes God calls us to do things that may seem strange to us. Our faith in God should inspire us to obey. *Faith is a demonstration of complete trust.*⁵ We should have complete trust and confidence in God's plan for our lives today!

A Global Flood

When Noah's family finished construction, God sent the animals to the ark. Once Noah and his family entered, God shut the door. Then, it started to rain. God also sent waters from the deep parts under the earth. Water began to cover all the land. Some people probably ran to the ark and beat on the door. We have no idea what Noah was thinking, but since Noah was human like us, we can imagine that he was sad to hear their cries. Outside of the ark, all were washed away.

It was because of sin that the flood came.⁶ It was because of sin that these people were crying out. It was because of sin that they were being washed away. How sad it must have been for God to destroy so much of His creation. We can learn a lesson from this: God is holy, and He cannot fellowship sin.⁷ We must make sure that we have the sin removed from our life. In our time, the only way to accomplish this is through an obedient faith in Jesus Christ.⁸

For almost a year, the flood covered the whole earth. Eventually the waters decreased and the new chance for mankind began. Noah prepared an animal sacrifice to honor God. God made a special covenant with all of mankind that He would never again destroy the whole world through a flood.⁹

³ See Christian Basics: Noah's Ark: A Type of the Church

⁴ Genesis 6:22

⁵ Hebrews 11:1

⁶ 1 Peter 1:16; Habakkuk 1:13; See Christian Basics: How Could a "Good God" Do That?

⁷ 1 John 1:5-7

⁸ Hebrews 1:1-4

⁹ Genesis 8:20-9:23

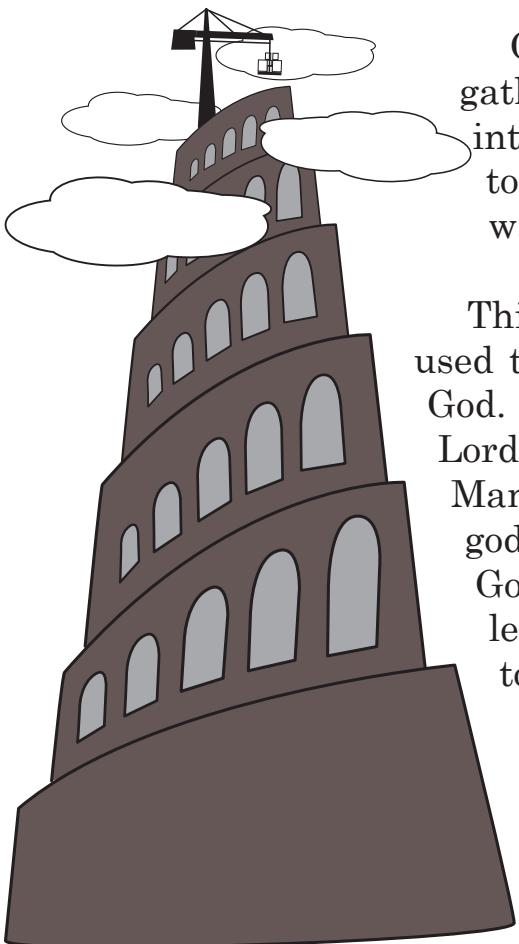
Discussion Questions:

- What is the difference between believing in God and having faith in God?
- How do you think Noah and his family felt after the flood was over?

Sin Spoils the New World

Now that wickedness was washed away, it may seem like all would be good again. However, Noah and his family still had the “sin problem,” too. Even though they were faithful and loved God, there were times when they struggled with sin. Genesis records a time when Noah became very drunk and naked. One of his sons greatly dishonored him. The consequences of sin brought curses on the family.¹⁰

Noah’s descendants began repopulating the earth. Great cities were built, and mankind accomplished great wonders. One reason that mankind worked together so well during this time was because of their common language.¹¹



One great city was called Babel. Here, many gathered to build a great tower that would reach up into the sky and into heaven. Their reason was not to give God glory, but to glorify themselves. They wanted to become equal with God.¹²

This was very much like the temptation that the devil used to deceive Eve! He told her that she could be like God. Humans struggle greatly for who will reign as the Lord in their life. We all must choose to serve someone.¹³ Many people choose to serve themselves. They are the god of their life, even if they don’t want to admit it. God wants us to submit to His loving will and let Him lead our lives.¹⁴ This allows Him to show us the way to redemption and eternal life.

In His mercy, God came down and put different languages into the minds and mouths of men.¹⁵ Suddenly, people could not talk to each other anymore. By confusing their languages, God halted this rapid decline of sin. He knew that the pride of Babel would have made the world only more wicked!

¹⁰ Genesis 9:18-23

¹³ Joshua 24:14-15

¹¹ Genesis 11:1

¹⁴ Romans 6:15-18

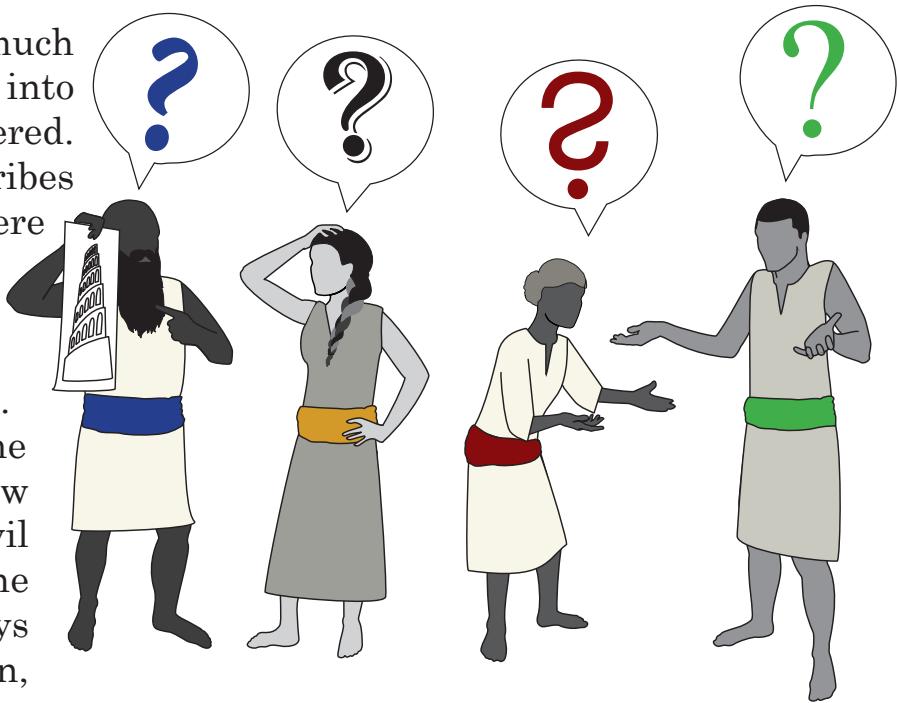
¹² Genesis 11:3

¹⁵ Genesis 11:9

Discussion Questions:

- What lessons can we learn from the sins of Noah?
- Why do you think humanity has always wanted to “equal with God”?

Because there was so much confusion, the people divided into smaller groups and scattered. This is how the different tribes and cultures of the world were established. If mankind had not been so proud, perhaps there would still be only one language to this day. Unfortunately, sin and the devil will not stand by and allow peace on this earth. The devil will always be jealous of the goodness of God, and will always seek to bring sin, destruction, and death to those who have been created in God's image.



In Review: The World Struggles with Sin

Adam and Eve watched with heartbreak as sin affected their children. As the human family grew, so did the sin problem. The world became so wicked that God, in His mercy, destroyed it with a global flood. Only faithful Noah and his family survived. However, sin infected this righteous family and continued to destroy the goodness of mankind. When many came together to build a tower in order to make themselves like God, the Divine Spirit confused their languages and scattered mankind across the Earth.

The Bible shows that the sin problem was not going away. Even faithful families like Noah's struggled with sin. The Genesis narrative demonstrates that something would have to be done to help restore the relationship between God and man. God revealed His plan, and after studying about the world's struggle with sin, perhaps this Bible verse will show once again how much God loves us:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."—John 3:16