

The Story so far.....



Part 2

We have already come across many characters in **The Story of God**, the one consistent character being God Himself. Keep looking for and seeking God as you read! Here are some of my notes on the story of Noah.

Noah

The story of Noah is **less about animals 2 by 2**, and pretty colours and more about **new creation to old creation**.

Gen 5:29 Lamech makes a **bold prediction** that, just as **through one man sin and curse came** into the world, so **through another one man there will be comfort**. Noah is a foreshadow of the **things to come in Christ**.

Gen 6:5-7 The 'God' qualities of God are revealed:

- **Ge6:5** God is a God who **sees everything** – internally or externally the Lord sees it all!
- **Gen6:6** God is God **who feels**. The Lord **was sorry** He made man on the earth!
- **Gen6:7** God sees, God feels, and **God is a God who acts/interacts/reacts**. The Lord **decides to destroy** man, beast and earth.

Is this the tragic end to The Story of God? No, there is a **glimmer of hope** found in the **grace and favour** of the Lord. The man **Noah finds favour** in the eyes of the Lord.

The **future of mankind** is one man and his family in a **home-made boat loaded with animals** against a **flood that covers the whole planet**.

In the natural sense the **odds for survival are pretty slim!** If you didn't know the end of the story would you **fancy Noah's chances?!** But, by the **grace of God**, this is a **secure and foolproof plan**, because it is **not by the works of man** but the **grace of God** that salvation comes.

In this story we can **learn something about God's judgement**. For the **unrighteous** God's judgement has **petrifying prospects**. However, for the **righteous** – those who have **found the grace of God** – God's judgement **actually brings renewing and freedom** from unrighteousness.

For Noah, who found favour in the eyes of the Lord, the **corruption and unrighteousness** that surrounded him was **about to be swallowed up**, and he was about to enter **into a renewed world**. **For Noah**, passing through God's judgement **brought freedom**. Freedom **from the effect and power of the sin** of the world around him. God's judgement brought freedom for Noah as the **old world passed away** and he entered a **new world**.

God's judgement is **not to be taken lightly**, but we need to know, **by the grace of God**, it brings **freedom** to those who have **found favour** in His sight. For those who **pass through God's judgement**, or whom **God's judgement passes over**, freedom comes! The **old passes away** and the **new comes**.

The NT speaks of this freedom. **2Cor5:17** 'If anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**. The **old has passed away**; behold, the **new has come**.'



The Story so far.....

Part 2

Gen7:17-24 Water comes **from every direction** and everything is **consumed**. Even the **mountains are covered** and **all 'flesh' dies**.

What is happening here?

If you look at it, it looks like a **complete reversal** of what God did in the **first week of creation (Gen1)**.

All that was made alive on **days 5 and 6, perishes**. The dry land that appeared when God **gathered the waters together** in one place is now **given back to the water and consumed**. Possibly **even the expanse** that was created separating the waters from the waters (Gen1:6) **disappears** as the rain water and sea water almost merge – **water literally comes from every direction**.

With Noah in the ark, the **world is returned** to the **watery chaos** that it started off as in **Gen1:2**. It is like the world has **been de-created**.

In the bible God's **judgements** are often spoken about in the **language of de-creation or deconstruction**. Take for example **Jer4:23** where Jeremiah is describing the **destruction of Judah**.

'**End of the world' language** is used through the prophets to talk about **God's judgements**. **Jesus** uses the same kind of language in **Matt24** where he uses '**end of the world' language** to describe a specific (and catastrophic for the Jews) event of judgement ie the **destruction of the temple**.

Conversely **creation language** is used in the bible when the prophets are speaking of **God's salvation**. (eg **2Cor5:17**)

Judgement = de-creation language.

Salvation = new creation language.

The **story of Noah** seems like the **end of the world!** Except the **future of creation**, like a **small seed of life**, is bobbing about in a boat in the midst of this **huge expanse of water**. The **seemingly fragile rescue**, redemption plan of God is **still in process**.

Gen 8:1-5 Here is the **turning point** where de-creation stops and **new creation is established**. And, very **similar to Gen1** where the Spirit (or wind/breath) of God hovered over the waters, God makes a **wind to blow over the earth and the waters subside**.

In **Gen 8** we see the **process of new creation** occurring with things happening again in the **same way and order** as in Gen 1.

- Gen8:1 – **Wind blows** over the earth – Gen 1:2
- Gen8:2 – **Fountains of the deep** and **windows of the heavens** were closed – Gen 1:7
- Gen8:3-5 – Waters recede and **land appears** – Gen 1:9
- Gen 8:7 – **Birds appear** first – Gen 1:20
- Gen 8:17 – **Animals and humans** appear – Gen 1:25

Gen8:15-19 God tells Noah to '**Go out from the ark**'. Noah takes a **step of faith into a new world** - Literally the **old has gone and the new has come**.

Remember that **salvation language is new creation language**.

Read **2Cor5:17** again in the **light of what has happened to Noah**.

- In Christ we have **left the old world**,



The Story so far.....

Part 2

- Judgement has **passed over us**
 - The **new world** has come
- Freedom** from sin has come

This is why **baptism is important**. In it we **become like Noah** by associating with the **death and resurrection of Jesus**. Moving from the **old to the new** – **New creation and freedom**. In the ark Noah **passed through God's judgement** on sin and came through the **other side alive!** In the ark Noah **passed through death** and came out **as if resurrected** into a new life

However, there is **one slight snag** in the story. Noah steps out of the ark into **a new creation, a new world**, but he is **still a sinful human**. **Everything** in the world has **changed**, but in many ways **nothing has changed**. There is **renewal** but there is also **continuity** from before. However, God remains **committed to mankind** despite his very obvious flaws (Gen9:21 just as **Adam and Eve** became **conscious of their nakedness** after they sinned, so **nakedness and indeed sin** are still real **issues for Noah** and mankind.)

The amazing thing about The Story of God is that it is **actually God, not man, who changes!!** God is the one who **makes a covenant with His creation** – a **one sided covenant** where the responsibilities are all on God. God **decrees 'Never Again'** shall the creation be destroyed by flood.

Gen8:13-9:17 Noah becomes the new Adam and as such is the **head of the family of the new world**. Noah is given the **same commission as Adam** – 'be **fruitful and multiply**.'

The **first thing Noah does is worship** with burnt offerings on an altar that he builds. The worship that Noah offers is **pleasing to the Lord**.

Compare this with **Eph4:17-5:2** – (Notice the **new creation language** of salvation as you read.)

Eph4:22 'Put off the **old self**' (self = man, in Greek)

Eph4:23 'Be **renewed** in the spirit of **your minds**'

Eph4:24 'To **put on the new self** (man), created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.'

Eph5:1-2 'Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a **fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.**'

The **worship of a 'love lifestyle'**, imitating **Christ**, is the **pleasing aroma of worship** we can offer to the Lord.

Gen 8:21 This is an insight into the heart of God

If you **compare Gen8:21 and 6:5** you will see that the very **thing that grieved** the Lord to the point of wiping everything out through judgement, is now the **thing that God chooses to graciously overlook**.

God chooses 'Never Again' to **curse the ground** because of man's sin.

God chooses 'Never Again' to **strike down every living creature**. This Never Again is **reiterated in 9:11 and 9:15** where the **convictions deep in the heart** of God are **spoken out by God to Noah** as **part of His covenant** with creation

This is a **remarkable passage of text** to take note of. Look carefully.

Man doesn't change – evil remains. But **God freely chooses to change His intent**. God has **pledged to preserve the world**. His 'Never Again' means that **grace reigns**.



The Story so far.....

Part 2

Gen9:1 Noah receives the same **blessing as Adam** – ‘**Be fruitful and multiply.**’

Again we see Noah is the **NEW ADAM!** It is truly **incredible that God still blesses Noah in this way!** Despite man’s inherent sin God **still loves people** and **still loves making people!** God has **not given up on man or mankind** – but **renews His commitment** to them desiring that they increase and bear fruit.

We need to **see the heart of God** hear and apply it to the way **we do church.** I’m sure if we are honest we would admit to thinking that church, from our point of view, would **work much better** if there **weren’t any people in it!** Yet the **heart of God** says that **people**, despite the mess they make, are **actually the whole point!**

Gen9:6 The **life of man is given a high price.** The **reason** God gives for the value of man’s life is that he is **made in the image of God.** If you shed a man’s blood, don’t forget, you are **shedding the blood of a man made in the image of God.** The **life of man is highly valued** because the very **identity of man is intrinsically wrapped up in the image of God.**

Gen9:9-11 God **establishes a covenant** with the new **mankind.** God establishes a covenant with **all creatures.** God establishes a covenant with **the earth.** (v11)

The idea of **Covenant** is something that **underpins God’s relationship with mankind.** The covenant that God makes here is very **short and simple** but has **universal implications** for all creation.

‘Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.’

The whole of creation – man, animals and earth - is now **bound in a contract with God.** And the amazing thing is that the **responsibility of the contract is all on God.** There are **no requirements from creation’s point of view** it is simply God’s commitment to work to keep the covenant. **This is good news for creation!** All **creation can rest** knowing that **God’s grace reigns,** His **plan of redemption** can completely unfold.

Gen9:12 The sign of the covenant with Noah is the rainbow. **The rainbow is sign that** de-creation has finished – it is a **sign of peace** between God and His creation.

Notice that the rainbow is **in the cloud.** The clouds are **the very place that judgement came from** but now the clouds are where the **sign of covenant comes from.**

Interestingly the rainbow is a **reminder for God not for us!** (v16) When the rainbow appears in the clouds **God will remember His everlasting covenant** between **Himself and all living creatures on the earth.**

Our salvation **rests on what God remembers and what He forgets.**

- Our salvation depends on the fact that by grace **He forgets our sins**
- Our salvation depends on the fact He **remembers His promises**

The rainbow is the image of a **bow upturned to the sky.** **Judgement is turned away.** Arrows are gone the bow is hung up to rest. The de-creation work is finished. When God looks on the **sinful world** He also **sees the bow to remind Himself** of His **covenant.**

The **next time we see the rainbow in scripture** is in the book of Revelation.

Rev4:2-3 The everlasting covenant of God remains to the end. The rainbow appears around the throne of God and shows it is a **throne of grace.** (Heb4:16)