

Judeo-Christian Flood Story

When the human race began to increase, with more and more daughters being born, the sons of God noticed that the daughters of men were beautiful. They looked them over and picked out wives for themselves.

Then God said, "I'm not going to breathe life into men and women endlessly. Eventually they're going to die; from now on they can expect a life span of 120 years."

This was back in the days (and also later) when there were giants in the land. The giants came from the union of the sons of God and the daughters of men. These were the mighty men of ancient lore, the famous ones. Noah and His Sons God saw that human evil was out of control. People thought evil, imagined evil - evil, evil, evil from morning to night.

God was sorry that he had made the human race in the first place; it broke his heart. God said, "I'll get rid of my ruined creation, make a clean sweep: people, animals, snakes and bugs, birds - the works. I'm sorry I made them."

But Noah was different. God liked what he saw in Noah. This is the story of Noah: Noah was a good man, a man of integrity in his community. Noah walked with God. Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

As far as God was concerned, the Earth had become a sewer; there was violence everywhere. God took one look and saw how bad it was, everyone corrupt and corrupting - life itself corrupt to the core.

God said to Noah, "It's all over. It's the end of the human race. The violence is everywhere; I'm making a clean sweep. "Build yourself a ship from teakwood. Make rooms in it. Coat it with pitch inside and out. Make it 450 feet long, seventy-five feet wide, and forty-five feet high. Build a roof for it and put in a window eighteen inches from the top; put in a door on the side of the ship; and make three decks, lower, middle, and upper. "I'm going to bring a flood on the Earth that will destroy everything alive under Heaven. Total destruction. "But I'm going to establish a covenant with you: You'll board the ship, and your sons, your wife and your sons' wives will come on board with you. You are also to take two of each living creature, a male and a female, on board the ship, to preserve their lives with you: two of every species of bird, mammal, and reptile - two of everything so as to preserve their lives along with yours. Also get all the food you'll need and store it up for you and them."

Noah did everything God commanded him to do.

Next God said to Noah, "Now board the ship, you and all your family - out of everyone in this generation, you're the righteous one."Take on board with you seven pairs of every clean animal, a male and a female; one pair of every unclean animal, a male and a female; and seven pairs of every kind of bird, a male and a female, to insure their survival on Earth. In just seven days I will dump rain on Earth for forty days and forty nights. I'll make a clean sweep of everything that I've made."

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Noah did everything God commanded him. Noah was 600 years old when the floodwaters covered the Earth. Noah and his wife and sons and their wives boarded the ship to escape the flood. Clean and unclean animals, birds, and all the crawling creatures came in pairs to Noah and to the ship, male and female, just as God had commanded Noah. In seven days the floodwaters came.

It was the six-hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month that it happened: all the underground springs erupted and all the windows of Heaven were thrown open. Rain poured for forty days and forty nights.

That's the day Noah and his sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, accompanied by his wife and his sons' wives, boarded the ship. And with them every kind of wild and domestic animal, right down to all the kinds of creatures that crawl and all kinds of birds and anything that flies. They came to Noah and to the ship in pairs - everything and anything that had the breath of life in it, male and female of every creature came just as God had commanded Noah. Then God shut the door behind him.

The flood continued forty days and the waters rose and lifted the ship high over the Earth. The waters kept rising, the flood deepened on the Earth, the ship floated on the surface. The flood got worse until all the highest mountains were covered - the high water mark reached twenty feet above the crest of the mountains.

Everything died. Anything that moved - dead. Birds, farm animals, wild animals, the entire teeming exuberance of life - dead. And all people - dead. Every living, breathing creature that lived on dry land died; he wiped out the whole works - people and animals, crawling creatures and flying birds, every last one of them, gone. Only Noah and his company on the ship lived. The floodwaters took over for 150 days.

Then God turned his attention to Noah and all the wild animals and farm animals with him on the ship. God caused the wind to blow and the floodwaters began to go down. The underground springs were shut off, the windows of Heaven closed and the rain quit. Inch by inch the water lowered. After 150 days the worst was over.

On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ship landed on the Ararat mountain range. The water kept going down until the tenth month. On the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains came into view.

After forty days Noah opened the window that he had built into the ship. He sent out a raven; it flew back and forth waiting for the floodwaters to dry up. Then he sent a dove to check on the flood conditions, but it couldn't even find a place to perch - water still covered the Earth. Noah reached out and caught it, brought it back into the ship. He waited seven more days and sent out the dove again. It came back in the evening with a freshly picked olive leaf in its beak. Noah knew that the flood was about finished. He waited another seven days and sent the dove out a third time. This time it didn't come back.

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In the six-hundred-first year of Noah's life, on the first day of the first month, the flood had dried up. Noah opened the hatch of the ship and saw dry ground. By the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the Earth was completely dry.

God spoke to Noah: "Leave the ship, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives. And take all the animals with you, the whole menagerie of birds and mammals and crawling creatures, all that brimming prodigality of life, so they can reproduce and flourish on the Earth." Noah disembarked with his sons and wife and his sons' wives. 19 Then all the animals, crawling creatures, birds - every creature on the face of the Earth - left the ship family by family.

Noah built an altar to God. He selected clean animals and birds from every species and offered them as burnt-offerings on the altar. God smelled the sweet fragrance and thought to himself, "I'll never again curse the ground because of people. I know they have this bent toward evil from an early age, but I'll never again kill off everything living as I've just done. For as long as Earth lasts, planting and harvest, cold and heat, Summer and winter, day and night will never stop."

Genesis 6-8 from the <i>Message</i> – a translation of the Bible by Eugene Peterson
