

The Primeval History

Study Guide

LESSON
FOUR

THE RIGHT DIRECTION



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STUDY GUIDE

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How to use this lesson and study guide

- **Before you watch the lesson**
 - **Preparation** — Complete any recommended readings.
 - **Schedule breaks** — Review the outline and the time codes to determine where to begin and end your viewing session. IIM lessons are densely packed with information, so you may want to schedule breaks. Breaks should be scheduled at major divisions in the outline.
- **While you are watching the lesson**
 - **Notes** — Use the Notes section to follow the lesson and to take additional notes. Many of the main ideas are already summarized in the notes, but make sure to supplement these with your own notes. You should also add supporting details that will help you to remember, describe, and defend the main ideas.
 - **Pause/replay portions of the lesson** — You may find it helpful to pause or replay the video at certain points in order to write additional notes, review difficult concepts, or discuss points of interest.
- **After you watch the lesson**
 - **Review Questions** — Questions on the basic content of the lesson. Answer review questions in the space provided. Review questions should be completed individually rather than in a group.
 - **Application Questions** — Questions relating the content of the lesson to Christian living, theology, and ministry. Application questions are appropriate for written assignments or as topics for group discussions. For written assignments, it is recommended that answers not exceed one page in length.

Preparation

- Read Genesis 6:9–11:9.

Outline

- I. Introduction (0:26)
- II. Literary Structure (2:44)
 - A. Flood of Deliverance (3:49)
 - 1. Initial Covenant (4:17)
 - 2. Enduring Covenant (5:56)
 - 3. Escape from Water (7:42)
 - 4. Exit to Dry Land (8:24)
 - 5. Divine Remembrance (8:54)
 - B. New Order (10:21)
 - 1. Sons of Noah (11:15)
 - 2. Defeat of Babel (14:31)
- III. Original Meaning (16:53)
 - A. Flood of Deliverance (18:05)
 - 1. Connections (18:27)
 - 2. Implications (23:57)
 - B. Noah's Sons (25:04)
 - 1. Canaan (25:39)
 - 2. Conflict (27:40)
 - 3. Implications (38:37)
- IV. Modern Application (41:49)
 - A. Inauguration (43:01)
 - 1. Covenant (43:34)
 - 2. Victory (45:30)
 - B. Continuation (46:59)
 - 1. Baptism (47:46)
 - 2. Spiritual Warfare (50:38)
 - C. Consummation (52:41)
 - 1. Final Cataclysm (53:07)
 - 2. Final Battle (55:58)
- V. Conclusion (58:16)

Notes

I. Introduction

II. Literary Structure

A. Flood of Deliverance (Gen. 6:9–9:17)

These chapters form a symmetrical five-step drama.

1. Initial Covenant (Gen. 6:9-22)

God spoke to Noah and revealed why he planned to destroy the human race.

God planned to start over again by delivering Noah and his family.

2. Enduring Covenant (Gen. 8:20–9:17)

God entered into a second covenant with Noah at the end of the flood narrative (see Gen. 9:11-15).

Noah was the mediator of a covenant that extended to all future generations.

3. Escape from Water (Gen. 7:1-16)

Noah prepared the ark and brought animals of every kind into it.

4. Exit to Dry Land (Gen. 8:6-19)

A dramatic counterpoint to the second step.

5. Divine Remembrance (Gen. 7:17–8:5)

The center or turning point of this narrative.

Moses' chief concern was to show that through Noah God brought humanity into a world of tremendous blessings.

B. New Order (Gen. 9:18–11:9)

1. Sons of Noah (Gen. 9:18–10:32)

Genesis 9:20-29 sets forth distinctions among the sons.

Genesis 10:1-32 describes the distribution of Noah's sons and their descendants:

- Japhethites — North, Northeast, and northwest of Canaan
- Hamites — Northern Africa
- Canaan, son of Ham — land of Canaan, Israel's Promised Land
- Shemites — Arabian Peninsula

2. Defeat of Babel (11:1-9)

The story of the tower of Babel divides into five symmetrical dramatic steps.

- a. Humanity Unified**
- b. Humanity's Plan**
- c. Divine Investigation**
- d. Divine Plan**
- e. Humanity Dispersed**

The account of Noah's sons:

- Shows that the new order includes complex interactions among different groups of human beings.

- Includes more defiance of God, as well as God's eventual defeat of those who defy him.

III. Original Meaning

Moses wrote:

- To report the past
- To guide Israel in his own day

A. Flood of Deliverance

1. Connections

Moses established connections between the flood and his own day by pointing to connections himself and Noah.

a. Violence

The work of both Noah and of Moses was to deliver from violence.

b. Ark

Both Moses and Noah had been delivered from watery deaths by means of an ark, or *tevah*.

c. Covenants

- Noah entered into covenant with God on behalf of the entire human race.

- Moses led the people of Israel into a special covenant with Yahweh.

d. Water Judgment

- Noah — Flood

- Moses — crossing of Red Sea

e. Wind

God sent wind to drive back the waters in both the days of Noah and the days of Moses.

f. Animals

- Noah brought animals to the new world of his day.
- Moses brought animals into the Promised Land.

g. Divine Remembrance

- God acted on Noah's behalf because he remembered him
- God delivered Israel from Egypt because he remembered his covenant.

h. Blessing of Nature

- Noah — a lasting and stable natural order that would benefit humanity.
- Moses — in the land of promise, nature would remain constant and beneficial.

2. Implications

God had used Noah:

- To redeem humanity from horrible primeval violence
- To re-establish the human race in a new world of great blessings.

God had chosen Moses:

- To deliver Israel from the horrible violence of Egypt.
- To bring Israel into the new world of the Promised Land.

Moses' design for Israel was so similar to the flood of Noah that no one could rightly deny it had come from the hand of God.

B. Noah's Sons

1. Canaan

Canaan, the son of Ham, received Noah's curse. Ham has little significance apart from the fact that he was the father of Canaan.

2. Conflict

Moses stressed the certainty of conflict by repeating Canaan's curse three times.

Canaan would become subservient to Japheth only to the extent that Japheth joined forces with Shem.

The future of humanity would entail a dramatic conflict in which the descendants of Shem would subjugate the descendants of Canaan.

3. Implications

The Canaanites had settled in the region that stretched north to south from Sidon to Gaza, and to the region of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Moses' account of the sons of Noah was designed to give a background to Moses' call to Israel to move forward into the conquest.

Babel later came to be known as Babylon.

Moses displayed his grandeur of God's victory by contrasting:

- the outlooks of the inhabitants of Babel
- his own true outlook

The term "scatter" has the very negative connotation of utter defeat in battle.

Astounding victory for Yahweh:

- Called his heavenly host to war against Babel.
- Chased away its fleeing inhabitants across the face of the earth.

The inhabitants of Babel wanted to build a tower that reached to the heavens. Yahweh had to come down from the heights of heaven just to see the city.

Moses reviled the ancient city by saying that the real reason it was called “Babel” was because *balal* (confusion) took place there.

Yahweh had made a joke out of the greatest city of primeval history.

The Israelites thought that the walls surrounding the cities of Canaan reached to heaven, just like those who built the tower of Babel thought that their ziggurat reached heaven.

IV. Modern Application

A. Inauguration

Christ accomplished salvation in ways that corresponded to the themes in Genesis 6:9–11:9.

1. Covenant

Christ delivered his people from God's judgment by means of the new covenant.

Christ came to earth when God's people were under divine judgment.

2. Victory

The new order of the world required Israel to move forward into the conquest of Canaan, and he assured them of a great victory.

Jesus was victorious over the spiritual forces of darkness in his death and resurrection.

B. Continuation

The time between the first and second comings of Christ relate to Genesis 6:9–11:9.

1. Baptism

The flood waters in Noah's day symbolized or anticipated the water of Christian baptism (1 Pet. 3:20-22).

2. Spiritual Warfare

The water of Noah's flood delivered humanity into a holy war.

Christians today are at war with evil.

C. Consummation

New Testament writers described the return of Christ in glory as the final cataclysm and the final battle.

1. Final Cataclysm

Noah's flood proves Jesus will return (2 Pet. 3:3-7).

The present heavens and earth will come to an end at the return of Christ in judgment.

When Christ returns in glory, there will be a cataclysm that utterly disrupts the world as we know it.

2. Final Battle

The return of Christ will be a worldwide battle in which Christ himself appears and destroys all of his enemies (Rev. 19:11-16).

V. Conclusion

3. Describe the connections between the flood of Noah's day and the experience of Israel in Moses' day. What implications did Moses intend his audience to draw from these connections?

4. What did Moses want his audience to learn from the account of Noah's sons in Genesis 9:18–10:32?

Application Questions

1. The theme of deliverance can be traced through Noah's flood, the Israelite's journey to the Promised Land and the inauguration of the kingdom. In what ways has God delivered you? How the theme of God's deliverance provide hope for you and the world today?
2. Moses about these chapters to motivate the Israelites to move forward in battle. How do can we apply this same motivation to spiritual warfare? What other battles has God placed before you?
3. How were the people of Babel confused about the ways of God? Give an example of how modern Christians depend on their own efforts and security instead of relying God.
4. In what ways do modern people scoff and doubt Christ's return? How does remembering Noah's flood remind us of Christ's forthcoming cataclysmic intervention?
5. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?