



# HOME GROUPS

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**Series:** Origins - Week 4 - June 26, 2022

**Scripture:** Genesis 6:9-9:29 NIV11

*Community is shaped by the conversations we share. These questions are just one tool you might use to help host meaningful engagement with the themes emerging from this week's teaching.*

Make sure to check the "Journal and Talk" section at the end. You may find that it is the only thing you'll do with your group today.

**Message Summary:** Bobbi walks us through the story of Noah and the flood, following the narrative arch in Genesis of creation to de-creation and back to creation, situating our own stories in the cycle.

**Connect:** Are you excited for the upcoming long weekend? What are your plans? Do you celebrate Canada Day? Why/why not?

## Discrepancies

As we begin to look at the ancient story of Noah and the flood, it is important to note that, first, there are at least two similar but different versions of this story that floated around the Hebrew community, and, second, that this is not the only ancient flood myth from the ancient world. These old stories, intertwined like a braid, are altered and combined in Genesis to meet new needs. Noah is a new flood hero in a world where God is not fighting against other gods, but in control, de-creating and recreating a world thrown into chaos as a result of human corruption, not warring deities. This story, much like the previous stories we have looked at in Genesis, is creating a new sense of identity for us as humans made in the image of a God who makes all things new.

- If you grew up in church, what were you taught about the story of Noah?
- What images come to mind when you think of this story, and what parts of this story have made their way into popular culture? Why do you think these versions exist in our popular imagination? Are they true?

## De-Creation

As the world collapses under the flood, the chaos we saw being crafted into new order in Genesis 1 returns with a vengeance. Where in Genesis 1 there was creation, Genesis 7 paints a picture of de-creation, of death, of a collective gasp as the breath of life is snuffed out. But we are reminded in the picture of the ark floating atop the chaotic flood waters that de-creation can be part of the creation cycle. Creation falls into de-creation to make way for something new. This too is part of the origin story Genesis hands to us. When life falls apart, when everything feels as though it is coming apart at the seams, we are reminded that de-creation is part of the cycle. But as we see in the story of Noah, this is not an ending. It is a beginning.

- When have you experienced a moment of de-creation in your own story? What new beginning was on the horizon?

## What Does It Mean for God to Remember?

Chapter 8 is the turning point of this narrative, where creation is restored, Noah makes an offering of thanks, the waters recede, and God reflects and remembers. This remembering is a direct action of goodness, promise and peace towards a world we as readers may have assumed was going to be forgotten to chaos. The ordering wind sweeps away the chaotic waters, and the branch of a new tree signals life, blessing, regeneration, and abundance.

This story can absolutely speak to us, even if we were not its original audience. These themes of corruption and destruction, waiting out a terrible storm, and living to see another day in a world being reborn transcend time and space. It's your story if you've survived something horrific.

It's your story when you live from the very best part of yourself that remembers and acts with justice in a world that forgets to be fair. It's your story of honouring life and saying "thank you" for every gift.

- What does it mean to you to know God is a god of benevolent remembering?
- How do we honour God's remembering in our own lives, saying thank you for the gifts we are given?

## A Promise is a Promise

The flood narrative ends with the same picture of human corruption as it began. Noah is humiliated by his son and curses not only him, but all of his son's descendants as well, resulting eventually in the destruction of an entire people, the Canaanites. The end of this story is marked by fear and dread, and the struggle to survive after the flood. But God does not send the world into another cycle of de-creation. In fact, God promises to always be for us and marks this promise with the sign of the rainbow. The rainbow is an image of a tool of war, the warrior's fighting bow, unstrung and retired. God makes a promise of love and patience, to abide with creation no matter what.

- Our world is as full of fear and dread as Noah's after the flood, and we are just as capable of destroying one another as Noah was. What does it look like for God to keep this rainbow promise today in our world? How is God's abiding love and patience demonstrated to us now?

## **BENEDICTION:**

*Loving God,  
We take a moment with our own hearts  
To listen for a word, phrase, or idea that we'd like to carry  
with us this week.  
There's so much of our origin in these origin stories.  
It's a gift to have them with us.*

*As we go today, we pray –  
Spirit of the living God, present with us now, enter the places  
of our pain, our anxiety, or distrust and heal us of all that  
harms us. Amen.*

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## **Journal and Talk**

A new section this year that works well if you meet online.  
Maybe this will be the only exercise you do with your group.  
Keep your meeting time to an hour to avoid Zoom fatigue.  
Do a quick check-in/connect - 2 min per person.  
Invite your group to journal for 10-15 minutes in response to  
the prompts. Use the rest of your time listening to and  
interacting with each other's responses, as much as people  
are comfortable sharing.  
Encourage your group to see this time as a way to tell and  
invite others into each other's stories. Protect this time from  
becoming a "let's fix you" space; it's all about active and  
gentle listening.

*Journalling prompts:*

- When have you experienced a moment of de-creation in your own story? What new beginning was on the horizon?

- Our world is as full of fear and dread as Noah's after the flood, and we are just as capable of destroying one another as Noah was. What does it look like for God to keep this rainbow promise today in our world? How is God's abiding love and patience demonstrated to us now?