

## SESSION 47: A WEEK FROM THE END

Genesis 7:1-5

October 27, 2024

### **PREFACE**

One aspect of the Bible that has always fascinated me is the amount of repetition used on its pages. I realize that much of this is cultural, and just reflects the manner in which people wrote at the time. ❑ Yet to my eyes and ears this repetition seems to be, as the apostle Paul describes the unauthorized speaking of tongues in First Corinthians, like “a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.” *Just tell me once; the rest is just irritating noise.*

Certain scholars are convinced that some of this repetition is obvious evidence of a different author, as we discussed earlier in this study. Turn back to Chapter One of Genesis.

In Chapter One the author itemizes in almost bullet-point form the systematic, day-by-day progression of Creation by Elohim. Then, as we turn the page to Chapter Two, beginning in v4 the chronological pointer appears to reset to Day One, with certain events reiterated; along with this, “Elohim” is replaced by “Yahweh God.” Some cite this as evidence that a different person is now penning the words, but in this class I have made the case, instead, for a logical change in emphasis, with an expansion—a “fleshing-out,” as it were—of Creation details in Chapter Two.

Thus, while in Chapter One it is succinctly stated in v27 that “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them,” in Chapter Two this process is *literally* “fleshed-out” with more details about the literal forming of the first man and woman in v7 and vv21-25. ❑ It doesn’t require a second author to do this, just one author adding more details to the narrative. And the one author, Moses, shows determined purpose in how he identifies God, as H. C. Leupold explains,

On the matter of the use of the divine names in this story observe how much is to be said in support of our position... Note the very good sense that pervades the whole situation when these basic facts are kept in mind: when God’s gracious dealings with Noah and with mankind are to be considered, then the name *Yahweh* is used;

Sailhamer: “Andersen has shown that much of the repetition in the Flood account stems from the writer’s use of a type of sentence he has called ‘epic repetition’ and ‘chiastic coordination’.”

It is our position in this class that Moses was the author of not just the entirety of Genesis, but of the five-volume Pentateuch.

but when God is thought of as the Almighty Ruler of heaven and earth, whose particular province it is to judge men and to determine their fate, this God whom men should reverently fear is called *Elohîm*.

The pattern that we see in Chapters One and Two is somewhat repeated in Chapter Six and Seven in the Flood narrative. We have already been told in Chapter Six that Noah and his wife will be accompanied by their three sons and their wives (v18); we have already been told the methods of acquisition and numbers of the animals that will be housed in the ark. But now, in Chapter Seven, these will be reiterated and, in some instances, expanded with more details. And, in true biblical fashion, some of those details will be repeated and expanded even *within* Chapter Seven (see v6 and v11).

### **Read Genesis 7:1-5.**

As the curtain opens on Chapter Seven, we are one week out from the beginning of the rains. The ark is completed, and we can assume that all or most of the supplies and foodstuffs have been stored inside. From the length of time it took to build the ark and collect the animals, we can safely assume that they have been corralled in pens *outside* the ark until now. 📌 This would only follow, for there was much sorting out to do (as v2 suggests), and the animals would have either arrived on their own or been searched out by Noah over a period of years.

**v1**

**Then Yahweh said to Noah, “Enter the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this generation.”**

Leupold makes a good point here: “Of God’s mode of speaking to Noah we know nothing. Noah knew that God spoke.” And that should suffice for us; in whatever form God communicated with Noah, Noah got the message.

Yahweh declares openly that He sees Noah “alone” to be righteous. The text does not give us explicit information regarding the spiritual status of his wife, his sons, and his daughters-in-law.

I have heretofore given John Huston credit where deserved when his imagery seems to faithfully illustrate reality, but I don't offer him plaudits for how he imagines the animals just ambling in from over the horizon, the various species all mixed up, and all arriving in the vicinity at the last minute upon the completion of the ark, just as the humans are entering and the thunderclouds already forming.

I don't want to over-think this, but I believe the evidence thus far would show that were his children not also righteous, learning faith and righteousness from their patriarch, they would not have been included in the ark's passengers, for they would not have been required to continue the human race. Noah's wife, however, is in a different category. The sons are in the *next* generation—if we hold to a narrow interpretation of “generation” (*dor*)—while Noah's wife is in his. Would Yahweh God have accepted her, even if *not* righteous, just for the sake of continuing the species?

Leupold seems to offer a pretty good perspective on this—a perspective which has application to fathers and families even today.

*Leupold:* The blessing that may grow out of the godly conduct of a consecrated individual may, indeed, redound to the good of others who are associated with him and be much greater, than what these persons would have received apart from their associations with such an individual. See how Israel is blessed both for Abraham's and for David's sake. However, prominent as such blessings are, we have every reason to assume that the father's influence affected the personal attitude of the members of his household to Yahweh, so that of their own volition they chose to walk in the godly patriarch's footsteps. Yet had Noah not stood firm, they themselves might soon have wavered. Therefore Yahweh ascribes righteousness to Noah alone in this his generation.

I believe that the influence of Christian fathers and mothers on their children goes well beyond just teaching them the habits and mechanics of faith. There is that, but there is more. It is possible the parents' actual faith may be a critical component in the child's. Why else would it be so easy for the teenager to rebel after leaving home, when suddenly introduced to opposing “faiths” absent the influence of the parents? Why, after being born and raised in the church and dwelling in a household of faith, did *I* rebel so easily once I was in the service and alienated from that home environment? Because I was not just surrounded by tempting new opportunities—but that I was now severed from that *environment* of faith within which I had been raised. I no longer rose each morning to the Christian warmth and reality established by and emanating from my parents.

Thus with Scripture's emphasis on Noah the individual and his personal righteousness, I believe we can safely assume that his example and witness was critical to the righteousness in the lives of his family members.

### vv2-3

**"You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female; and of the animals that are not clean, two, a male and his female; also of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, to keep their seed alive on the face of all the earth."**

The consensus among interpreters seems to be that this sudden and unanticipated mention of "clean" (ceremonially clean) animals reveals that God's laws regarding such things were either

- assumed by man from his earliest days from the behavioral nature of the clean and unclean animals (cattle = clean, creepy spiders = unclean); or
- though unrecorded or less-formally commanded by God, this distinction was somehow made clear to man by Him—such knowledge evidenced behind Abel's righteous sacrifice (4:4). That is, God's "Law" was established from the outset of Creation, but not formalized for His chosen people in written form until the establishment of tabernacle/temple sacrifice, and after Israel is a settled, self-governing people.

Opinions vary for *why* Noah is to take in more clean than unclean animals. ❑ I cannot agree with those who say the reason is for the family to have clean animals to eat during the deluge. Since his creation, man has been vegetarian.

### **Read Genesis 1:29-30.**

Man will not have Yahweh's permission to become a carnivore until He establishes His new covenant with him *after* the Flood.

### **Read Genesis 9:1-3.**

There may be a two-fold reason for securing more of the clean animals: first, for sacrifices and second, so that once man is granted permission to eat meat, the numbers of clean animals on the earth will have a head start at propagation.

### **"by seven seven"**

The Hebrew text repeats the word translated "seven" (SHEH-bah). Some take this to mean seven *each*—three pairs with a leftover male, presumably to be used for sacrifice. Others take this to mean seven *pairs*—as do the ESV and newer NIV (YLT as well). The problem with the former is that the emphasis in these references has and will be on "pairs": male and female. In fact within v2 the phrase is, "by sevens, a male and his female." One male leftover breaks the pattern. So while this is no critical decision requiring resolution, I lean toward the latter: seven pairs of clean animals.

**“For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made.”**

Here is the sovereign Creator and Lord of the universe declaring with a certainty only He possesses that Noah has only seven more days to get all his baggage and cargo and food stored before the rains begin. Time to double-check all the caulking between the planks and the integrity of the roof.

The number forty is a favorite of the Lord God as a duration for testing and/or trial which ends with evil overthrown and good victorious. When the spies of Israel all returned from Canaan with a fatalistic report (with the exceptions of Caleb and Joshua) Yahweh declared that that generation of Israel would be penalized, with time given to sift out those who had rejected His promise of land for the nation.

**Read Numbers 14:32-35.**

And, of course, this was the duration of His own Son’s trial in the wilderness before His ministry.

**Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.  
(Matthew 4:1-2)**

Now He declares that the rain and other floodgates will pour water upon the earth for “forty days and forty nights”; all evil—indeed, “every living thing”—will be “blot[ted] out” by the deluge. The Hebrew *maha* (maw-KAH) means to utterly wipe away, abolish.

It is risky business to anthropomorphize our God; He is, after all, spirit-kind (John 4:24) and beyond our ken. At the same time, however, God’s word repeatedly does humanize the ways of God for our benefit, so that we might understand Him better.

So I offer the following food for thought in the spirit of the apostle Paul, when, writing to the Corinthians, he said, “I have no command of the Lord, but I give an opinion... (1 Corinthians 7:25).”

I am struck by how Yahweh closes v4. He could have made the same point by stopping at “...I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing”—as He did in Genesis 6:17.

**“As for Me, behold I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall breathe its last.”**

Here, however, He adds “...that I have made.”

When we read the Creation epic as recorded in Chapters One and Two it is explicitly clear that in God’s eyes, in His creative intent, man is, as it were, a sanctified (i.e., set apart), component of Creation. He is created as the earth’s highest form of life, and given dominion over all other species (Genesis 1:26); he alone out of all other living beings will be made “in the image of God.”

We can all agree that, as He is omniscient and omnipotent, Yahweh God has set these events in place long before they were enacted. From Genesis to the Revelation it was all worked out beforehand; God is never surprised. Even so, His word repeatedly describes Him with human emotions, as in Genesis 6:5-6.

#### **Read Genesis 6:5-6.**

Interestingly here in the context of these expressed emotions, in the next verse, Yahweh adds the thought He does in 7:4.

**And Yahweh said, “I will blot out man **whom I have created** from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I regret that I have made them.” (Genesis 6:7; emphasis added)**

Because of this, I hear sadness in v4. As we understand our God, He knew all along that mankind would turn evil, and that this watery judgment would be necessary. Nonetheless, when it comes right down to it, when it comes to actually turning the spigots to release the flood, there is a sad regret in His “soul” over having to destroy the most special, the most unique part of His Creation.

Being an all-knowing, all-powerful God and King of the universe does not preclude His having emotions of sadness and regret over the proclivity of flesh toward sin, toward evil.

*I made them, He says with sorrow in His heart, I made them, and now I have to destroy them.*

Verse 5 closes the paragraph with the confirmation that, once again, Noah will obey His Lord, and do what He commands.

# SESSION 47

A Week from the End  
Genesis 7:1-5

## Elohim (“God”) vs. Yahweh

*Leupold:* On the matter of the use of the divine names in this story observe how much is to be said in support of our position... Note the very good sense that pervades the whole situation when these basic facts are kept in mind: when God’s gracious dealings with Noah and with mankind are to be considered, then the name *Yahweh* is used; but when God is thought of as the Almighty Ruler of heaven and earth, whose particular province it is to judge men and to determine their fate, this God whom men should reverently fear is called *Elohim*.

## A Week Out

As the curtain opens on Chapter Seven, we are one week out from the beginning of the rains. The ark is completed, and we can assume that all or most of the supplies and foodstuffs have been stored inside. From the length of time it took to build the ark and collect the animals, we can safely assume that they have been corralled in pens *outside* the ark until now. This would only follow, for there was much sorting out to do (as v2 suggests), and the animals would have either arrived on their own or been searched out by Noah over a period of years.

## A Righteous Head

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## “Clean” Animals

Though unrecorded or less-formally commanded by God, this distinction was somehow made clear to man by Him—such knowledge evidenced behind Abel’s righteous sacrifice (4:4). That is, God’s “Law” was established from the outset of Creation, but not formalized for His chosen people in written form until the establishment of tabernacle/temple sacrifice, and after Israel is a settled, self-governing people.

## Vegetarian or Carnivore?

Since his creation, man has been vegetarian (**Genesis 1:29-30**). Man will not have Yahweh’s permission to become a carnivore until He establishes His new covenant with him after the Flood (**Genesis 9:1-3**).

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