

# ESSENTIAL GUIDE

—— to the ——

# GENEALOGY OF JESUS



## NOAH, A RIGHTEOUS AND BLAMELESS MAN

When evil that corrupts and destroys earns its proper reward, its own destruction, we should not be surprised. What is truly surprising is

*“Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God.”*  
—Genesis 6:9

that there was one man who “found favor [grace] in the eyes of the LORD” (Gen. 6:8). That man was Noah. As we will see in Noah’s story, grace limits punishment and opens possibilities where none seem to exist.

Noah is described as a righteous man. In the Old Testament, the term “righteous” is commonly applied to a person who does what is lawful and right. It is often used to contrast a person’s righteousness against another’s wickedness (for example, Ezek. 18:5–9). Noah is also described as being “blameless,” a word not commonly used for humans. It is used to describe animals used in sacrifices (Lev. 1:3, 10). Psalm 15 affirms that only the blameless will dwell on God’s holy hill (Ps. 15:1–2). The blameless are described as those people who stay away from iniquity (2 Sam. 22:24; Ezek. 28:15) and walk in the law of God (Ps. 119:1).

These descriptions do not mean that Noah had never sinned or was a perfect human being; rather, they mean that he was righteous and blameless in contrast to the wickedness all around him. Noah stood apart from everyone at that time. So, what made Noah remarkable was his intimate relationship with God. Scripture places Noah in a special category because “he walked faithfully with God” (Gen. 6:9). In the Old Testament, only a few individuals are described this way. Enoch is described as “walked faithfully with God” (5:22, 24). Abraham, Isaac, and some of the kings of Israel “walked before” God (2 Kings 20:3; see also Gen. 17:1; 48:15). Walking with God is a reminder of the intimacy that humans had with God in the garden of Eden, where God walked “in the cool of the day” (3:8).







Noah and his family  
building the ark

Noah's righteousness and blamelessness was a light in the midst of the darkness, a light that shone upon the corruption and violence on earth. That light is a reminder of the original and still existing goodness and beauty and blessedness of God's creation. This is one reason God created humans—to be reminders of his goodness. The apostle Paul urges Christians to "Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.' Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life" (Phil. 2:14–16).

## THE FLOOD

God's grace and love are always manifested concretely. In Noah's case, God's grace takes the shape of an ark. Punishment for wickedness was coming, but Noah and his family would be spared. God instructs Noah to build an ark to save him, his family, and the animals from the floodwaters to come. Noah, being a righteous man, "did everything just as God commanded him" (Gen. 6:22; and notice the repetition in 7:5).

As a response to the corruption and the violence of humans in the world, God cleansed his creation with a cataclysmic event: the flood. To understand the reason and the nature of the flood, we must remember the way God creates. In creation, God ordered the universe day by day, and set each thing in its place. On the second day, God created an expanse, or

*"And rain fell on  
the earth forty  
days and forty  
nights. . . . Every  
living thing on the  
face of the earth  
was wiped out.  
. . . Only Noah  
was left, and  
those with him  
in the ark."  
—Genesis 7:12, 23*

firmament, that separated the waters from above and the waters from below (1:6–7). That separation ordered and limited the destructive power of the primordial waters. God the King ordered his kingdom to bring order and life.

In the flood, “all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened” (7:11). The separation that brought order and life to creation was now undone. The waters above and the waters below were brought together to destroy order and life. In other words, God’s punishment for humanity’s corruption and violence was an undoing of creation. As the flood shows, sin produces disorder and death, and not just at an individual level but also at a cosmic level. The destruction was terrifying: “Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out” (Gen. 7:23).

## A NEW BEGINNING

The flood lasted for 150 days. At this point in the story, Noah and his family had spent nearly five months in the ark. But then a new beginning is signaled: “God remembered Noah” (Gen. 8:1). In the Scriptures, the expression “God remembered” is usually very good news:

- ✿ God remembered Abraham (Gen. 19:29).
- ✿ God remembered Rachel and gave her a son (Gen. 30:22).
- ✿ God remembered his covenant and redeemed Israel (Ex. 2:24).
- ✿ God remembered his covenant and promises to save his people in Mary’s song (Luke 1:54) and in Zechariah’s song (Luke 1:72).

Knowing that God remembers, then, is a mark of hope and new possibilities. Once the flood had fulfilled its purpose of cleansing the world, the Lord subdued again the powers of the flood. When the waters receded, the world was again ordered and ready for a





*The subsiding of the waters of the flood*

new beginning. The dove Noah sent out through a window of the ark returned, eventually, with an olive leaf in its beak—a sure sign that life had returned.

When Noah and his family and all the animals came out of the ark, Noah built an altar and offered burnt offerings (Gen. 8:20). In the Old Testament, burnt offerings (*'olah*) referred to sacrifices in which the

entire animal was consumed. The Hebrew name *'olah* is connected to the verb for “ascending, going up,” probably an allusion to the smoke of the consumed sacrifice that ascended to God. This sacrifice was used in daily offerings to atone for sins, and it could be used as a voluntary sacrifice of thanksgiving. However it was used, the principle was the same: using the entire animal in the sacrifice symbolized the complete surrender of the worshiper.

When Noah offered his sacrifice, “The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma” (Gen. 8:21). This reminds us what burnt offerings were supposed to be: “an aroma pleasing to the LORD” (Lev. 1:9, 13, 17).

Of course, it is not the aroma of cooked animal flesh that pleases God. It is the worshiper’s complete surrender that is pleasing to God. People of the cultures around Israel in Old Testament times also offered burnt sacrifices to their gods. But their offerings were attempts to please their gods and make them behave in ways that were favorable to the worshiper. In other words, the sacrifices of these worshipers were attempts to manipulate their gods into acting to benefit them. The Bible is clear that God did not accept sacrifices as a means of manipulation:

✿ God wants “a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart” (Ps. 51:17).



- ✿ “Mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings” (Hos. 6:6).
- ✿ The apostle Paul taught that we ought to offer our “bodies as a living sacrifice holy and pleasing to God” (Rom. 12:1).

A sacrifice was a visible demonstration of a believer’s complete surrender to God. The aroma that the Lord smelled and found pleasing was Noah’s complete surrender and gratitude. Just as human corruption and violence had moved God to sorrow, Noah’s surrender and gratitude moved God to compassion and a different kind of sorrow. This time, it was the sorrow of compassion and grace: “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done” (Gen. 8:21).

Then God blessed Noah. The blessing is a repetition of the blessing in Genesis 1:28; “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth” (9:1). The repetition of the blessings is a clue that God was starting over.

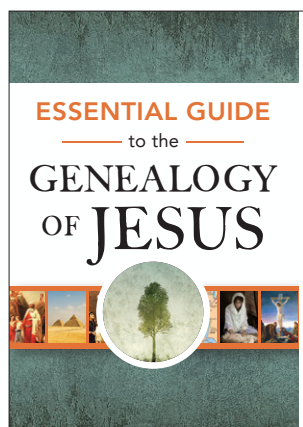


*Noah offers a burnt offering*

## NOAH AND JESUS

The life of Noah foreshadowed the life of Jesus Christ our Savior.

NOAH	JESUS
Noah was a kind of “second Adam,” since all living human beings come from him (Gen. 8:15–9:17).	Christ is called “the second man” (Adam) since eternal life can only be found in him (1 Cor. 15:47).
Noah’s ark provided refuge for all kinds of animals (Gen. 6:19–7:5).	Christ’s body (the church) provides salvation for all, both Jew and Gentile (Rom. 11:11; Gal. 3:28–29).
Human evil had reached an unacceptable high. So God decided to undo his creation with a flood (Gen. 6:6–7).	When the time is right for God, he will undo his creation by fire to re-create it (2 Peter 3:12–13; Rev. 21:1).
Noah’s ark was delivered from the floodwaters (Gen. 7:7).	Christ’s body (the church) was delivered from death through the water of baptism (1 Peter 3:21).
Noah offered a sacrifice of blood (Gen. 8:20–9:6).	Christ offered himself as a sacrifice (1 Peter 1:18–19).
Noah’s ark came to rest on Mount Ararat on the Jewish month of Nisan 17 (Gen. 8:4).	Christ’s resurrection took place on Nisan 17 (which corresponds to the month of March or April).
Although Noah was not perfect, he is described as a “righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God” (Gen. 6:9).	Jesus was the perfect, blameless man (Heb. 4:15).



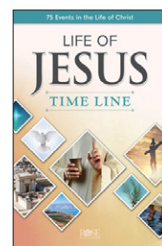
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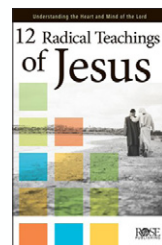
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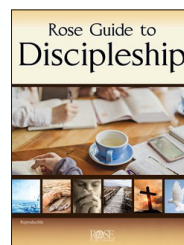
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