

The J Source Flood

Genesis 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 7, 10, 12, 16b-20, 22-23; 8:2b-3a, 6, 8-12, 13b, 20-22

by Don Falkos

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YHWH saw through the course of time how people had become more and more wicked, to the point where every thought they had...every inclination toward a thought...was simply evil. YHWH was saddened and said, "The humans I have created along with the creatures of the land and the birds of the air all need to be eliminated from the face of the earth."

But there was one man with whom YHWH was pleased. Noah was the only person who lived right and obeyed YHWH.

YHWH said to Noah, "You and all your family are to go into the Ark. Take with you seven pairs (male and female) of every kind of clean animal – that is, every kind of animal that may be used for sacrifice. In addition, take seven pairs (male and female) of every kind of bird, and one pair (male and female) of every other kind of animal so these creatures will be kept alive on the earth. In seven days I will make it rain for forty days and forty nights and every living thing will be wiped from the face of the earth."

Noah did just as YHWH had commanded him.

Once Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives, and all the animals that were to be spared had gone into the Ark, a great big boat, YHWH closed the door. After seven days had passed, it started to rain. Great torrents of rain came pouring down non-stop for forty days and forty nights. The water got deeper and deeper, until the Ark was floating high above the ground. Eventually the water was so deep the highest mountain peaks were covered by more than twenty feet of water. No bird, no animal, no human was left alive anywhere on earth. YHWH had destroyed everything that breathed except for Noah and those with him in the Ark.

The rain stopped, and the waters slowly receded. At the end of forty days Noah opened the window he had made in the Ark and sent out a dove. But there was still deep water everywhere and finding no place to land it flew back to the Ark. Noah reached out his hand and brought the dove safely back inside the Ark. Noah waited seven more days then sent the dove out again. It returned in the evening, carrying in its beak a freshly plucked olive leaf. By this Noah knew the water had gone down. Seven days later Noah sent the dove out for the third time. It did not return. Noah removed part of the roof of the Ark and could see the ground was completely dry.

Noah built an altar and offered sacrifices. YHWH was pleased and said, "I promise I will never again punish the earth for the evil things people do. I promise as long as the earth lasts, there will be planting and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night."