

# St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups

August 6th 2006

## Beside the sea – the sea that covered the earth



### Word: Key points from Sunday's sermon

The Read the whole of Genesis chapters 7 and 8 (maybe in separate chunks)

Last week Paul ended his sermon on Genesis 1.31

"God saw all that he had made and it was very good."

But today, we see that the bright promise of God's original creation had been blighted by human sin.

Already by the time of Noah humankind had become self-seeking with people living as they pleased.

The bible teaches us that sin is not to be taken lightly

Sin is falling short of the standards God has set us. If we take that as our benchmark, we're all in there.

So we can't just say this is a story for those wicked people in Noah's time, this is a story FOR US. G K Chesterton wrote to the Times "You ask what is wrong with humanity. I am."

In the story of Noah God needs to punish (cut off) those who sin. But the text does not talk of God's anger and outrage but of God's grief and pain. He takes no pleasure in punishing those who sin. He is deeply pained by the hurt his creations cause one another.

So God brings the flood. But even then his judgement is tempered by mercy and he saves a small group who will form the core of his rebuilding programme.

Another bible theme is introduced: that of redemption and a new start.

We can approach the story of the flood rather as a parable. It is the vehicle for us for spiritual truths.

1. That in the natural sequence of events our failure to live up to God's standards cuts us off from friendship with him.
2. That God in his grace has made a way for that bond between himself and us to be renewed.
3. That just as Noah was saved by water so we are saved in baptism and all that means.
4. That just as Noah and his family were saved by God's grace, if we repent and are sorry and intend to live a new life, we are forgiven and our relationship with God is restored. But for us, it is through Jesus and his death on the cross in our place.



### Witness: Questions to discuss

1. How would you define sin? Would you consider yourself a "sinner"?
2. Can you see a parallel between the waters of the flood and the water of baptism? (Could this be a reason for baptising by total immersion???)  
Look in 1 Peter.
3. If so, do you think the story of Noah paves the way for our salvation ?
4. If we look at the world today, do you think there are similarities with the world in Noah's time?
5. How can we as a church family apply some of these lessons to ourselves?