

## The Structure of the Flood Story in Genesis 6–9

As described by Gordon Wenham, the flood story in Genesis has a ring structure:<sup>1</sup>

Transitional introduction (6:9-10)

1. Violence in creation (6:11-12)
2. First divine speech (6:13-22)
3. Second divine speech (7:1-10)
4. Beginning of flood (7:11-16)
5. The rising flood (7:17-24)  
God remembers Noah
6. The receding flood (8:1-5)
7. Drying of the earth (8:6-14)
8. Third divine speech (8:15-19)
9. God's resolve to preserve order (8:20-22)
10. Fourth divine speech (9:1-17)

Transitional conclusion (9:18-19)

Notice that the ring structure is not perfect and it tends to break down towards the end of the pattern. For example, sections ## 9 and 10 should be reversed in order to have better symmetry.

---

<sup>1</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Word Biblical Commentary 1; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), p. 156.