

# BIBLE STUDY – PEOPLE & WILDLIFE

## A. Warm-up

Cut out all the names and all the sentences below, so you have eight names and eight sentences. Get together in pairs or threes. Match up the following people with the information about them (answers & bible references are at the end!):

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|------------|--|
| 1. Adam    | A. Foresaw a day when God would renew & restore his ravaged creation, and make it abound with abundant, diverse life |
| 2. Noah    | B. Gave names to the animals   |
| 3. David   | C. The first conservationist   |
| 4. Solomon | D. Longed for the day when all creation would be liberated from its bondage to decay                                 |
| 5. Ezekiel | E. Used birds, or flowers, or agricultural stories to illustrate his teaching  |
| 6. Jesus   | F. Studied and described plants, birds and fish  |
| 7. Paul    | G. Wrote about the weather, the elements and wildlife in his poetry  |
| 8. Hosea   | H. Taught that environmental degradation can be caused by human sin  |

## B. Three people in more detail

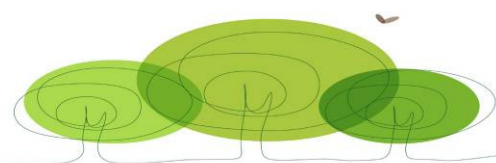
### King Solomon

**Read 1 Kings 4:29-34** When someone today describes plants, or studies animals, they have many aids at their disposal: identification guides and other books, as well as modern optical equipment – microscopes, telescopes etc.

- How might Solomon have gone about his research?

**Read Proverbs 30:18-33** There is not much about nature in Proverbs, but this passage is clearly based on observation and reflection on wildlife.

- What do these verses suggest about Solomon's attitude to other species?
- How might Solomon's studies of fauna and flora have contributed to his reputation for wisdom?



## Jesus

For much of the time, Jesus gave of himself to people: sometimes one needy enquirer, sometimes the twelve disciples, often huge crowds. But there were also times when he needed to be alone, or with just his closest friends.

### Read Mark 1:12, 1:35, 6:32, 6:46, 14:32

- How were these times important in the life and ministry of Jesus?
- List some of the different habitats where Jesus went to pray.
- Have you ever prayed alone and out of doors, as Jesus did?
- If so, was it a very different experience from praying indoors?
- What are, or might be, the benefits of praying alone, or with just a few friends, in a quiet place out of doors?

## Noah

### Read Genesis 9:8-17

- With whom did God make this covenant?
- What did God promise?
- Why had God ordained such awful judgement?
- Can you think of current situations where wildlife and natural habitats are being destroyed because of human sin?
- Is it reasonable to describe Noah as the first conservationist?
- In Hebrews 11:7, Noah is commended because of his faith. Can you name people of faith today who are concerned about both people and wildlife?

## C. Considerations

We've looked at three responses to nature: to **study** it like Solomon; to **appreciate** quiet places for retreat and solitude, as did Jesus; and to **protect**, as did Noah.

- Is the modern church noted for its contribution to the study, appreciation and protection of creation? Why ... or why not?
- As a group, or as a fellowship, are you involved in any of these activities?
- If not, what practical steps could be taken (however small) to become a church which is "good news" for both people and wildlife?

Warm up references: 1B Genesis 2:19-20; 2C Genesis 6-9; 3G e.g. Psalms 8, 29, 36, 65; 4F 1 Kings 4:29-34; 5A Ezek 47; 6E e.g. Matthew 6:25-34, Matthew 13, John 10:1-21; 7D Romans 8:19-20; 8H Hosea 4:1-3.

This Bible Study is adapted from one written by Barbara Mearns c.1998

