

# God's Earth and God's People: Relationships Restored

Ruth Padilla DeBorst

## Another Day in a Broken World

It's just another day. Another day of uncertainty. You fear for your life and that of your loved ones. You never know if bandits will attack you on the road or marauding gangs will take over your neighborhood. Daily news is about violence and death. Days are full of stressful striving for security. That's life these days. So you store provisions, build fences, and tell your children to trust no one. Sound familiar? Well, this is the story recorded in Genesis 6:

The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. (v. 5)<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references in this article are from Today's New International Version.



---

Ruth Padilla DeBorst currently serves as General Secretary of the Latin American Theological Fellowship, is a ThD candidate in Missiology and Social Ethics at Boston University, and directs Ediciones Certeza Unida publishing house. She lives with her husband James and their blended, multi-cultural family of six kids in Costa Rica where Ruth is leading the Institute for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education in Latin America.

Violence reigned inside and out of the human heart. The people, the land, even the animals and plants suffered. But the narrator affirms that God was not far away nor on vacation. God saw all of this. Neither was God indifferent. His loving and just nature would not allow him to remain impassively distant from this scene.

The Lord regretted that he made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. (v. 6)

God grieved. God's heart was filled with pain. The harm being wrought by the people he had placed on his earth to care for it was not at all part of God's creation plan. In the beginning, God had made the heavens and the earth, and he celebrated their goodness. In the beginning, God had filled the earth with living things, and he celebrated their diversity. In the beginning, out of the earth, God had created earthlings, men and women who would enjoy intimacy with God, with one another, and with the rest of creation. And God had said: "This is *very good!*"

But they had trashed God's good gifts. They had determined to walk their own way, no longer with God in the garden. When we questioned our Creator's goodness, harmony with God was shattered. When we chose to decide on our own what was right and what was wrong, suspicion, shame, pain, death, and violence began forcing wedges between the one and the other.

Human relations were broken. We were no longer able to act as mutual helpmates. When we chose to believe the lies of a creature instead of exercising responsible care over the rest of creation as stewards of God's property, our work became heavy and exhausting. The relationship between

---

*When we questioned  
our Creator's goodness,  
harmony with God was  
shattered. When we chose  
to decide on our own  
what was right and what  
was wrong, human  
relations were broken.*

---