

# **what did Noah do about trash?**





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Downers Grove, Illinois

Adult Form  
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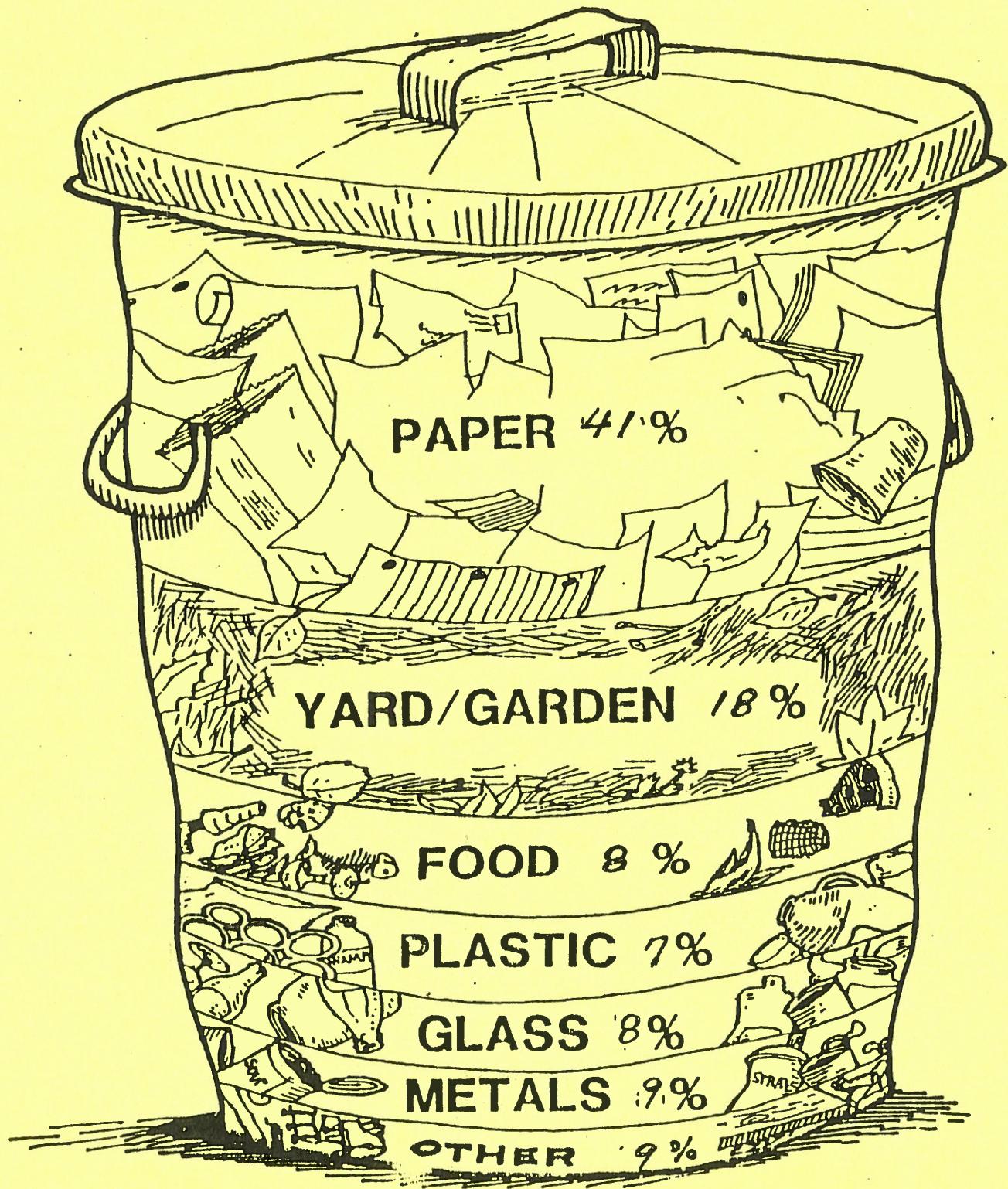
Theology of Garbage

Promotional: If you were from outer space and your space ship landed on a landfill somewhere in the United States what would your findings tell you about the people, their culture, and their theology? Have you every thought about what your own garbage contained tells you about you, your culture, and your theology? On the other hand, does your theology, your understanding of your Christian faith have anything to say about your handling of trash, garbage, waste?

Process

1. Landfills
  - a. If you visited a landfill what would you find? (Trash can example.)
  - b. Do the findings tell you anything about the values of the people?
  - c. In what kind of God do these people believe?
2. Your own personal garbage can
  - a. What does your trash and how you deal with it say about you?
  - b. Does it tell anything about what is important to you?
  - c. What does your trash and your dealing with it say about what you believe about the world?
  - d. Does it say anything about what you believe about God and what your God is like?
3. What does our theology say about garbage? (See chart)
  - a. God
  - b. The nature of God
  - c. Salvation
  - d. Stewardship
  - e. Human
  - f. Cosmology
  - g. Other







A THEOLOGY OF GARBAGE

Category	Theology from Garbage (Etic)	Theology from Garbage (Emic)	A Theology for Garbage (Revised)
God	Pantheon of gods: health, sanitation, convenience, communication (cherished)	One transcendent God.	Revealed in Jesus Christ. Made known in history and nature.
Nature of God	Extension of human's desire for the "good life"	Providential and Transcendent Law Giver	Immanent Reconcycler and Graceful Restorer
Faith	Sufficient resources for human disposal.	God will provide in all circumstances	Trust in a redeeming God (Christ)
Object of Belief	Technological skills & human achievement	Human capabilities are gifts of God	God
Fear/The Other	Contamination & destruction	Evil prevails	The righteousness (goodness) of God
Time/Space/Resource	Only the present matters. No past or future. Use of resources determined by the user.	Time is finite & space and resources are infinite (i.e. sufficient for time). Anthropocentric value.	Space and resources are finite & time is infinite. Use of resource determined by resource.
Salvation	Comfort & convenience	Human centered. Life after death.	Restoring relationships. Health & wholeness of all
Hope	A continual supply of resources.	The reign of God brings the "good life" OR the millennium is now.	Conditions change. Held together in Christ.
Sacred	Consumerism. The unblemished.	Manicured space and cleanliness.	What is profane
Profane	Garbage	Dirt & trash	Where God acts
Stewardship	Move natural resources to the trash	Gross National Product	Listen to earth. Recycle & restream.
Cultic Celebration	The weekly visit of garbage truck	Garbage free environment	7th Day Environmentalist. Sacrifice.
Human	Consumer. Separate from the rest of creation. Above it.	Consumer - center of culture and religious life. Dominates environment.	Servant. Co-creator. Satisfaction of others. One of the species.
Sin/Evil	Garbage in backyard. Uncleanliness.	People are not perfect	Refusing to live within limitations
Nature	A consumable	Fixed. Mechanical. Natural laws.	Organism. Evolving/learning/nurturing
Science	To serve technology	Enhance quality of human life, not environment	Learn more about how God acts
World View/Cosmology	Focused on human satisfaction	Limited to human experience	Celebration of God by all creation. God gives birth to the earth. All creation is good.

Someone has suggested that the first column (etic) is our real, lived-out faith and the second column (emic) is our ideological, non-lived-out justification. What do you think?



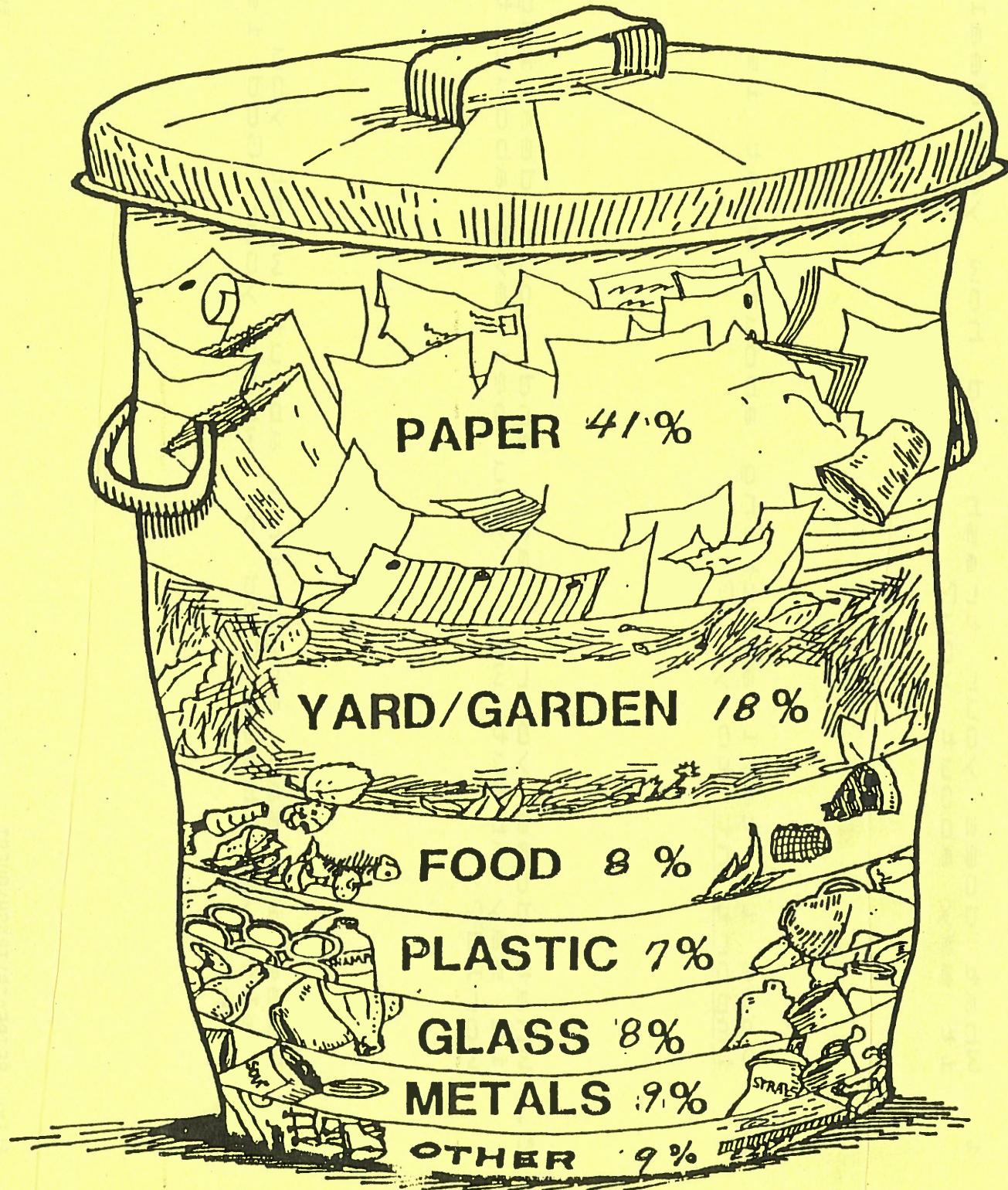
WHAT DID NOAH DO ABOUT TRASH? A Theology of Garbage

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God			
Nature of God			
Faith			
Object of Belief			
Fear			
Time/Space			
Salvation			
Hope			
Sacred			
Profane			
Stewardship			
Cultic Celebration			
Human			
Sin/Evil			
Nature			
Science			
World View			

Please fill in the blanks from your perspective. Column 1: Looking from the outside in, what does trash tell about the theology of the people who put it there? Column 2: Looking at the trash as one who contributes to it, what does it tell about the theology of the people? Column 3: What does your theology say about your understanding and treatment of trash?

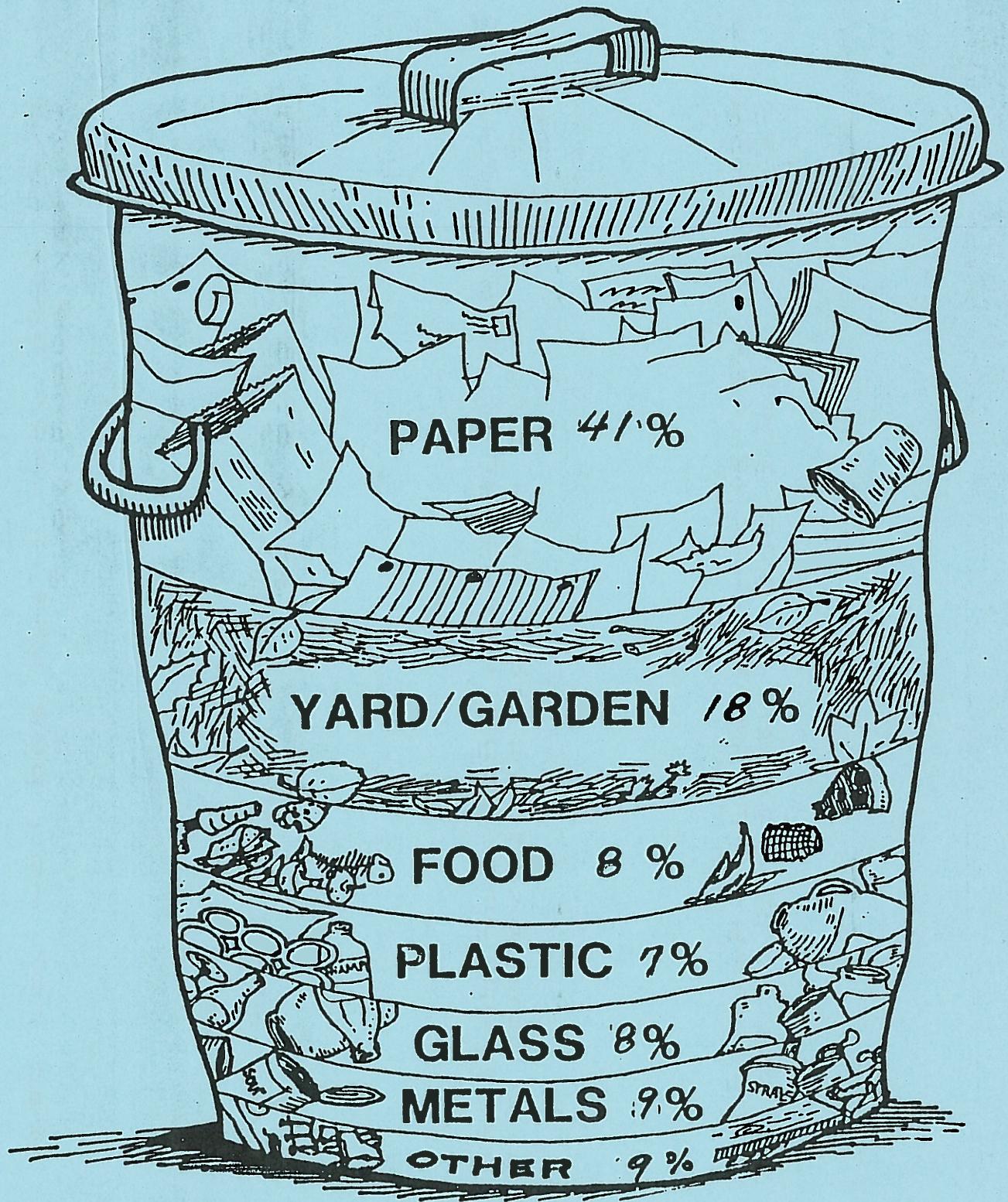
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## QUESTIONS

- 1 - What does your trash and how you deal with it say about you?
- 2 - Does it tell anything about what is important to you?
- 3 - What does your trash and your dealing with it say about what you believe about the world?
- 4 - Does it say anything about what your God is like?



## QUESTIONS

- 1 - I- What does aborigine say about what goes in  
the trash? Does it say anything about your trash and how you deal with it?
- 2 - D- Does it tell us anything about what it is important to do with trash?
- 3 - W- What does your trash tell you about your diet? What is in it?
- 4 - R- Does it say anything about what goes in the trash?

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*# The way we rationalize the people condition*

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Hark for a demand / Skimp  
& mortify our own  
I doubt - although

## Speciosissima

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