

## Story 2. Two Houses



“I’m going to build a holiday house,” said Geelaugh.

“So am I,” said Crocosmile.

“Why don’t you build just one house?” asked Dog who was always very sensible. “That would save you both a lot of money and we could all work together to build it.”

“No,” said Geelaugh. “I’m so tall my house will need high doors and a tall roof so that I can stand up straight. Crocosmile’s house doesn’t need to be tall so she should build her own.”

“If you promise that you’ll give me plenty of chocolate while we work, I’ll help you,” said Wombrat to Geelaugh.

Dog thought it was silly to build two houses but she also agreed to help Geelaugh.

Cupine and Happypotamus said they would help Crocosmile.

“Let’s have a race and see who can be finished first,” said Cupine.

“A great idea,” said Geelaugh.

Crocosmile answered: “I’m not going to race. I’m going to take my time and build a strong house that will last forever.”

Wombrat crawled to the middle of the group and asked, “Where will you build the houses?”

“I’m planning to build mine close to the river. That way I can go for a swim whenever I like,” said Crocosmile.

“I’m also going to build mine near the river,” said Geelaugh.

“Let’s get started,” said Geelaugh. He and Wombrat went to Bunnings to buy wood, nails and paint. Dog went to Aldi to buy all their chocolate for Wombrat using money that Geelaugh had given him. Geelaugh told him “don’t give Wombrat any chocolate until he’s done a day’s work.”

Geelaugh put a big Esky in the boot of his new crimson car so that he could keep Wombrat’s chocolate safe and cool.

“What can we do?” Cupine and Happypotamus asked Crocosmile.

“You just go home and rest. I’ll meet you at the river tomorrow. I’m going to draw some plans so that my house will be the very best,” replied Crocosmile.

Early next morning Geelaugh and his two helpers were at the river working hard. It was built on a sandbank very close to the river. Dog was working very hard on the floor and Wombrat was nailing the walls together. Soon they would all start work on the roof. The house would be finished by that afternoon. They were doing a very good job. But now Wombrat was ready for his morning tea – hot chocolate, chocolate biscuits and chocolate flavoured milk.

Crocosmile’s land was on the other side of the river. The sandbank was nice and level but she decided to build on rock that was nearby.

“But the rock isn’t level - and it’s very hard to dig. We’ll take ages,” moaned Cupine.

“It’s what we must do to build the house properly,” replied Crocosmile with a smile that showed her sharp white teeth. “I want my house to be strong.”

All day long Cupine and Happypotamus worked hard in the hot sun to dig holes in the rock. They put heavy posts in the holes and filled the holes with concrete. It was hard work and by night-time they were exhausted. Poor Cupine.

By the end of the next day, a fine solid roof was on Geelaugh’s house. Crocosmile had only just finished the floor.

“We’re nearly finished,” called Wombrat across the river. “You’ll still be working when we’ve finished. Soon I’ll be resting and eating more chocolate – and watching you work. Ha! Ha! Ha!”

“It’s not a race. I’m not in a hurry,” said Crocosmile. But she was very tired and wondered if she had been too fussy with her house.

The next day Geelaugh’s house was completely finished. It looked very beautiful. The high walls were straight and the tall windows looked out over the river. There was a very wide verandah at the front where Wombrat was setting up a picnic lunch. Dog had just finished painting. The walls were yellow and the windows were painted bright red. Geelaugh and his two friends thought that they had done a very, very good job.

“My house is magnificent,” said a very proud and happy Geelaugh.

On the other side of the river three tired animals worked to finish Crocosmile’s house but there was so much more to do.

“Can we help?” called Geelaugh.

“No thank you,” replied Crocosmile. “You have worked fast and now you should rest. When we’ve finished we can all have fun together.”

Three days later Crocosmile's house was finished. It had shiny polished floors and a bright red tile roof. The rooms were sunny and friendly. Large posters of motorbikes hung on all the walls.

If you were to look up the river you would see two beautiful houses: one on either side of the river. It was impossible to say which one looked better. The six animals were very proud but the builders of Crocosmile’s house were very, very tired. Cupine had blisters on his paws from all the hard digging. Poor Cupine.

Each weekend the animals would go and stay at the houses by the river. They always stayed at the house that they had built but they would often visit the other house.

One night it started to rain. First just a trickle but then it was pouring. There was thunder and lightning. Before long the river had grown to a raging torrent. Water was lapping up against the two houses. Geelaugh woke suddenly. He thought he felt the house move. He jumped out of bed.

“Quickly, quickly,” he called to Wombrat and Dog. “Wake up! The house is being washed away. We must get out. We must warn Crocosmile that her house might also be washed away. I’ll phone her.”

In Crocosmile’s house the three animals were sound asleep. The rain was beating on the roof and the river was pushing on the walls. But the house didn’t budge.

The phone woke Cupine. As he jumped out of bed to answer it, he saw an amazing sight. He looked, rubbed his eyes and looked again. Floating past his window was Geelaugh’s house. It had been washed off the sandbank and was floating down the river like a big ship.

As the house floated past, Geelaugh was still on his phone warning Cupine of the danger. But there was no danger. Crocosmile’s house stood firm. It did not move.

Crocosmile and Happypotamus raced onto the verandah in time to see Geelaugh’s house being smashed to pieces on the jagged rocks. His new bronze coloured car and Wombrat’s chocolate hamper were also dashed to pieces on the rocks. The three animals were thrown into the river. Crocosmile threw a rope and dragged Geelaugh and Wombrat to safety. Dog managed to swim to the bank. Cupine wrapped his wet friends in warm blankets. Happypotamus made hot cocoa.

The next day Geelaugh said to Crocosmile: “I thought you were foolish building on the rock. Was it worth all that hard work digging the holes in the rock and pouring concrete? I know now that I was the fool. I thought I was clever building on the sand. It was so easy and I was finished quick smart. My house was very well built but its foundations were no good. You did the right thing.”

“It’s always wise to build on rock,” said Crocosmile as they started to build a new house for Geelaugh – with good foundations in the rock!

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## Source Notes & Discussion

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#### **Parable of the House Builders: Matthew 7: 24 – 27, Luke 6: 47 – 49**

This story closely follows the Bible parable. The storm and the winds represent the trials and tribulations that are a normal part of life. A strong foundation in the love of God as expressed in Jesus and living that faith builds in us a strong foundation assisting us to weather the storms of life.

Recall the Sunday School song;

*Build on the rock, the rock that ever stands*

*Build on the rock and not upon the sand*

*You may not fear the storm or the earthquake shock*

*You're safe forever more if you build on the rock.*