

Genesis 7; 8; 9:1-17

Aim of Lesson

To show the judgements of God on the wicked and his mercy towards those who love and obey him.

Background study

Isaiah 54:9; Luke 17:26-27; 2 Peter 3:3-13. Find a map showing the position of Ararat, and refer to commentaries on the flood.

Suggested outline of lesson

Refresh the children's memory regarding the preparation and work of building the ark and the steady persistence of Noah and his family in carrying out God's detailed instructions, despite the incredulous taunts of men, women and children. Ask the class to imagine the completed ark standing on dry land, and miles from the nearest stretch of water. It was so massive as to be awe-inspiring and to look, to the unbelievers, rather ridiculous. Rainfall as such had perhaps not been experienced before (see Genesis 2:5-6).

Then God spoke to Noah again, and made it clear that the time had come to put an end to man's wickedness. He outlined his plan to save all his creatures: Noah was to assemble a male and female of every type of animal, bird and insect, and seven pairs of certain animals which God had designated (the significance of this differentiation can be omitted), and bring them into the ark. Birds and animals still migrate in a seemingly miraculous way and perhaps it was this ability that God used to bring the animals to Noah at the right time. Imagine how the crowds would assemble and the news spread when vast numbers of creatures, from a tiny spider to a great elephant, headed unerringly for the ark. For seven days the procession continued - an incredible sight. How busy Noah and his family must have been, placing this wide variety of living things in their appropriate places. Ask the children what the reaction of the onlookers might have been. Did they laugh heartily - or nervously? Were they still secure in their indifference? At what point did they begin to feel uneasy?

On the seventh day, the loading completed, God shut the door of the ark and sealed it. Read together chapter 7, verse 16. It was now too late for anyone else to enter. On that very day, the storm clouds gathered, and water began to fall from the sky. But not only did it rain continuously. Cataclysmic events released millions of gallons of water from subterranean reservoirs, and the level of water rose rapidly, becoming increasingly turbulent. The great bulk of the ark stirred, then floated and was carried away by a swirling tide. Although it is important to make it clear that the judgement of God came on the people because of their wickedness, the horrific nature of the situation, as they rushed to escape to higher ground, should not be dwelt upon nor described too graphically. Concentrate rather on the experience of Noah and his family.

In order to convey the period of time and the sequence of events, it is suggested that a diary or calendar be introduced, either of your own making or a manufactured one marked for the purpose. An example is given on the next page. Obviously present-day months are not accurate equivalents, but will serve the purpose of explaining the duration of the flood to the children in a way they can understand. (If the children find this detail interesting, you may like to tell them that the months were probably lunar months, and Noah would count the new moons to measure the passage of time. The 150 days of Genesis 7:24 take us from the 17th day of the second month to the 17th of the seventh - five thirty-day months).

Describe the regeneration of the earth as Noah and his family, with all the living creatures, emerged into a cleansed world. Emphasize Noah's act of worship and God's blessing and covenant, the guarantee of which is still visible today.

Relevance to the children's lives

Every time we see a rainbow it should remind us of God's promise and his faithfulness in keeping all the promises he makes. Noah was confident that God would bring him safely through the terrible experience of the flood, and when it was over his first thought was to thank God. When we realize we have escaped great danger or trouble, what should we do?

It is interesting that it was on the first day of new year that the ground was dry (Genesis 8:13). God provided Noah with a new start - as he does with us each year.

Worksheets

The code reads 'Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood!'

The people leaving the tower of Babel are saying 'I'm getting away from here,' 'How amazing,' 'I don't understand this,' 'Let's find somewhere else to live,' and 'I think everyone has gone mad!'

Prayer

Dear Lord God, thank you for saving Noah and his family from the great flood. Help us to remember that if we put our trust in you, we too shall be cared for, no matter what may happen. Amen.

Memory verse

"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease" (Genesis 8:22).

Chronology of the flood

Date	'Equivalent'	Events	Genesis
1st month	January	Building completed; ark stocked	7:5
2nd month	February		
10th		Animals began to enter	7:8
17th		Noah entered ark; door shut; rain began	7:9
3rd month	March	40 DAYS CONTINUOUS RAIN	7:17
27th		Mountains covered	
	April		
	May	EARTH COVERED FOR 5 MONTHS	7:24
	June		
7th month	July		
17th		Water began to decrease; ark rested (Ararat)	8:3
	August	FLOOD WATERS RECEDE	
	September		
10th month	October		
1st		Mountain tops seen	8:5
11th month	November		
11th		Raven and dove sent out; dove returned	8:7-9
18th		Dove sent again; returned with leaf	8:10-11
25th		Dove flew away	8:12
	December	LAND UNCOVERED	
1st month	January		
1st		Part of roof removed; earth free of water	8:13
2nd month	February		
27th		Earth dry and firm; ark vacated	8:14-16