



God Preserves Noah

Genesis 8:1–9:17



LESSON GOAL

Students will recognize that God judges sin, but also is loving and keeps His promises.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- God remembered Noah and caused the floodwaters to recede.
- Noah responded to God's grace.
- God gave instructions to mankind through Noah.
- God promised not to judge the world with a flood again.
- God is faithful to keep His promises.

KEY VERSE

"The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth" (Genesis 9:16).

APPLICATION

- Submit to God as ruler.
- Trust God; He always does what He says.
- Remember that God keeps His promises.
- Obey and trust God as Noah did.

NEXT WEEK

God Judges the Nations at Babel
Read Genesis 11:1–9.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

In order to save Noah and his family from the great judgment that was coming, the Lord commanded Noah to build an ark (Gen. 6:14). The ark was to be made of gopherwood—a type of wood that has not been identified but that might have been cedar or cypress. The ark’s dimensions were truly remarkable for its time. It was approximately 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high (Gen. 6:15). Modern ocean liners rarely exceed twice the length of Noah’s ark. To compare it with something familiar to us, we can conclude that the ark was the length of one and a half football fields. The biblical text does not give the precise thickness and weight of the beams, but the structure was solid enough to withstand the battering of the storm and the turbulent waters. (For more information, refer to the background note on page 5.4.)

Anyone who has experienced even a minor flood knows something of the devastating force water can generate. We can only dimly imagine what it must have been like on the day when “all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened” (Gen. 7:11). The incredible power and speed of massive quantities of water gushing from subterranean springs and pouring down from the skies above caught everyone by surprise—everyone but “Noah and Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons” (Gen. 7:13). We are told repeatedly that the waters increased and rose greatly, that they covered all the high mountains, and that every living thing that moved on the earth “died” and was “destroyed” (Gen. 7:21, 22, 23). For five long months, Noah and his family and all the animals rode out the flood (Gen. 7:24). During that entire time, they saw no dry land at all. They must have felt that God had forgotten them. But “God remembered Noah” (Gen. 8:1).

Note: To “remember” someone in the biblical sense means to express concern for him, to revisit him with gracious love.

Up to this point, mankind had been getting progressively worse, but from Genesis 8:1 on, things gradually got better. The reason they improved is because “God remembered Noah.”

In a very real sense, the period after the flood marked a new beginning for the human race. The following events took place after the flood:

- 8:1 “God made a wind to pass over the earth.”
- 8:2 “The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped.” It been 150 days since they started (7:24).
- 8:3 “The waters receded continually from the earth.”
- 8:4 “The ark rested...on the mountains of Ararat.”
- 8:5 “The waters decreased continually.... The tops of the mountains were seen.”
- 8:6–7 Noah sent a raven out from the ark. Evidently the raven returned to

Additional Reference Materials

Paradise to Prison: Studies in Genesis by John J. Davis

The MacArthur Study Bible by John MacArthur

Creation and Blessing by Allen P. Ross

the ark because it could not find a resting place; there was too little dry land to debark.

8:8–12 Noah released a dove. On its third journey, it found a resting place and did not return to the ark.

8:13–19 Fifty-seven days after Noah opened the window and released the raven, God commanded him to exit the ark. God also renewed the command He had given to the animals and to Adam (Gen. 1:28): “Be fruitful and multiply on the earth” (Gen. 8:17; 9:1).

Though the rest of mankind had been judged, Noah and his family were redeemed. God brought His faithful children through the trial of the flood by telling them how to escape it. Throughout the long ages of history, the Lord has rescued those who trust in Him because “God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5:9).

The receding of the floodwater gave mankind the opportunity for a brand-new start. More than any other event since creation itself, the aftermath of the great flood inaugurated a time of beginning again.

It was no accident that Noah’s first act in the new world was to build an altar to the Lord and offer sacrifices on it (Gen. 8:20). Noah’s devotion was not surprising, for he already had distinguished himself as a man who walked with God and whose faith was unwavering. Noah’s sacrifice reminds us of the importance of a proper sacrifice and a proper attitude. Worship properly offered is a very personal matter. For that reason, it was to God as “the LORD” that Noah brought his sacrifice, and it was “the LORD” who responded to Noah’s act of worship (Gen. 8:20–21).

Note: “LORD” is the intimate, redemptive name of God in the Old Testament. As such, it is regularly used in contexts of worship and sacrifice (Gen. 4:4).

The Lord regarded Noah’s sacrifice as a “sweet savor,” a “soothing aroma,” or, more literally, “a smell of satisfaction” (Gen. 8:21). A new promise symbolized the Lord’s response. God promised never again to curse the ground or destroy all living creatures because of man (Gen. 8:21). The cursing of the ground in Genesis 8:21 refers to the universal destruction of the land by flooding (Gen. 9:11, 15).

God also promised in Genesis 8:22 that the normal cycles and processes of nature would continue unhindered as long as “the earth remains.” The functions of time and season mandated by God from the very beginning, would never again be interrupted until the end of history.

With this new beginning of life came three commands in God’s covenant with Noah. The first command was to fill the earth (Gen. 9:1, 7).

The second command (or reaffirmation) was for man to rule over the entire animal kingdom (Gen. 9:2–4). Various animals would serve as food for mankind. For the first time, God encouraged man to eat animals in addition to vegetation (Gen. 1:29–30; 9:3). God gave man one restriction in regard to eating meat: “But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood” (Gen. 9:4). Since “the life of all flesh is its blood” (Lev. 17:14), the severest penalties would be inflicted on those who ate meat that still had its blood in it (Lev. 17:10, 14).

The third command was to keep sacred the life of man (Gen. 9:5–6). Man and beast alike would be held accountable for the lives of any human beings they killed. God’s command in Genesis 9:6 gave man not only the right but also the responsibility to put murderers to death. The reason seems clear: God made man in His own image, and therefore the murderer, in taking the life of a man, displays contempt for God as well.

Note: This principle has important implications for the function of the state in the area of capital punishment. Civil government as instituted by God involves the power of life and death. It is not the mindless revenge of a murdered man's relatives but the orderly processes of civil law that should be the deciding factor in capital cases (Num. 35:6–30). In this respect, government, necessary because of human disobedience, is God's gracious provision for the preservation of human life (Rom. 13:1–5; 1 Tim. 2:1–3; 1 Pet. 2:13–17).

In the remaining verses (Gen. 9:8–17), God reaffirmed His covenant with Noah and his descendants and gave him the sign of the covenant, the "rainbow in the cloud" (Gen. 9:13). Whenever the rainbow appeared in the clouds, it would serve as a reminder of God's covenant with all His creatures. For many people today, the rainbow may be simply a beautiful natural phenomenon, but for the believer it is a perpetual reminder of God's covenant promise to Noah and his family and all the animals. Floodwater never again will destroy all life.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth" (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

What book of the Bible have we been studying?

The book of Genesis

What did God tell Noah to make?

God told Noah to build an ark.

Why did Noah need to make an ark?

God was sending a flood.

Why was God going to send a flood?

To destroy the sinful men.

Did God save anyone? Who?

Yes. God saved Noah and his family.

Did Noah obey God?

Yes, he followed the Lord's instructions.

How can you be saved?

By trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior.



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Rainbow Mural

Draw a rainbow on a large sheet of bulletin-board paper. Have students tear colored construction or tissue paper and glue the pieces on the rainbow. Tell the students that today they will learn that the rainbow is a symbol of a very special promise from God.



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Noah's Altar

Bring brown paper bags to class. Tell the students to turn the bags inside out to make "rocks." Students can build an altar with the rocks, using packing tape to secure the rocks to one another. Tell the students that today they will learn why Noah built an altar to the Lord.



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Ark Relay

Materials: one-inch squares of brown paper, two glue sticks, two drawings of an ark

Directions: Divide the students into two teams. Tape the ark drawings to a wall, and place a glue stick and a pile of paper squares on the floor underneath each drawing. Have the teams line up, single file, on the opposite side of the room. When you say "go," the first student from each team should hop, skip, tiptoe, walk backward, walk like a duck, or crawl to his team's ark. He should pick up one paper square, glue it to the ark, and return to the end of his team's line. Then the next team member has a turn. The first team to finish wins.



Storm Sounds

Have the students sit in a circle and imitate you as you make storm sounds. Begin by snapping your fingers; then pat your chest, pat your thighs, slap the floor, and blow air from your mouth. If you want, you can also lead students back through the motions, ending with snapping fingers. Ask the students if those sounds remind them of anything. Ask whether the students remember what happened to Noah. In today's lesson, we will learn more about Noah.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included to use during worship time. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Reading of the Text

Read Genesis 8:1–9:17.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate the fruit from the tree, they sinned. Adam's and Eve's children and grandchildren were all born with sin in their hearts, too, and needed their sins to be forgiven. Cain's children and grandchildren never

talked to God or listened to Him. They were disobedient to their parents and mean to one another. People became meaner and more selfish. God was very sad about the people on the earth because of their sin. On the whole earth, there was only one man who walked with God and talked to God. His name was Noah. Can you say "Noah"?

Noah didn't have a Bible with God's words as we do, but God talked to him. Noah listened to God and wanted to obey Him. God said to Noah, "Build an ark—a big boat—that will hold your wife, your three sons, and their wives." There were eight people in Noah's family. [Hold up eight fingers and count to eight.]

God told Noah to build the ark big enough to hold two of every kind of animal and bird on the earth. He said, "I am going to send a flood that will come up, up, up until the water covers all the mountains. You and your family will be safe on the ark if you do exactly as I say." God promised Noah that a flood would come, but He also promised to take care of Noah on the ark.

Noah loved and trusted God and did everything just as He said. Noah built the ark so that it would be big enough for all the animals—two huge elephants, two tall giraffes, and two fat polar bears. Noah made space for two tigers, two lions, and two pigs. There was a little tiny space [make your voice high and small] for the two mice and the two squirrels. God knew exactly how big the ark should be. God knows everything.

People watched Noah building the ark, day after day. While he was cutting the wood to exactly the right size, Noah would tell the people, "God has promised to send a big flood that will come up, up, up over the mountains. God always keeps His promises. If you want to be safe, you must get on the ark." The people laughed at Noah. They said, "You're crazy. There's not going to be a flood. We don't believe your God." They didn't listen to God's words or obey Him. Finally God said to Noah, "It's time to get on the ark. The flood is coming. Get on the boat, and the animals will come to you." [Move Noah's family and the animals onto the ark if you are using flannelgraph figures.] Noah obeyed God and took his family onto the ark. Just as God said, the animals began coming, two by two. [Have the students make animal noises.] Two lions, two foxes, and two gorillas. Two owls, two alligators, and two laughing hyenas. The animals obeyed God and walked onto the ark. Then God shut the door of the ark. Noah's family waited one day, two days, three days—no rain. They waited four days, five days, six days—no rain. Finally, on the seventh day, rain began to fall from the sky. It rained and rained and rained. For 10, 20, 30, 40 days, it rained. For 10, 20, 30, 40 nights, it rained. Buckets of water poured from the sky. The water came up, up, up, higher and higher. The rain covered the entire earth, even the highest mountains.

Noah and his family looked out the window, and all they could see was water everywhere. There were no trees, and no land was anywhere in sight. Noah's family was glad that God was keeping His promise to keep them safe on the ark. When the rain stopped, God sent a wind to take away the water. [Have the students blow a "wind."] The water went down, down, down. The ark stopped on the top of Mount Ararat. Noah let a raven fly out the window to see if it could find a place to land. Noah waited seven days [count to seven] and sent out a dove. It brought back an olive branch in its beak. Keep waiting! Noah waited seven more days [count to seven] and sent out the dove. It didn't come back. It had found land. It wouldn't be long now!

Noah waited for God to tell him when it was time to get out of the ark and step onto dry ground. Finally God said, "Come out of the ark." Noah's family and all the animals hurried off the ark. It felt so good to run and jump and shout for joy. The animals went scampering away to find their own special homes.

Noah wanted to thank God for keeping his family safe. He built an altar. The altar was a pile of rocks on which Noah burned an offering of thanks to God. Noah bowed his head and thanked God for taking care of his family. God was pleased with Noah's offering of thanks. He said to Noah, "Do you see that rainbow in the sky? I am making you a promise that I will never again send a flood that covers all the mountains. I will send rain—even big rains called floods—but I will never again cover the whole earth with water. When you see the rainbow in the sky, you will remember the promise I am making to you. I always keep My promises." God always keeps His promises. You and I can believe God's Word. The Bible is God's Word, and it is always true.

Prayer: Dear God, thank You for keeping Your promise to take care of Noah and his family on the ark. Thank You for the rainbow, which reminds us of Your promises. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Lesson Questions

What made God sad when he saw Adam and Eve's descendants?

All the people except Noah's family were selfish and were hurting one another.

What did God command Noah to build?

God told Noah to build a big ark.

Who obeyed God and got into the ark?

Noah's family of eight people, two of every kind of unclean animal, and seven of every kind of clean animal and bird went onto the ark (Gen. 7:2–3).

What happened during the flood?

It rained for 40 days and 40 nights, and water covered the mountains of the entire earth. Only the people and animals on the ark were safe, as God promised.

When Noah and his family got off the ark, what did Noah do?

Noah built an altar and burned an offering of thanks to God.

What was God's promise, and what did God put in the sky so that people could remember the promise?

God put a rainbow in the sky to remind people that He would never again send a flood to cover the entire earth (Gen. 9:12–17).

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards to present the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces to present the lesson.



Here Comes a Storm

Talk with the students about wind, rain, lightning, and thunder. Fan the students with a large piece of cardboard or a cookie sheet to simulate wind blowing. Spray a water bottle above their heads to illustrate the rain that came down. Flash the lights in the room to represent lightning. Have the students stomp their feet quickly to simulate thunder.



Under Water

At the beginning of the lesson, illustrate that the world was entirely immersed in water by dunking an inflated globe in a large bucket of water. Explain to the students that God made a wind blow to dry up the water. Ask the students to blow like the wind, and then remove the globe from the water.



Human Rainbow

As the students enter the class, look for those wearing the various colors of the rainbow. Before beginning the lesson, call the students up and arrange them by color. The order of the rainbow is red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. Ask the students if they know what a rainbow represents. Tell them that in today's lesson they will learn about God's promise to Noah.

Praise and Worship

Arky, Arky

Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down

I Love You, Lord

Lord, I Lift Your Name on High

Mighty Is Our God

Praise Him, All Ye Little Children

Trust and Obey

Who Built the Ark?



God's Promise

God made wind blow;

(Place hands to sides of mouth and blow.)

The waters went low;

(Hold hands out to sides, palms down; slowly lower.)

Raven and dove flew to and fro.

(Hook thumbs together, flap hands; move back and forth.)

God sent His bow,

(Spread fingers; move hands in broad motion overhead.)

And now we know

(Point to temple.)

He won't again flood land below.

(Shake head back and forth while wiggling fingers and lowering hands in rain motion.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



Waiting to Get Out

Review Genesis 8:13–16 with the class. Note that Noah determined the land was dry but waited for God’s command to leave the ark. That command came almost two months later. Have the students sit on the floor while another teacher sets the tables with snacks. Show the students that everything is ready, but tell them that they must wait for your instruction to get their snacks. When you give the command, it’s only for going to the snack, not eating it. Tell the students that first, like Noah, they should thank God.



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Paper Dove/Raven

Cut sheets of black and white construction paper into 8 ½ x 5 ½-inch pieces. Fold them in half to make a 4 ¼ x 5 ½-inch rectangle. Cut a wing shape from the folded side to the other end. When you open the page, it should make the shape of a bird. Fold down each wing, leaving a half inch from the bottom. Tape a straw to the bird. Each student should go home with one dove and one raven. Practice various bird shapes before you make the template for the students.

Variation: The black and white construction-paper birds can be glued onto 8 ½ x 11-inch construction paper. Glue on plastic eyes.



God’s Promises

Let each student make an umbrella from a cupcake liner and a pipe cleaner. The students can color the liners with markers. Place a rainbow sticker on each umbrella. Push the pipe cleaner through the middle and make a tiny loop in the end over the top so it can’t slip through. Form a curve in the other end of the pipe cleaner for the handle. Talk about God’s promises in the Bible.



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God Keeps His Promises Bookmark

Cut one bookmark per student out of construction paper or cardstock. Let the students color and decorate their bookmarks. Talk about God’s promises being in the Bible, and tell the students that God always keeps His promises. Older students can understand that the rainbow reminds us that God will keep His promise to never send another flood that covers the earth. Younger students can understand that God put the rainbow in the sky.

Variation: These could be made slightly larger to serve as doorknob hangers.



Rainbow Promise

Give students brightly colored scarves. Call out the order of the colors in the rainbow, and have the students line up accordingly. Have the students fold their hands as you thank God for the rainbow. Say a simple prayer such as, “Thank You, God, for the rainbow. You always keep Your promises.”



MEMORY VERSE

“The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth” (Genesis 9:16).



After 40 days, Noah sent out a dove from the ark to see whether the waters had receded from the earth (Gen. 8:6-12).



God set the rainbow in the cloud as a sign of His promise to never flood the earth again (Gen. 9:12-17).

