

# NOAH AND THE FLOOD

Genesis 6:11 - 9:29

## STRUCTURE

**Key-person:** Noah

**Key-location:** The ark in the ancient world.

**Key-repetitions:**

- Destroy (Gen 6:3, 7, 13, 17; 7:21; 8:21-22; 9:11, 15).
- Ark (Gen 6:13-16; 7:1, 9, 23; 8:1, 4, 6-10, 16-19; 9:10).
- Take into the ark: Noah's family (Gen 6:18; 7:1, 7, 13); animals, birds (Gen 6:19-20; 7:2-3, 8, 14-16); food (Gen 6:21).
- Animals (Gen 6:7, 19-21; 7:8, 14-15, 21, 23; 8:1, 17-20; 9:2-3, 10, 11, 12, 15).
- God commands (Gen 6:14, 19; 7:1, 2; 8:15, 17; 9:1, 4, 7).
- Covenant (Gen 6:18; 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17).
- Waters: rose (Gen 7:17, 18, 19, 20); receded (Gen 8:1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13).

**Key-attitudes:**

- God's displeasure with the human race.
- Noah's faith.
- God's concern to save a remnant of both people and animals.
- Noah's gratitude when he left the ark.
- Disgrace of the drunken and naked Noah.

**Initial-situation:**

Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were banished from the Garden of Eden. They had two children, Cain and Abel. Cain killed his brother Abel. Cain left God's presence. Cain's descendants were violent and did evil things. Adam and Eve had another son, Seth. Some of Seth's descendants walked with God. After many generations, evil thinking, corruption, and violence increased until all the people were evil, except for Noah. God regretted creating people and informed Noah of his plan to destroy the world.

**Initial-problem:**

With the exception of Noah and his family, all the people on the earth were wicked.

**Final-situation:**

Noah became drunk and lay naked inside his tent.

## BIBLE STORY

### The Flood

The earth became heavily populated; people became corrupt and violent. The Lord saw that the people on earth were wicked and their thoughts were always evil (Gen 6:1-7).

Noah was a man of integrity who walked with God. God told Noah, "I've decided to destroy all people because they've filled the earth with violence. Build yourself an ark of cypress wood. Make rooms in it and coat it with tar pitch inside and out. Make the ark 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. Make a roof for it. Finish the ark to within 18 inches of the roof in order to have an opening at the top. Make three decks – a lower, a middle, and an upper deck. Put a door on the side of the ark.

"I'll bring flood waters that will destroy everything alive under the sky. But I'll establish my covenant with you: you'll board the ark with your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives. Noah did everything God commanded him to do (Gen 6:11-22).

The day came when the Lord told Noah, "Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because out of everyone alive today, you are the righteous one. Take with you seven pairs, a male and female of each, of every kind of clean animal that I've chosen for eating and for sacrifice. Take seven pairs of every kind of bird. Take a pair, male and female, of every kind of unclean animal. Seven days from now I'll send rain. It will rain for forty days and forty nights. I'll eliminate from the earth every living creature that I've made, except those in the ark" (Gen 7:1-4).

Noah did everything as the Lord instructed. Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came. Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives boarded the ark to escape the flood. Male and female pairs of all animals, birds, and reptiles came to Noah and they boarded the ark in pairs. Then the Lord shut the door behind Noah. Seven days later, flood waters came. Heavy rain came from the sky, and underground springs erupted for forty days and forty nights (Gen 7:5-16).

For forty days flood waters kept coming. Waters rose and the ark floated. Waters rose and submerged the highest mountain peaks. The high water mark was twenty feet above the mountains. Every living thing that lived on dry land and breathed with its nose died. Only Noah and those with him in the ark remained alive (Gen 7:17-24).

After the rain stopped, God sent a wind over the earth. Underground springs stopped flowing and the flood waters subsided. A hundred and fifty days after the flood began, the ark came to rest on Ararat Mountain Range (Gen 8:1-5).

Several times Noah sent a bird out to test the earth and to see if it was dry. When the earth was completely dry, God told Noah, "Leave the ark – you, your wife, your sons and their wives. Bring out all the living creatures that are with you – the birds, the animals, and all the reptiles; so they can breed, reproduce and increase in number." Noah, his family, and all the animals departed from the ark (Gen 8:6-19). (*They had been in the ark for about 370 days.*)

## After the Flood

Noah built an altar to the Lord and he made a burnt offering of every kind of clean animal and clean bird. The Lord smelled the pleasing aroma and said to himself, "I will never again destroy all living creatures as I have just done; even though, from the time people are children, they are set on doing evil. As long as earth exists, planting and harvest, cold and hot, summer and winter, day and night will never cease" (Gen 8:20-22).

God blessed Noah and his sons and told them, "Have many children, multiply, and fill the earth. I have placed all wild animals, birds, and fish under your control. You are responsible for them. Everything that lives and moves will be food for you.

I'll demand the life of any animal that kills a person. I'll demand the life of any person who kills another person; for to kill a person is to kill one made like God.

Noah, you and your family are to have many children. Grow in number, multiply, scatter, and populate the whole earth" (Gen 9:1-7).

Then God told Noah and his sons, "I now establish my everlasting covenant with you, your descendants, and with every living creature. Flood-waters will never again destroy all life. The rainbow in the clouds is a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I'll recall my everlasting covenant with you and all living creatures, that never again will flood-waters destroy all life" (Gen 9:8-17).

## Noah Becomes Drunk

Noah became a farmer and planted a vineyard. He made wine, drank it, got drunk, and passed out naked inside his tent (Gen 9:20-27).

After the flood, Noah lived 350 years. He was 950 years old when he died (Gen 9:28-29).

### GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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| 1. What catches your attention in the story?                  | 5. How did the characters face their problems?                                       |
| 2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. How have you faced similar problems?  |
| 3. Who are the main characters in the story?                  | 7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. What problems did the characters face?                     | 8. What does the story tell about God?   |

### SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did God decide to destroy the ancient world with a flood?
2. Why does God have the right to judge people?
3. What was God's plan to save Noah and his family?
4. What covenant promise did God make to Noah and his descendants after the flood?
5. How did the flood both punish one group of people and save another group?
6. The next time God punishes the world, how can you be in the group that is being saved instead of the group that is punished?

## LIFE-LESSONS

1. **God is intolerant of people who do evil and think evil.** People's evil thoughts and actions will be judged and punished by God. The flood story attributes the flood to God's judgment on the wickedness (Gen 6:5), evil thinking (Gen 6:5), and violence (Gen 6:11) of the human race.
2. **The person who pleases God doesn't go along with the crowd.** People on earth were wicked, violent, and their thoughts were always evil. However, Noah was a man of integrity, who walked with God (Gen 6:1-9).
3. **There is salvation only by the means established by God.** There was only one entrance door to the ark (Gen 6:16). There was only one ark in which people could escape God's punishment in the flood.
4. **There is a separation: people with faith who obey God are separated from those who do not believe and obey.** Noah was separated from those outside the ark who didn't have faith in God (Gen 7:11-16; 2 Pet 2:4-5). (See Mat 24:37-41.)
5. **Obeying God may require a person to take on unpleasant tasks.** Being on the ark with all the animals was unpleasant. They could not have taken the stench of all the animals had it not been for the flood waters outside the ark.
6. **God shows his mercy by not giving people the punishment they deserve.** The Lord promises not to destroy all people and creatures again with flood water; even though, he recognizes that people have not changed and are inclined to practice evil (Gen 6:21).

## LEARNING ACTIVITY

### Role-playing Drama:

Invite volunteers to pretend they are Noah's neighbors. They are ridiculing Noah for building an ark in a location where there is no body of water.