

#4 - Noah and the flood - Genesis 6:11-9:17

Engage:

- Always consider what can you use from the previous stories to introduce this story? The sinfulness of man? The involvement of God in the life of man?

- The sinfulness of man has become so great that God determined that He must start afresh. He found Noah to be faithful. Noah and his family were commissioned to build an ark that would save them from the coming flood. It is thought by some that this project took 120 years. They draw this understanding from the way they interpret Genesis 6:3. (See Life Application Bible.) We do know that Noah was a “preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5) with no converts other than his family before the flood.

Thoughts About the Story:

- 6:1-10 – As the number of people increased on the earth, moral standards decreased (i.e. “the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose”. It is debated as to who the sons of God and daughters of men were. The NIV Study Bible addresses this issue. A likely choice is the sons of God are from the descendants of Seth and the daughters of men from the descendants of Cain.). God’s patience with man also decreased because all they thought of was “evil all the time.” God was so grieved that humankind had gotten to this point that He decided to destroy “mankind” and the animals of the earth and the birds of the air. But one man and his family found favor in God’s eyes because he was found to be righteous in God’s eyes and “walked with God” - Noah.

- 6:11-22 – God commanded that Noah build an ark that was 450' long, 75' wide and 45' high (1,400,000 cu ft). It was to have 3 different levels and be covered with a roof. It is unclear what is meant by the phrase “finish the ark within 18" inches of the top.” It most likely refers to a “window” type opening or an overhang of the room. There was a door in the side in which Noah used to bring two of each of the creatures on the earth and two of the birds of the air, plus food for Noah, his family, plus the animals and birds.

God made a covenant with Noah to spare him and his family. “Noah did everything just as God commanded him.” (See 7:5 where this phrase is repeated.)

- 7:1-12 – Seven days before the rain started, Noah was told to bring 7 “pairs” (see the footnote from the NIV text) of each clean animal of the earth and bird of the air into the ark. (See Leviticus 11 for a description of what was clean and unclean to the Jewish people. See Mark 7:14-20; Acts 10:9-15; Romans 14:10 to see how we should understand the use of food.) God said it would then rain for 40 days and 40 nights. After 7 days, in the 600th year of Noah’s life, on the 17th day of the 2nd month, the rain began – and the springs the deep opened. This no doubt helped cause the flood to occur more quickly!

- 7:13-24 – Noah, his wife, their 3 sons and their wives entered the ark. Pairs of all the animals came to Noah. “Then the Lord shut him in.” (the door was shut). The water rose to cover the tops of the mountains by 20 feet. Every animal and bird not in the ark died. Only Noah, his family and the animals in the ark survived. “The waters flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty days.”

8:1-12 – After the rain stopped and the springs of the deep were shut, the waters began to recede. On the 17th day of the 7th month ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. The tops of the mountains became visible on the 1st day of the 10th month.

Forty days later Noah released a raven from the window he made in the ark. This bird flew back and forth until the water dried up. Noah sent out a dove, which returned because it found no place to land. Noah sent the dove out again 7 days later. This time the dove brought back an olive leaf that evening. Noah waited 7 more days and sent the dove out again. This time it did not return.

Note: - 8:1 – “And God remembered Noah.” - This is an interesting thought. Just as God did not bring Noah into the middle of the flood only to forget about him, so He has not brought you to the point in your life merely to abandon you in the midst of your circumstances.

Application: Because God remembers you, how can and should you remember Him?

- 8:13-22 – Noah found that the earth became dry during the 601st year of Noah’s life on the 27th day of the 2nd month. God then told Noah and his family to come out of the ark. This was 1 year and 10 days after the door was shut. Also, they were to bring the animals and birds out so they could multiply and be fruitful and increase in number. Noah built an altar to the Lord and offered some of the clean animals and birds as burnt offerings to God. God was pleased with the offerings. God promised to never destroy all living creatures “as I have done” as long as the earth endures.

9:1-17 – God blessed Noah and his sons. They were told to be fruitful and increase the number of people. Dominion of man over the creation was re-established. They were given the privilege of eating of the animals (clean animals - see Genesis 7:1-12 notes.) along with the green plants. Meat with lifeblood still in it was to not be eaten. (See Leviticus 3:17; 7:26-27; 19:26).

Respect for life is clearly stated as God’s will since man is made in the image of God. They were told to be fruitful and multiply.

The sign of the covenant that God made was described. A rainbow appeared in the clouds as a “reminder” to both God and man. God promised that water would never be used again to destroy all life. (2 Peter 3 - The next time, God will use fire to bring judgment.)

Questions:

- **About God:**

- What do you think it means when we are told that God “grieved” that He had made man? What can you do to please God, rather than grieve Him?
- How would you describe God’s attitude toward man after the flood? (Covenant)

- **About Noah:**

- What do you think Noah could have thought when he stepped out on dry ground?

Note: The story of Noah is referenced outside of these chapters in Genesis in the following places: 1 Chronicles 1:3, 4; Isaiah 54:9; Ezekiel 14:14, 20; Matthew 24:37-38; Luke 3:36; 17:26-27; Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5 and the Genesis flood is referenced in 2 Peter 3. (Remember how we talked about the frequency of the Old Testament (OT) being

used in the New Testament in the Foundations lessons – and why we need to know the OT?)