


the
Jesus 
Storybook
Bible
Curriculum

A new beginning

Noah's ark, from Genesis 6–9

☉ Please see the curriculum Introduction .pdf for more guidance on praying with your group and on Scripture memory.

☉ The total allotted time per lesson is 45 minutes. This is the minimum amount of time it would take to complete the whole lesson. The time can easily be extended to increase the lesson to as much as 1.5 hours. If you have more than the allocated 45 minutes, please use the extra time to extend the time for activities, to learn the memory verse, and to pray.

☉ The “Notes for Teachers on the Text” section is intended as explanation of the Bible text and advance preparation for you only; it is not expressed in terms or language the children could understand.

The Jesus Storybook Bible Curriculum
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Recap of the Previous Story

3 min. 

☉ Welcome the children and ask them to sit in a circle.

☉ Briefly recap the main point of the previous story: “Last time we learned that our sin spoiled God’s perfect creation. We do not love God or his creation the way we should. Sin also means we run away from God and try to be happy and live without God. We learned that sin not only makes us and others sad and lonely and sick and afraid, it also breaks our relationship with God. We also memorized a verse about sin.”

☉ Ask the children to recite together the verse they learned at home about the story. “Genesis 6:5 — ‘The LORD saw that the human heart was only evil.’”

☉ To lead into the theme of today’s story, say: “The human race was sinning all the time. In our story today God sends a flood to put a stop to sin. Does everyone know what a flood is? Has anyone ever seen a flood? Raise your hand. Thank you, hands down.”

Activity Introducing the Story

10 min. 

Aim: To expend energy and learn about rescue.

Materials: None.

1. Say: “Imagine there was about to be a flood and the land was going to be completely covered with water.”

2. Ask everyone to stand and line up by a wall on one side of the room. Say: “The side of the room you are on is the land that will soon be under water, so you need to get to a rescue boat and the rescue boat is over there, on the opposite side of the room. I am the captain.”

3. Ask two (or more, depending on the size of the group) children to be sailors. Ask them to stand in the center of the room.

4. Explain the game: The children call out, “Captain, the flood is coming; may we come aboard the rescue boat?” The captain replies, “You may come aboard the rescue boat only if you are wearing the color . . .” All of the children run to the “boat” on the other side of the room. The sailors may tag anyone who isn’t wearing the named color. Anyone tagged is out and has to sit down on the “land.” Everyone who makes it across the room is rescued and gets to go back to the land and run again.

5. Play the game, reminding the sailors to tag — not tackle — the other children. You may also prefer to ask everyone else to skip or crawl rather than run.

6. Repeat until everyone is tagged.

7. If you have time, play the game again with different sailors, and using a different formula; e.g., “You may come aboard the rescue boat only if you have . . . hair.”

8. Toward the end of the allocated time, ask everyone to sit back down in the circle and say: “In today’s story there is a huge flood. Let’s find out what happened.”

For larger groups: You may want to divide the group into two; one half plays while the other half watches, and then reverse. Those watching could be asked to help the captain choose colors.

Join the children in the circle and announce the title of the story. Read aloud pages 38–47 from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* or listen to CDI track 4.

Notes for Teachers on the Text

The account of Noah and the flood is filled with many puzzling details that can easily absorb time and energy. We should not ignore such issues; nevertheless, we must be careful not to be distracted from discovering the overall teaching of the narrative.

First, we learn here of the seriousness of sin. We read in Genesis 6:5–7, “The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become.... So the LORD said, ‘I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created.’” One of the main points of the entire flood narrative is that God cannot tolerate evil.

Second, we learn here of the interior nature of sin. Genesis 6:5 says, “Every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.” Sin is primarily a matter of the heart. If we focus too much on behavioral violations, we will miss the internal forms of sin. Sin is first a matter of attitude and motives, and it can influence and grow even before it has broken out into behavior.

Third, we learn here of the grievousness of sin. Verse 6 says that God was “deeply troubled.” This is the ultimate reason that sin is sin. It troubles or “grieves” God.

Fourth, we learn of the universality of sin. Notice that there are no exceptions in the human race with regard to sin. All humankind is wicked. All have hearts whose thoughts are “all” evil, and who deserve to be destroyed.

If we take 6:7 seriously – that all mankind deserved to be “wip[ed] from ... the earth” – how do we understand 6:8? In other words, why does Noah find “favor in the eyes of the LORD”? It is normal for readers to see verse 9 (that Noah was a “righteous man, blameless ... he walked faithfully with God”) as the cause of verse 8. But such a reading fails to take into account the emphatic nature of 6:5–7 about the universality of sin and judgment, which would include Noah and his family. So why then did Noah escape the flood?

The Hebrew word that the NIV translates “favor” in verse 8 is the main Old Testament word for “grace” – *chen*. Grace is always unmerited – or it would not be grace. But the verse itself also gives us a broad hint about why Noah escaped. It does not say “Noah earned or won favor in the eyes of the LORD,” but “Noah found favor.” To “find” something is to discover it, to come upon it. What is the difference between finding \$10 and earning \$10? When you find \$10, it has come to you freely, without regard to your work or behavior. In the same way, to find God’s blessing is not the same as to earn it. Verse 8 is the cause of verse 9, not vice versa. Noah walked with God because he found grace/favor with God. He did not find grace/favor because of his walk.

This is one of the themes of the entire Bible – that God accepts and saves us by grace alone. Here in early Genesis, that theme takes the form of God’s preservation of a godly line, a godly people, through his continual, gracious, intervention.

Understanding the Story

15 min.



Aim: To understand that God rescued Noah and his family, and promised never to destroy the world with a flood again.

Materials: 4 chairs (or any other objects or method of marking out a set amount of space); crayons; copies of the handout (the last page of this document).

1. At the end of the story, say: “So much has changed. In our first story when God made the world, it was perfect. Now the world is full of sin. So God sends a flood, but he rescues Noah and his family. Let’s act out the story.”

2. Put the four chairs in a square. Announce that the chairs mark out the area of the ark. Ask everyone to stand and line up against a wall. Explain that you will call out scenes from the story and then you will all act them out.

ANNOUNCE: “SCENE 1 — NOAH BUILDS AN ARK.”

Ask: “What did Noah need to build the ark?” Get answers like hammer, wood, saw, etc.

Ask someone to play the part of Noah and to go to the chairs and pretend to build the ark.

Ask: “What did Noah’s friends do when they saw him building the ark? That’s right; they pointed and laughed because they didn’t believe Noah about the flood or needing to be rescued.”

Ask everyone lined up by the wall to act like Noah’s friends. Ask them to point and laugh and call out things like: “Hey, Noah, where’s the water?” “Noah, you don’t need an umbrella, let alone a boat!” “Poor Noah thinks he needs to be rescued!” etc.

ANNOUNCE: “SCENE 2 — THE ARK IS READY.”

Ask: “Who did God choose to be on the ark and be rescued? Yes, Noah, his family, and the animals.”

Point to one of the gaps between the chairs and announce that it is the only entrance to the ark.

Ask Noah to board the ark, i.e., walk into the space between the chairs.

Ask everyone else to choose an animal — it can be anything that creeps or crawls or gallops or hops or climbs. Ask them to board the ark pretending to be the animal — moving like the animal, making sounds like the animal, and so on.

Ask the children what animal they are and remind them to be very careful in the crowded space not to hurt or touch one another.

ANNOUNCE: “SCENE 3 — ABOARD THE ARK.”

Ask: “What was it like on the ark with all those animals? Correct; very crowded, hard to move, noisy, and very smelly.”

Ask the children to continue to move like the animal they have chosen but to look uncomfortable because they cannot move in the small space.

Ask Noah to go around feeding the animals while making comments; e.g., “Termites — stop eating the ark! What have you stinky animals been doing in here? This is the longest, smelliest journey ever!” etc.

ANNOUNCE: "SCENE 4 – THE RAIN STOPS."

Ask: "After over a year on the ark, how do you think everyone felt when the flood ended? Yes, happy; they would be skipping and dancing and stretching their limbs."

Starting with Noah, ask the children to come out one by one as their chosen animal. Help them to show a big difference between how they acted on the ark and how they act now that they can move around freely again.

Ask: "What did Noah say as soon as he got off the ark? Did he say: 'I never want to see another animal as long as I live!' or did he say: 'Thank you, God, for rescuing us, just as you promised!'"

Once the last animal is off the ark, ask Noah to say: "Thank you, God, for rescuing us, just as you promised."

3. At the end of the activity, ask everyone to sit back down in the circle and give them a copy of the handout and a crayon.
4. Say: "On your paper you can see a picture of the ark and three questions. There are two possible answers to each question. Let me read them to you. Circle the correct answer."
5. Read the three questions and possible answers aloud, asking them to circle the correct answer. Ask them to share their answers, commenting appropriately.

For larger groups: You may want to divide the circle into smaller groups, each with a teacher and four chairs. Each teacher can then conduct the activity with their group and then the groups can all perform for one another.

Drawing the Story to a Close

1 min. 

Say: “God promised never again to send a flood to destroy the world. That isn’t because the world did not go wrong again. It did. But in the same way that God rescued Noah and his family, God promises he will send a Rescuer to rescue us.”

Ask: “Who is the greatest Rescuer of all who comes to rescue us? Yes, it is Jesus.”

Jesus in the Story

2 min. 

Ask: “What did we discover about Jesus from today’s story?”

Get a few children to share their answers aloud, commenting appropriately; then ask everyone to write an answer in the space on their handout.

Praying about the Story

5 min. 

Pray aloud, thanking God that he had a plan to rescue Noah and that he has a plan to rescue us.

Ask the children to pray, thanking God for sending Jesus, the greatest Rescuer of all.

A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

2 min. 

☉ Introduce the verse: “Remember the reason that God sent the flood was because the world was full of evil; it was full of sin. So we are going to practice the verse from last time.”

☉ Read the verse out loud together as a group.

☉ Announce the verse: “So, your verse to practice at home is Genesis 6:5 — ‘The LORD saw that the human heart was only evil.’”

☉ Remind the children to give the handout to their parents and to memorize the verse for next time.



How were Noah and his family rescued?

- a) By being super swimmers.
- b) By God.

Why were Noah and his family rescued?

- a) Because they were good people.
- b) Because God chose them.

What does God promise Noah?

- a) That God would never again send a flood to destroy the world.
- b) That God would give Noah fewer animals next time.

Jesus in the Story



What did you discover about Jesus from this story?

—————→ **Jesus**

A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

The LORD saw that the human heart was only evil. (Genesis 6:5)



Notes for parents: From the story we learned that God rescued Noah and his family because of his grace, not their goodness. We too are rescued because of God's grace.

Please help your child to memorize the verse and the Scripture reference for next time. Please review with them the place of the book of Genesis, using the diagram above.