

Noah's Ark, a Salvation Plan

Introduction:

Ten generations after Adam God looked down on the earth and saw that the wickedness on the earth had become very great. Men's thoughts were evil. The earth was filled with violence, corrupt, and rotten to the core. God was sorry that he made men and was grief-stricken. He decided to get rid of everything He'd created.

Story:

There was one man, Noah, who stood out above the rest to God. Noah was a good, just man full of integrity. 2 Peter 2:5 tells us he was a preacher of righteousness or right-living before God. He had a wife and 3 sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

God came to Noah and told him that the earth had become like a sewer, and He planned to destroy it. Then He gave Noah these instructions:

Build a ship out of teakwood. Make it 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. Build a roof for the ship and put a window about 18 inches from the top. Put a door in its side. Make 3 decks. (This would be the capacity of 522 railroad stock cars.)

God told Noah He planned to destroy everything on the earth with a flood. He promised to make a covenant with Noah. He told Noah to bring his wife, sons, and their wives into the ark. He commanded Noah to take two of every living creature, a male and a female, onto the ark with them to keep them alive. He told him to store up food and water for them all.

It would have taken about 100 years to build this ark. The whole time Noah was building it, he was probably warning his fellow men about the coming flood and destruction. We know that at the time of Noah the earth was a tropical climate. There were mists to water the earth, but there had never been a flood or even a rain shower. Noah's neighbors must have thought he was crazy. They may have even taunted him and his sons and made fun of them as they worked on the ark.

When Noah was 600 years old, the ark was completed. God told Noah to board the ark with his family because out of everyone on the earth Noah and his family were the only righteous ones. He told Noah to take seven pairs of every clean animal (a male and a female), one pair of every animal that God considered unclean, and one pair of every kind of bird onto the ark. (This would have been about 16,000 animals in all.) God told Noah that in seven more days it was going to begin to rain. The rain would continue for 40 days and 40 nights.

So Noah did as God commanded him. He and his whole family entered the ark. The animals came to the ark to board it in pairs. When everyone and every pair of animals were on board God closed the door of the ark.

Then all the underground springs broke open and the waters in the heavens poured forth. This continued for 40 days and nights. As the waters increased, the ark was lifted up on the waters. (The ark was built like a barge so it would have been difficult for it to capsize in the flood.) As the waters continued to rise they covered the mountains—about 22 feet above the highest mountains. Everything on the earth died—men, birds, farm animals, domestic animals, every living thing that lived on dry land died. Only Noah and those with him in the ark survived. The flood lasted 150 days.

God remembered Noah, his family, and the animals that were with him in the ark. He made a wind to pass over the earth so the flood waters would go down. The underground water and the rain from heaven stopped. So inch by inch the waters began to withdraw from the face of the earth.

The ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat on the seventeenth day of the seventh month. The waters continued to decrease until the tenth month. On the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains could be seen again.

After 40 days, Noah opened the window on the ark. He sent out a raven, which kept going back and forth waiting for the waters to dry up. Then he sent out a dove. The dove couldn't even find a place to perch so Noah took it back into the ark.

Noah waited another seven days, and sent out the dove again. This time the dove returned in the evening carrying an olive branch. Noah knew that the waters had gone down.

He waited another seven days and sent out the dove. This time the dove did not return.

When Noah was 601, the flood waters had all dried up. Noah removed the cover from the ark and saw that the ground was dry.

By the twenty-seventh day of the next month, the ground was completely dried up. Then God spoke to Noah and said: "Go out of the ark with your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives. Bring out every living thing that has been in the ark with you—all the birds, all the animals—so that they may reproduce and thrive on the earth."

So Noah and all his family left the ark along with all the animals. They went out in family groups.

Noah built an altar to GOD. He selected clean animals and birds from every species and offered them as burnt-offerings on the altar. GOD smelled the sweet fragrance and thought to himself, "I'll never again curse the ground because of people. I know they have this bent toward evil from an early age, but I'll never again kill off everything living as I've just done. For as long as Earth lasts, planting and harvest,

cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never stop.” (Genesis 8:20-22)

God blessed Noah and his sons. He told them to be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. He explained to Noah that every living creature would be afraid of man. He said that Noah was responsible for them all. He told Noah all of them had been given to Noah and his family for food. They were not allowed to eat meat that still had its lifeblood in it. **Then God said if anyone took a man’s life He would avenge it whether the murderer was man or beast. He said this was because man is created in the image of God, reflecting the very nature of God.** God repeated the command to be fruitful, multiply, and bring forth and abundance in the earth.

Then God made a covenant with Noah, his sons, and all their descendants: **“I’m setting up my covenant with you including your children who will come after you, along with everything alive around you--birds, farm animals, wild animals--that came out of the ship with you. I’m setting up my covenant with you that never again will everything living be destroyed by floodwaters; no, never again will a flood destroy the Earth.”**

God continued, **"This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and everything living around you and everyone living after you. I'm putting my rainbow in the clouds, a sign of the covenant between me and the Earth. From now on, when I form a cloud over the Earth and the rainbow appears in the cloud, I'll remember my covenant between me and you and everything living, that never again will floodwaters destroy all life. When the rainbow appears in the cloud, I'll see it and remember the eternal covenant between God and everything living, every last living creature on Earth."** (Genesis 9:9-16)

Summary:

Jesus taught that when He returned to earth the times would be just like in the days of Noah. He said that people were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah and his family entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. (Luke 17:26, 27) You see, God had a day of judgment planned. He had patiently waited while Noah was building the ark, giving mankind a chance to repent from their wickedness. In the end, they didn't and only 8 human beings were saved. God is coming to judge the world again, but it won't be with a flood. The Bible tells us this judgment will be by fire. (See 2 Peter 3) Just like God provided the ark to save Noah, his family and the animals, God has provided a way of salvation for all of us. It was God himself who closed the door to the ark as the flood

waters were about to rise. God himself has provided a door for all of us—His Only SON. In John 10:9 Jesus said, “I am the DOOR. If any man enters by me, he shall be saved.” Jesus is the door to our salvation. The ark is like a picture of God’s salvation plan. Are you ready to enter by this door today?

Discussion Questions:

1. There were 4 reasons why God decided to destroy the earth. Can you list them?
2. Why did God choose to save Noah and his family?
3. People lived a really long time around the time of the flood. So Noah had 100 years to build the ark. What do you think it would’ve been like for him and his sons to hear their neighbors mocking them while they were building the ark? Could you stand up to all that peer pressure, especially if you had never seen rain or a flood of water before?
4. Have you ever had an opportunity to be a “preacher of righteousness” like Noah?
5. What was the first thing that Noah did after everyone and all the animals got out of the ark? How did God react to this?
6. What instructions did God give Noah after He blessed him? Why did God say He would avenge man’s blood if any man or animal took a man’s life? What does this tell us about how God values every human being’s life?
7. What was the covenant God made with Noah, his family and all his descendants? What was the sign of the covenant?