

A GOOD MAN IN A BAD WORLD

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

OBEDIENT MERCY FORGIVE NOAH MERCIFUL

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Genesis 6

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the students know that Noah decided to obey God, even when no one else did

MEMORY VERSE

"The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving" (Daniel 9:9a, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

As a child, the pressure of the group did not affect me much until I got to 8th grade. But as the years have passed, the age of pressure on children has gotten lower and lower until now it is the years before adolescence. At present, children of six and seven years, and even smaller, are greatly influenced by their peers.

One of the reasons is that they spend more and more time with other children their age. With the arrival of nurseries and kindergartens, children begin to be influenced by their peers, practically from when they are born. Since many children spend between 4 to 12 hours per day with other children, they worry more about what their classmates think and approve of.

Today's lesson finds elementary children with this reality in their unique and particular situations. It is never easy to be different from the rest of the group, especially these days. And, with the corruption of basic moral values of many societies, children have to deal with choices that we did not have to make years ago.

As you prepare the next three lessons about Noah, immerse yourself in the scriptural passages and story. Ask God to help your present Noah in such a way that your students admire him and want to act like him. Noah stood alone in front of a world of sin and violence. Pray that your students will learn to trust the Lord enough to do the same when necessary, in the room, on the playground, in their neighborhoods, or wherever they proclaim that they are children of God.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

In any story where judgment fell on people in rebellion, it is easy to see God as a harsh judge. In this story about the flood, it is easy to see God as the one who killed the wicked and saved a few righteous. If we look at it that way, we'll overlook what the Scriptures describe: "The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled" (6:6). Only a God who loves so much can feel so much pain for the evil person.

God's pain was not because he created man, but he suffered because the people he loved refused to restore their relationship with him. Therefore, the anguish of the Creator was because of the wickedness of mankind. Humanity had gone astray. That situation was followed by a period of cleansing and forgiveness, which was an act of love, not revenge.

This story has a parallel with the conversion of a person. When the person's heart is filled with pain due to his mistakes and sins, and he seeks God to help him, God responds with forgiveness and transformation. In his mercy, God cleanses the chaotic world created by the wandering heart.

In biblical history, we see that not everything was destroyed by the universal flood. The branch of the olive tree is the first proof that vegetation had survived. When Noah and his family left the ark, they had the forests and fields available to rebuild their lives. By cleaning the human heart, God did not destroy the framework of the old creation. People remain human after their conversion, but with the new opportunity to rebuild on the foundation already provided.

The story of the flood emphasizes that each individual is responsible, regardless of what others do or have done. Noah was the only "righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God" (v.9). This does not imply that Noah had never sinned. Like all of us, he was the recipient of a fallen nature, which was the result of the sin of Adam and Eve, even though Noah loved and obeyed God with all his heart.

Noah could have been like everyone else, but it was not like that. He had the courage to be different from the rest of the group, a quality that God rewarded. This is a difficult point for adults to accept, how much more then it is for children. The power of the crowd or what we know as "the group phenomenon" is hard to resist. When everyone in the group does something, it is difficult to do something different, especially when "doing that something" is the right thing to do.

Noah is an example for us and the children that following God is always the right thing to do, regardless of whether others do it or not. Here's something to think about, not just for this lesson, but every time we're in contact with students: How can we, as teachers of children, influence our students to trust God in such a way that they are willing to obey him when their friends tell them to do the opposite?

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Can I enter the ark?

You'll need: poster board or cardboard, scissors and markers. Before the session, write on cards or papers the names of animals that are easy for the children to recognize, for example: bear, cat, dog, bird, elephant, lion, pig, etc. Make 2 sets of each, so that 2 children have a bear, 2 the cat, 2 the lion, and so on. During the session, give each child one of the cards with the name of an animal. Tell the children not to show it or tell anyone what animal they have.

Explain: "The objective of this game is to find the other person in the room who has the same animal that you have on your card. You must make the sound that your animal makes, or walk or act like it, but they cannot say the name. When you find your partner, come and ask me: 'Can we enter the ark?' You'll give me your cards, and I'll compare them, and if you've really found your partner, I'll tell you, 'Yes, you can enter the ark.' But if not, I'll say, 'No, you cannot enter the ark.'"

Play until all the children find their partner. When finished, ask: "What Bible story does this game remind you of?" (Noah's ark). Noah lived at a time when no one else on earth loved nor obeyed God.

TEACH THE LESSON

Hard, Harder, Hardest

Before the session identify three areas of your meeting area: one as "Hard," another as "Harder," and a third as "Hardest." If possible, you can mark these areas by writing these words on 3 poster boards or large papers. If you select this option, you will also need a thick marker and something to attach the poster boards or papers.

In your group say: "I will read some brief stories about different times when children have to make decisions. Then you'll vote if

that decision is hard, harder, or hardest. You'll vote by standing in area that you think best describes your decision."

Read the stories. Give time for the children to decide and walk to the poster they choose. After each decision, ask volunteers why they responded as they did.

1. The teacher leaves the room. Before leaving, she told the class to be quiet and do their homework. Almost all the children start talking and laughing. How hard is this decision about keeping quiet and obeying?
2. Your mom said to clean your room before going to play. She has to go out and do a quick errand. You look at your room ... it is a mess. How hard is this decision about obeying your mom?
3. The children went to a birthday party. One of the boys had a magazine with bad jokes and bad pictures. Your parents do not let you look at that kind of magazine. All the children at the party look at it. How hard is it to say, "No, I will not look at the magazine," and start doing something else?
4. You're with your best friend in a store near your home. You both want candy and chocolates, but you do not have money to buy them. Your friend tells you, "Just take some and hide them quickly." How hard is it for you to refuse to steal?
5. One of the children in your class hit a child on the playground. The school principal is talking to the students and asking who did it. Nobody responds. How hard is it for you to tell the truth?

Say: "Deciding to do the right thing is difficult. Especially when you're the only one who wants to do it. Today's story talks about a man who decided to obey God, even when no one else wanted to."

Discussions! Fights! Hate! Death!

Every place on earth where God looked, he saw people doing what they wanted instead of what was right. Their selfishness was much more plentiful than the love and goodness of God. God felt terrible pain and suffering in his heart. Everyone did the wrong thing. Nobody obeyed him or did the right thing. Nobody, except one man. His name was Noah. Noah loved God and always tried to obey him. God was not happy and could not allow the world to continue the way it was. It was getting worse. Sadly, he decided, "I must destroy this world and everything in it!"

God spoke to Noah and said, "Noah, the world is full of violence and evil. I will destroy everything in it with a huge flood. But I promise you that I will save you and your family. But this is what you have to do to be saved. You must build an ark, a very big ship. And you will cover it inside and out with pitch. You will make it three stories tall, and place a door on the side and a window on the top. When you have finished with the boat, you will take animals of each species and put them in the ark for them to live (see 19-20). (The animals included 7 pairs of ritually clean animals, 1 pair of unclean animals and 7 pairs of each kind of bird.) You must also put enough food in it for you, your family and all the animals."

How surprised Noah must have been with all those instructions! It had never rained on earth before. Noah had no idea what rain was, much less a flood! And the ark that God asked him to build was huge! He had no idea what a boat was, or what it was for! It would be much bigger than a football field, and taller than a two-story house. It would take a long time to build! No doubt, Noah must have had many questions to ask God, but he did not. He simply trusted him. He believed in what God had said, and he obeyed. He quickly began to build the ark. The Bible does not specifically say it, but Noah's three sons - Shem, Ham and Japheth - probably helped him.

Noah built the ark as God had instructed him. For many years, he built and built. All the people who passed by looked at what Noah was doing. What did they think? The Bible does not say it. But, as they watched, Noah worked, and announced the message of God. The Lord was giving them another opportunity to be saved. He would save anyone who repented of their evil ways and asked to be forgiven. But nobody did.

Finally, the ark was finished. Noah obeyed God in everything. Finally came the time when he, his family and all the pairs of animals had to enter the giant boat. What would happen next? He did not know. He only knew that God would protect him and his entire family, as He had promised.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Decide to obey

Ask the children to cut out the puzzles from Student Activity Sheet #246-A and #246-B. Give each one a bag to store the pieces. The figures are appropriate to be able to talk about what they must do to obey. Encourage the children to share their puzzles with their families and friends.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Memory verse race

Before the session, prepare 2 pennants (flags) in the shape of a triangle. Paint them with bold colors (if you want you can make them big). Attach a wooden rod about 40 cm. long. In your group, repeat the memory verse (Daniel 9:9). After doing it several times, divide the group into 2 teams. (It is better to do this activity in an open courtyard.) When you say "GO", the first child of each team, with their team pennant in hand, must run to the other end (place something to mark the spot) and say in a loud voice the text of Daniel 9:9 and the reference. Then they will run back to their team, hand the pennant to the next child and so on. Pay attention to the repetition of the verse. Help those who have problems. Play until one of the teams - the winner - has finished. Conclude by repeating the memory verse together. Save the pennants for the next session.

For options on how to help the children memorize this lesson's verse, see the "KidzFirst Memory Verse Activities" sheet.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Pray for your students to be obedient to God. Sing an appropriate chorus about obedience. Pray for those little ones who find it hard to obey their parents or teachers.

Encourage

Encourage the children to pray for each other during the week.

Invite

Tell the group something interesting about the next session to motivate them to attend. Remind them to invite friends.