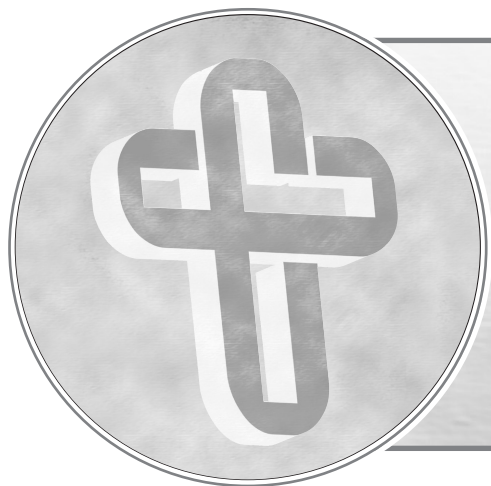


LESSON 5



CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

FEBRUARY 04 2023

Noah way!

Scripture Story: Genesis 6; Genesis 7–9:17.

Commentary: *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 7–9.

Key Text: Genesis 6:5-8

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

The story of Noah and the Flood is set in what is known as the Antediluvian Period. The Bible portrays the frustration God felt for a world of people who settled deeply into rebellion against their Creator. The Bible says: “The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled” (Genesis 6:5, 6, NIV). The people of the world became so filled with selfishness that they devoted their entire lives to immoral living. About the antediluvians, Ellen White says: “Not desiring to retain God in their knowledge, they soon came to deny His existence” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 91). That is the sad truth about the effects of sin.

The good news that emerges from the story of Noah is about the faithful diligence of Noah’s walk with God. Both Enoch and Noah were said to have “walked with God” during an era of great immorality in a self-absorbed world. Noah modeled the kind of relationship with God that is needed today, as the second coming of Christ approaches. Several powerful lessons emerge from Noah’s story: (1) Although judgment is imminent, God initiates a plan of salvation for all—but there is only one plan. The ark was a symbol of God’s provision of grace in a time of need. (2) The ark was a symbol of faithfulness when the masses scorned and ridiculed Noah and his family. It is hinted

in Scripture that the Sabbath will be a test of faithfulness in the final moments of history for those who are alive (Revelation 14). This lesson is a reminder that now is the time to walk with God and find grace in the eyes of the Lord.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Discover the many truths that can be found in the story of the Flood. (*Know*)
- Feel compelled to respond to God’s grace and provision. (*Feel*)
- Be given an opportunity to give God their loyalty and start a new walk with Him this week. (*Respond*)

III. EXPLORE

The Millennium and the End of Sin, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, No. 27

“The millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ with His saints in heaven between the first and second resurrections. During this time the wicked dead will be judged; the earth will be utterly desolate, without living human inhabitants, but occupied by Satan and his angels. At its close Christ with His saints and the Holy City will descend from heaven to earth. The unrighteous dead will then be resurrected, and with Satan and his angels will surround the city; but fire from God will consume them and cleanse the earth. The universe will thus be freed of sin and sinners forever” (Jer. 4:23-26; Ezek. 28:18, 19; Mal. 4:1; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Rev. 20; 21:1-5).

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

A curious phenomenon was observed at a Little League baseball practice. During batting practice the 9- and 10-year-old boys were swinging at the baseball as hard as they could, but their attempts to reach the fence were fruitless. The young team was practicing on a full-sized field where the fence that marked a home run seemed like a mile away. The boys were discouraged because the fence seemed so far away. The coach became perplexed because the boys seemed to be giving up, even though he reminded them that the actual fence on the field where they would play their games was much closer and well within their range.

The next time the team practiced hitting, the coach brought out a makeshift plastic fence and placed it right where the fence would be in their upcoming games. It transformed their hitting. They tried harder because they saw how possible it was for them to hit all the way to the new fence.

The same phenomenon is true of us. When we see our “fence”—the lives of Bible heroes such as Enoch, Noah, and Abraham—way out of reach, we tend to get discouraged about our walk with God. We don’t feel we can “hit” (walk) in their league. But God asks us to walk with Him right in our own league, as we grow in Him.

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

In the end of time God’s people will need to have the faith of Noah, but such faith seems so far out of reach sometimes. Heroes such as Noah and Enoch and Abraham were so faithful that we can’t see ourselves, with all our weaknesses, having such faith. But as you read the story of Noah and the Flood, remember that Noah’s kind of faith is within our reach today. Faith itself is a gift from God and grows as we walk with Him in trust.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

- As you read through the story, underline key facts that you see are important.
- Who are the main characters included in the story? (Circle them.)
- Highlight the text that reveals information about the setting and the attitudes of people in this story.
- What is significant about the specific days of the month mentioned in this story? Why do you think the details of the days and the months and the years are given?
- After reading through the passage of Noah and the Flood, what would you say are some aspects of the story that you had not noticed until now?
- What do you see as the major themes that grow out of this story? How do you see themes such as grace, judgment, faith, and hope revealed in this story? What different pictures of God’s character do you see in the story?
- As you read this passage, is there: a promise to claim, a lesson to learn, an example to follow, a warning to heed, a thanksgiving to express, a prayer to offer, an action to take?
- If there is one message in this story that relates to your life today, what is it?
- How can the message of this story change the way you live this week for God?

Use the following as more teachable passages that relate to today’s story: Hebrews 11; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Luke 17:6; 1 Corinthians 2:3-5.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share in your own words.

The story of the Flood is rich with symbols and lessons for young people today. More than anything else, the Flood declares in a story some of the themes that will emerge in the final judgment—when Christ returns.

1. It is interesting to note that God knew beforehand how big to build the ark. Judgment was coming, and God already knew who would choose to come on the ark for safety—before the rain even fell. After all, it doesn’t require much faith to feel the raindrops and then knock

on the door of the ark. The trick is trusting enough to get in the ark while the sun is still shining. God calls His people today to the same kind of faithfulness. What other biblical stories can you think of that required someone to “walk by faith and not by sight”?

2. Looking at the time line given in Scripture, it appears that Methuselah (Enoch’s son) died the same year that the Flood came. Methuselah witnessed centuries of decline, knowing that God had already taken his father to heaven. If Methuselah represents a group of people at the end of time, whom would you say he represents? What are some similarities you see between Enoch and John the Baptist?
3. Notice that Genesis 6:3 says, “Then the Lord said, ‘My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years’” (NIV). God gave Noah a specific time when He would bring His judgment, but He hasn’t given one to us today. Why do you suppose that is? Do you think having knowledge of a time line would help or hinder the gospel going to the ends of the earth?
4. Notice that Genesis 6:4-6 describes how far the people had gone in their sin. “Every inclination” was “only evil” and this was “all the time” (NIV). Have you ever wondered what it would take for conditions to be so bad that God was deeply troubled to the point of wanting to destroy the

Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

Every Word Counts

When teaching young people to study the Bible it is essential to get them to notice the words, phrases, and themes that grow out of the text. Each word matters! For example, have them write and then read a paragraph, covering up or deleting key words. The meaning changes and the significance gets lost when each word is not considered. Have students focus on the three superlatives found in Genesis 6:5 (every, only, all the time). If we want young people to deepen their experience with Bible study, we have to teach them to observe the details like a detective and notice every single word.

whole planet and everything in it?

5. Notice that the destruction of the Flood left Satan with an image of his own future. When the earth was destroyed by water, Satan was left with only eight faithful souls to harass on earth, and they had given their allegiance to God. This might have been a glimpse of the millennium for Satan.

III. CLOSING

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson. Invite students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.

- **Key Text**

Invite the students to share the Key Text with the class if they have committed it to memory.

- **Flashlight**

Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- **Punch Lines**

Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them share the verse that spoke most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.

Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Have the students divide into groups of two to four, and ask them to write out a modern-day version of the Flood. They need to include the key elements of the ancient story in the modern version they create. They can act it out or just read or retell the story as it would appear in the news today. After they have reported their stories to the class, compare them with what they think the second coming of Christ might be like if it were to happen today.

Summary

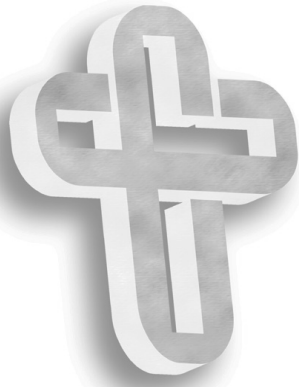
Share the following thoughts in your own words:

The story of Noah has been popularized over time with cartoonlike representations of animals and a big boat, but the message of judgment and destruction is often not prominent. Even when that message is pres-

ent, as in the Noah movie that was released in March 2014, often the characters of God and His people are distorted. The fact that God did everything He could to save everyone is a testimony to His character of love. It seems true that He wants us to be saved more than we do at times. As you see the many sides of God's character in the story of the Flood, remember Noah's walk. The Noah way is a walk of faith and not of sight. The only evidence Noah had of a flood was that God said it would happen. There were no pictures, videos, or images of any kind to help Noah's mind capture the terrible day of judgment that would come. The same is true for us today. When people are saying that "it will never happen," we need to sense how critical it is to be faithful to God and what He is calling us to do—even though there are no clouds in sight. Do you want to tell God, "I'm ready to jump on board today"?



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 7–9. A special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets* has been created by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net.



CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

FEBRUARY 04 2023

STUDENT LESSON

Scripture Story: Genesis 6; Genesis 7–9:17.

Commentary: *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 7–9.

Noah way!



Photo by Jennifer and Company

flashlight

“But Noah stood like a rock amid the tempest. Surrounded by popular contempt and ridicule, he distinguished himself by his holy integrity and unwavering faithfulness. A power attended his words, for it was the voice of God to man through His servant. Connection with God made him strong in the strength of infinite power, while for one hundred and twenty years his solemn voice fell upon the ears of that generation in regard to events, which, so far as human wisdom could judge, were impossible” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 96).

keytext

“The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. . . . But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.”

(Genesis 6:5-8, NIV)

what do you think?

Either/Or. Choose one of the two statements given and explain your response.

I believe Jesus will come in my lifetime. OR I don't think Jesus will come in my lifetime.

Why did you answer the way you did? What are some common explanations you have heard from people who hold either of these opinions?

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did you know?

The existence of a catastrophic flood is embedded in many ancient cultures. The Babylonians, the Mayans, the Egyptians, and even some cultures of Asia report stories from their history that bear a close resemblance to the Flood story of the Bible. Even the Australian Aborigines tell a story of a great flood, a family, and a boat as part of their cultural tradition.

INTO THE STORY

“This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, ‘I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out.’”

“And Noah did all that the Lord commanded him. Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood.

Pairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and

of all creatures that move along the ground, male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, as God had commanded Noah. And after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth. In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, on the seventeenth day of the second month—on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. On that very day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark.”

“By the first day of the first month of Noah’s six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry. By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry. Then God said to Noah, ‘Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you—the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground—so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number on it.’”

(Genesis 6:9-14; Genesis 7:5-13; Genesis 8:13-17, NIV)



OUT OF THE STORY

As you read through the story, key facts that you see are important.

- the main characters included in the story.
- the text that reveals information about the setting and the attitudes of people in this story.

What is significant about the specific days of the month mentioned in this story?

What do you see as the major themes that grow out of this story?

As you read this passage, is there:

- A promise to claim? _____
- A lesson to learn? _____
- An example to follow? _____
- A warning to heed? _____
- A thanksgiving to express? _____
- A prayer to offer? _____
- An action to take? _____

If there is one message in this story that relates to your life today, what is it?

How can the message of this story change the way you live this week for God?

punch lines

“By the word of God . . . the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” **(2 Peter 3:5-7, KJV).**

“As I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee” **(Isaiah 54:9, 10, KJV).**

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” **(Hebrews 11:7, KJV).**

“As in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” **(Matthew 24:38, 39, KJV).**

further insight

“We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith.”—Ellen G. White, *Steps to*

Christ, p. 59.

connecting to life

Sabbath

Read Matthew 24:38, 39.

Look at the *What Do You Think?* exercise at the beginning of this lesson and reflect on the similarities between the days of Noah and today. From today's reading make a list of three to five similarities between the time of the end and the time of Noah and the Flood.

"As in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:38, 39, KJV).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Sunday

Read Genesis 15:6.

Read the story portion of Noah and the Flood found in Genesis 6 through 9:17 and respond to the study questions given in your lesson. Scripture says that Noah found favor in the sight of the Lord (Genesis 6:8), and that he was righteous and blameless. What made him righteous and blameless? How can we find favor in the sight of God?

Monday

Read Genesis 6:5-8.

The *Key Text* for this week portrays aspects of God's character that are both troubling and heartwarming. It is sad that humanity became so disconnected from God that He would be "grieved" that He had made them. It's hard to imagine God being so sorry for the mess of sin that He chose to start all over again. But what is so beautiful is that God cared so much for the human race that He did start over instead of giving up on humanity altogether. That "Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord"

(Genesis 6:8, NIV) is a rainbow of hope that God will start over rather than giving up on us.

Have you considered thanking God for not giving up on you? Write a prayer of thanks to God for sticking with you.

Tuesday

Read Hebrews 11:7.

Read the *Flashlight* section. What are some events or experiences that seem unimaginable to you today? Consider how the faith Noah demonstrated in his day is still needed in your world. Do you know anyone of whom this quote reminds you? How do you see a little of Noah in them? What challenge might God be calling you to that seems impossible?

Wednesday

Perhaps there are moments in your week when an opportunity to share God's Word with a friend or a stranger will arise. Read the *Punch Lines* and identify one verse that you think might be especially relevant to people in your sphere of influence. Explain why you chose that particular verse and whom you would share it with if the opportunity presented itself. Pray for God to give you a chance this week to convey a word of hope from this week's study to someone else.

Thursday

Read Isaiah 54:9, 10.

It may be that one of the reasons the antediluvians (people before the Flood) did not respond to the promptings of Noah's preaching was that they thought they had time. Do you have a tendency to postpone aspects of your

relationship with God because you don't feel a sense of urgency? How does the story of Noah awaken any sense of urgency in you?

Friday

Read Hebrews 11:1.

The Bible says, "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1, NIV). Reflect on the story of Noah and the faith in what he could not see that he had to exercise. What other characters in Scripture had to exhibit similar "blind faith"? Make a list of your top 10 heroes of faith in the Bible and decide why their story is important to you. Also, think of the challenges you face and how the example of these characters might encourage you.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

this week's reading*

Patriarchs and Prophets (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 7-9.

**Beginning of the End* is a special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.