

Noah's Ark

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: God keeps His promises, so we can trust Him and obey Him all the way, even before we see why.

Bible passage: Genesis 6:5–9:17. Read it before class.

Memory verse: "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." *Genesis 9:13 (KJV)*

You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), paper and a pencil for each child, a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.

Before class: write the memory verse on the board.

1. Opening game: Draw It Exactly (5–10 minutes)

Give each child paper and a pencil. Say: "Draw exactly what I say, and nothing else." Read slowly: "Draw a long box across your paper. Draw two lines inside it to make three floors. Draw a door on the side. Draw a window at the top." Compare drawings. Ask: *Did anyone add something I didn't say, or leave something out? Why does it matter to follow every instruction?* Say: "God gave Noah exact instructions too."

2. Bible story: Noah Obeys God All the Way (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to Genesis 6. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

Why God sent the flood. People on the earth had become very wicked. Every thought in their hearts was only evil, all the time, and the earth was full of violence (Genesis 6:5, 6:11). It grieved God (made Him deeply sad) that He had made people (6:6). **Look up Genesis 6:8.** ("But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD." **Grace** means God's kindness that we do not earn.) Noah was a **just** man, which means he did what was right, and Noah walked with God (6:9).

God's instructions. God told Noah to make an ark of gopher wood (a kind of wood; the Bible does not say which tree) with rooms inside, and to cover it inside and out with **pitch**, a sticky tar that keeps water out (6:14). **Look up Genesis 6:15.** The ark was 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high. A **cubit** is about the length from your elbow to your fingertips, about 18 inches. So the ark was about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high! It had a window, a door in the side, and three floors (6:16). God told Noah to bring two of every kind of animal, male and female, and food for everyone (6:19–21). **Look up Genesis 6:22.** Noah did all that God commanded him.

Into the ark. God told Noah to take seven pairs of every clean animal and of the birds, and one pair of the animals that were not clean (7:2–3). Noah was 600 years old (7:6). **Look up Genesis 7:11.** The flood began in the 600th year of Noah's life, in the 2nd month, on the 17th day. Eight people went in: Noah, his wife, Shem, Ham, Japheth and their wives (7:13). **Look up Genesis 7:16.** The LORD shut him in.



The flood. Rain fell for 40 days and 40 nights (7:12). The water rose 15 cubits (about 22 feet) above the mountains (7:20). Every person and animal on dry land died, and only Noah and those with him in the ark stayed alive (7:22–23). The water stayed high for 150 days (7:24).

The raven and the dove. Look up Genesis 8:1. God remembered Noah and sent a wind, and the water went down. The ark rested on the mountains of Ararat in the 7th month, on the 17th day (8:4). After 40 more days Noah opened the window and sent out a raven, which flew back and forth until the water dried up (8:6–7). Then he sent out a dove. She found no place to rest her foot and came back, and Noah reached out and pulled her in (8:8–9). He waited seven days and sent her again. **Look up Genesis 8:11.** She came back in the evening with an olive leaf in her mouth, so Noah knew the water was going down. Seven days later he sent her out again, and she did not come back (8:12).

Out of the ark. Look up Genesis 8:14. In the 2nd month, on the 27th day, the earth was dry. Compare it with 7:11: Noah's family had been in the ark more than a year! God told them to come out (8:16). The first thing Noah did was build an altar to the LORD and offer **burnt offerings**, gifts burned on the altar to worship God (8:20). God promised that seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will not stop (8:22). **Look up Genesis 9:13.** God set His rainbow in the cloud as the sign of His promise to every living creature: never again a flood to destroy the earth (9:11–17).

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. Noah started building long before any rain fell. Why is it hard to obey God when we can't see the reason yet?
2. Genesis 6:22 says Noah did *all* that God commanded. What would "half obeying" have looked like for Noah? What does it look like for us?
3. Noah's family was in the ark more than a year (7:11, 8:14). What helps you trust God when you have to wait?
4. The first thing Noah did on dry ground was worship God (8:20). Why do you think he did that first?
5. God has kept His rainbow promise ever since. What other promises of God do you know?

Recall questions

1. How long was the ark? (*300 cubits, about 450 feet, Genesis 6:15*)
2. Which bird came back with an olive leaf? (*The dove, 8:11*)
3. Who shut the door of the ark? (*The LORD, 7:16*)

4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **bow** means rainbow, **token** means sign, and **covenant** means a promise God makes and keeps. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.



5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Noah obeyed God, and God kept him safe in the ark. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: when God's Word or a parent asks you to do something, do all of it, not just part of it.

6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. Genesis 6:10: What were the names of Noah's three sons? (*Shem, Ham and Japheth*)
2. Genesis 6:14: What kind of wood was the ark made of? (*Gopher wood*)
3. Genesis 7:4: How many days until the rain began? (*Seven days*)
4. Genesis 7:6: How old was Noah when the flood came? (*600 years old*)
5. Genesis 7:20: How many cubits did the water rise above the mountains? (*Fifteen cubits*)
6. Genesis 8:4: Where did the ark come to rest? (*On the mountains of Ararat*)
7. Genesis 8:20: What did Noah build after he came out of the ark? (*An altar unto the LORD*)
8. Genesis 9:1: What did God tell Noah and his sons to do? (*Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. That means have families and fill the earth.*)

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You always keep Your promises. Help us obey You all the way, even when we can't see why yet, and even when it's hard to wait. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks about the people outside the ark: answer simply and gently. God was grieved by the evil people chose (Genesis 6:5–6), and the Bible calls Noah "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5), so people heard about God while he built. God is always good and fair, and He wants everyone to come to Him.

