

## LESSON 1

## Noah—He Did As God Commanded

“A major storm is expected. Death and destruction will be suffered throughout the land.”

Suppose you were to hear these words on a radio broadcast. Suppose you had the only radio receiving set in the community. You alone knew of the coming disaster. How would you feel? What would you do? Probably you would think first of your family. You would warn them, “Come, we must try to save ourselves!” Then you would hurry to your neighbors’ homes, calling to them, “A storm is coming! Get ready for the storm!”

Suppose they would not listen. Suppose they said to you, “You are not an expert in matters of the weather. We will not get excited just because you come with some big story of a storm. We are having a feast. Go away. There has never been a storm like that here before. Why should we believe you?”

How rejected and defeated you would be! How sad to know that your efforts to help others were in vain. But if you were sure in your own heart you would do everything possible to save your family and yourself, wouldn’t you?

Events similar to the ones we have supposed were experienced in reality by Noah. The voice he heard did not come from a radio broadcast Noah heard the voice of God. We will discuss in this lesson the experiences of Noah. We will learn why

the terrifying storm came upon the earth, what God said to Noah, and how Noah escaped with his life as flood waters swirled all about him.

In this lesson you will .....

God Evaluated the World

God Judged Mankind

Noah Accepted 'God's Plan

This lesson will help you...

Explain what is meant by sin against God.

Explain why judgment is necessary.

Describe God's plan and His promise.

Explain how man receives God's promise.

**GOD EVALUATED THE WORLD**

The condition of Mankind

“What is Noah doing?” the people asked in mocking voices.

Only Noah knew that a great flood was coming to destroy the earth. He was building a huge boat. He tried to warn the people, but they would not believe him. The sky was clear, and they wanted to enjoy themselves.

In the beginning God created the earth beautiful and perfect, filled with plants and animals. Then He created a man and a woman, to share life and beauty.

The man and woman did not show respect for the God who created them. He gave them instructions, explaining how they could live happily and please Him, but they failed to obey Him. This brought sin into human life. After that, as children were born and people began to fill the earth, they all fell short of doing that which was pleasing to God. Sin came into control within the hearts of men.

God had created people, the best of all creation, so of course He watched them at all times and knew exactly what they were doing and thinking. He knew in those days that the people had forgotten Him and were living continually separated from Him, in sin.

*God saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.*

God saw that people were *corrupt*. This means that they were devious, or dishonest, vile, pernicious. It means that the normal purposes of life had been ruined. Many were perverted, or using their minds and bodies in unnatural ways. They thought of physical pleasures, food, drink, big parties, and celebrations. They felt no need for God and had no reverence or respect for Him. They cared nothing about His pleasure nor His will for their lives.

God saw that people were *violent*. This means that they were unkind and thoughtless toward one another. They fought against one another, were

crude and cruel and selfish. They used the bodies God had given them to harm other people, and forgot that their strength and abilities were to be used to nourish the earth and bring glory to the Creator.

In each of these *For You to Do* sections, the questions or exercises will help you review or apply what you have just studied. They will help you to know when you have understood the lesson. Follow the directions given in each section.

Here you find sentences which contain some blank spaces. Fill in the blanks with the correct words.

1 God saw that people were

This means that they used their strength to  
against one another.

2 God saw that people were

This means that they used their bodies and  
minds

in and dishonest ways.

Check your answers.

### The Nature of Sin

God was not pleased when He saw the condition of the earth. The people were not concerned. They kept on in their sinful ways, because they would not accept the fact that sin is a horrible and ruinous state of the heart. God, on the other hand, was very concerned, because He knew

the truth about sin. He understood that the corruption and violence were not only sin in themselves, but they were the result of man's sinful condition.

Sometimes we think of sin as a wicked act, done by a certain person at a certain time. It can be this, but it is much more, too. The real truth about sin is that it is the condition of man that exists because man has turned away from God. Sin separates man from God. Sin is the refusal to submit to the will of God. It is a denial of man's purpose, which is to serve and please God. Sin is man's rejection of God's will. It is refusal to listen to the voice of God.

Sin takes control of human beings like a fatal disease and leads them to extreme suffering, not only on earth, but in hell which awaits those that have strayed from God. That is why God was displeased when He saw the sinful condition of mankind. He knew that man could not be allowed to continue in this way. He knew that judgment and destruction had to come upon the earth. The stains which sin had left upon the earth needed to be washed away, so that the glory of God could once again reflect from the hearts of His most prized creation.

3 Select words from the list given here, and use them to write a definition that expresses your own understanding of sin. You need not use all the words. We have done the first one for you.

disease    separates    condition

suffering turned away disobedience

rejection rebellion

a Sin

b Sin is

.....

c Sin is

d Sin is

## GOD JUDGED MANKIND

### Judgment Was Required

Although He had been patient, there came a time when God had to declare that He could not allow the evil of man to contaminate the world any further.

So God said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air. 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. I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens."

The whole human race had resisted God's will—contended, or fought against obedience to God. In other words, people fought against their own reason for being. In this way, they destroyed

themselves in the sight of God. They had corrupted, or misused, what God had given them. God's nature could not allow such evil to stain His creation. God who is truth and purity had to bring judgment upon sin.

Now you know that a good father, even though he loves his children, cannot stand by and allow them to corrupt his name. The honor of the family name cannot be neglected. Children are not to disobey and disrespect their father. He must chastise them if they persist in such wicked ways. The good father does not like to punish his children, but he has no choice. The wickedness of the children makes punishment necessary. Such punishment, administered in love, serves only to guide the children along the right path, which leads to honor, not to shame.

God was in a position similar to that of the father who has suffered disrespect and disobedience from his children. In addition, God's nature is total holiness. Such holiness cannot share its presence with sinfulness. Holiness must judge sin.

for you to do

4 Circle the letters in front of the correct completions to the following statement God had to send judgment upon mankind because

- a) He did not love the people.
- b) the people continually resisted His purposes.

- c) His holiness must judge sin.
- d) He wished to prove His power.

### Judgment and Mercy Were Planned

Now God seemed to have a real problem, didn't He? He must send judgment upon the sinful earth. But also, He has a great heart of unlimited compassion and mercy. More than anything He desired that His people would accomplish the purpose for which they were created. He wanted them to bring glory to His name. What could He do?

Although He looked upon the earth in displeasure He knew from the beginning how He would solve the problem. He had a plan. He could destroy all the sinful earth, and yet rescue mankind, because there was one righteous man, blameless among the people of that day, a man who walked with God. His name was Noah (peace be upon him).

It was at this point that Noah heard the voice telling of a great storm to come. He heard the voice which came not from a radio broadcast; the voice which came directly from God.

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. I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth and everything on earth will perish."

You see, even though Noah was a person subject to the condition of sin, he found favor with

God because he remained close to the Creator and desired His presence. Noah walked in the path of God and was willing always to submit to Him. God planned to use Noah as His messenger. Through Noah He could send a warning message to mankind. Through Noah He could demonstrate mercy and compassion to the world. God would show that even when judgment comes, a way will be provided to save those who will listen to His voice and be obedient to Him.

So God told Noah that the terrible flood was coming because the sinful condition of mankind made it necessary. Sin could not be allowed to continue unpunished. The flood was the judgment of God. But for Noah, God would make a way of escape, because He cared for His people still and wanted them to understand His mercy and His purpose for their lives. He told Noah to listen carefully and obey all His instructions.

Noah was to build a large ship, called an ark, which would float on the waters and keep him safe during the storm. God gave exact directions and measurements for the construction of the ark. It is an indication of God's personal interest and concern for His people that He explained every detail of the preparations. When we read the account in the Torah, we get the impression that God was with Noah, watching every detail as the ark was built. He seemed to hover over His chosen builder, guiding him and making sure that the vessel to which He would trust His beloved creation was worthy to withstand the wrath of any

storm. No power of evil could ever destroy those who would accept the protection of God's wonderful ark!

God told Noah that when the ark was finished, at the appointed time rain would begin to fall. Waters would come up from the earth, and everything that breathed would be drowned, except for those in the ark. Noah was to take with him into the ark the members of his family, and pairs of all living creatures, so that life could be restored after the flood was over.

Thus we see that even before judgment came, God had already made provision for His special creation, mankind, to escape judgment and accept new life. God chose a man, Noah, and a method, the ark, by which people could be made aware of the certainty of judgment and the way of salvation.

for you to do

5 Choose from the list of words one which fits best and write it in the blank to complete each sentence.

judgment messengersin

flood ark drowned

salvation

a The sinful condition of man required

b In spite of his sin, God offered man

- c Because of God's concern for man He told Noah to build the
- d God chose to work through a human

## NOAH ACCEPTED GOD'S PLAN

### The Covenant Was Established

God said to Noah, "I will establish my covenant with you. Make an ark according to my instructions. Take your family and the animals into it as I have said' and you will be safe from the flood waters which will drown all other life."

God used the word *covenant* for a definite reason. Since a covenant is something like a contract, it has the effect of binding two or more parties together in a pledge or promise. All who enter into a covenant or contract have a solemn responsibility, and all have hope of benefit.

Noah understood what God told him. He realized that the covenant was God's way of bringing man to Himself. It was God's purpose from the beginning that God and man should be in harmony. Noah knew that he could please God by acting in complete obedience. And he knew also that obedience to God would bring salvation and life for himself. God does not go back on His word. Noah's salvation was guaranteed. He did not doubt his safety, for God does not plot against the righteous. He does not deceive those who follow

Him. Like a good contract, the covenant of God would bring benefits to everyone.

Noah did not hesitate. We read in the account of his life these plain words: *Noah did everything just as God commanded him.* By his obedience he pleased God and received deliverance for himself and his family.

Noah understood the words of God. He accepted and believed all that God said. He was faced with a decision. He could have decided not to accept God's plan of salvation; however, he made on his own freedom of choice the personal decision to act according to God's instructions. When we think about the situation we can be sure that Noah behaved with great faith and courage.

All about him, as we have noted, the people were interested only in pleasure and selfish living. They had never heard of a flood; had never seen water pouring from the sky. They had heard Noah talk about God and try to convince them to change their ways. Probably they laughed at him and thought he was a strange one. Now suddenly they hear him saying, "A flood is coming." They hear his warning voice as he speaks to his sons and tells them of the need to enter the ark he is building.

Noah, following God's specifications, produced a masterpiece of construction. This in itself should have been a witness of the importance of his words. The faithful, patient work and the warning message went on for years. The people who laughed or ignored Noah were making decisions, too. Just as

Noah proved by his actions that he had chosen to believe and obey God, so the others proved by their actions that they chose to reject God.

### FOR YOU TO DO

Answer the following questions, using your own ideas. Each can be answered in a few words.

6 What is the purpose of a covenant?

b

7 Why did God make a covenant with Noah?

8 Who has responsibility when a covenant is made?

9 What is man's responsibility when a covenant is made between God and man?

### The Promise Was. Extended

At last the ark was finished. Noah saw that all the food was placed on board, enough to last the people and animals throughout the time of the storm. Then all the animals were taken into their places, just as God had instructed. With the members of his family, Noah stepped into the ark. What a moment of triumphant faith that must have been! Noah had been righteous when others lived in sin. He had been obedient in following God's commandments. He had labored faithfully and strenuously to get the ark ready. But in the moment when he entered the door he *submitted himself*

*completely Into the hands of God* in a new and special way. We read in the account, *Then God shut him in*. God closed the door of the ark. There was nothing else that Noah could do. He was completely dependent upon . God for protection and salvation from the judgment which would come upon the sinful earth.

And the judgment did come. The flood was a terrifying reality. For forty days and forty nights rain fell from the skies and great springs burst forth from the earth. As God had said, and as Noah had warned the people, everyone outside the ark died in the awful waters. Noah was protected by the ark and by the covenant which God had established.

The water flooded the earth. Then God closed the springs of the deep and stopped the rain from falling. He sent a wind to evaporate the water, and eventually the ground was dry again. God said to Noah, "Come out of the ark." He told Noah that the people and animals should begin to multiply once more, and make the earth fruitful.

As soon as he was on dry ground Noah built an altar to God and offered Him burned sacrifices, in worship and thanksgiving. God was pleased with this, and said to Noah, "Even though the inclination of man's heart is evil, I will not destroy all living creatures again in the way that I have done." And God made the rainbow to be a sign of His promise to mankind.

We can understand by the words of God that the sinful condition of man had not been destroyed

in the flood. Sinful people had been destroyed, but the sinful condition remained. We learn from this that Noah was not saved because he was free from the condition of sin, but rather because he had trusted God to make a way of escape for him. Because Noah believed God and obeyed, God placed him in a position of safety. He was safe from the flood waters while he was in the ark. He was safe from the judgment which came upon the sinful earth. Trust and obedience builds for each of us a kind of ark which keeps us safe from judgment.

### FOR YOU TO DO

10 As we have studied the account of Noah we have seen that his actions tell us much about his characteristics as a person. After each description of an action, write in the blank a characteristic which the action indicated. Characteristics of Noah:

Interested in others    Faithful

Willing to work        Attentive to God

Worshipful

a    Noah followed God's instructions exactly.

b    Noah built a huge ark.

c    Noah worked on the ark for many years.

d Noah told the people a flood would come.

c Noah built an altar to God.

11 What behavior of Noah was absolutely necessary for his deliverance? Answer in your own words.

Yes, God said to Noah after the flood, just as He had said before the flood, *every inclination of the heart of man is evil*. Yet God was willing to make a new covenant with Noah, and this time He extended His promise to all of Noah's descendants. God had expressed His displeasure with the sinful ways of men by sending the flood. He had demonstrated that sin is terrible and must lead to judgment. He had shown that an individual person, who trusts and obeys God will not be subject to judgment.

Now, as He said, "I establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you," and made the rainbow His sign, God demonstrated once more His concern and His hope for mankind. We know that He intended the story of Noah to be told through the years to many generations, for we find it used often as an illustration of the lessons God wants us all to learn.

“Remember Noah,” God says to us, “as things were in his day, and sinful men paid no attention to him until the flood came and took them all away, so will there come an awful day when God will judge the earth.” Remember Noah. He was faithful, and God accepted him. “Remember Noah,” God has said to us “when I swore that the waters would never again cover the earth. . . . my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed.”

### FOR YOU TO DO

12 Write on a separate paper a list of thoughts or lessons which come to your mind as you think back over the account of Noah and the flood.

In what way can your own life be improved by what you have learned from the way Noah responded to the will of God?

Check all your answers with those given at the end of this lesson.

13 Pray to God, who delivered Noah, asking Him to speak to your own heart and guide you to find deliverance according to His plan for you.

### PRAYER

Oh God! Protector and Guardian of those who are of the righteous. Praise be unto you forever. As you personally instructed Noah in the building of the ark which protected him from the flood, may you be pleased as well, to instruct me in the building of an ark for my own life; in the building of a relationship with you, that will likewise protect

me from the great and terrible day of judgment. Implant within my own heart a relationship of devotion and obedience; for my soul cries out unto you for that same kind of covenant, in which I too can know for sure that you are my refuge, and that my salvation from destruction and hell is absolutely certain. For only then can my soul rest in peace.

Amen.

### CHECK YOUR ANSWERS

The answers to your study exercises are not given in the usual order. This is done so you will not see the answer to your next-question ahead of time. Look for the number you need, and try not to look ahead.

7 He wanted to bring man to Himself.

1 violent, fight

8 All parties have responsibility.

2 corrupt, perverted, or unnatural

9 To obey God.

3 a Sin separates man from God. b  
Sin is a disease which leads to suffering.

c Sin is the condition caused by man's disobedience to God's will.

d Sin is the result of man's rebellion and rejection of God's purpose.

10 a Attentive to God.

- b Willing to work.
- c Faithful. .
- d Interested in others.
- e Worshipful.

4 b) the people continually resisted His purposes. c) His holiness must judge sin.

11 The following may be expressed in other words. Noah obeyed God; did what God told him to do. He submitted to God, or depended completely upon God, he trusted God.

- 5 a judgment.
- b salvation.
- c ark.
- d messenger.

12 Possible answers: I need to be more aware of how terrible sin is in the sight of God. I will feel closer to God as I realize how much He cares for people. I can be sure of deliverance from judgment by submitting my own life completely to God.

6 To bind two or more parties together.

test

As you prepare to take this lesson test, please locate the *STUDENT REPORT ANSWER SHEET* in the back of your study guide. Read the instructions and record your answers for Lesson 1.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

If your answer to each of the following questions is

YES, blacken space A

NO, blacken space B

1 Have you carefully read Lesson 1?

2 Have you completed all the *For You to Do* sections in this lesson?

3 Have you checked the answers you gave in the *For You to Do* sections with those at the end of the lesson?

4 Have you reviewed the lesson objectives to see if you are able to do what they suggest?

5 Have you reviewed the material before taking this lesson test?

#### MULTIPLE CHOICE

6 When we speak of sin against God we refer to

a) man's failure to obey God's instructions and to please Him.

b) each individual act of man which brings God's judgment.

c) a temporary but harmless attitude toward God.

7 God's judgment was brought upon sin because a) God was offended and wanted to punish man.

b) God's will had been resisted and His name corrupted.

c) there was no provision for its removal.

8 God's chastisement, which is given in love, is intended as an

a) illustration which will warn other potential sinners.

b) example that will guide His children in the right way.

c) demonstration of the harsh side of His nature.

9 God's covenant with Noah was an agreement which obligated God to provide protection from judgment while Noah

a) was to earn favor by doing good works.

b) agreed to become a mouthpiece or prophet.

c) was to act in complete obedience to God.

10 Noah was saved because he

a) was free from the condition of sin.

b) trusted in God to make a way of escape for him.

c) had done many good deeds.

**TRUE OR FALSE**

The following statements are either true or false. If the statement is

TRUE, blacken space A. FALSE, blacken space B.

11 Since sin is a temporary condition, little is required to change the condition and to effect a friendly relationship between God and man.

12 The covenant God made with Noah was an agreement which involved both parties with solemn responsibility.: Noah must obey God; God guaranteed Noah's salvation.

13 Noah had no choice in the matter of accepting God's offer of a covenant relationship which guaranteed his salvation.

14 When Noah entered the ark he submitted himself completely to God for protection and salvation from judgment.

#### FILL IN

Fill in the blank spaces with the correct words.

15 Sin is the condition caused by man's ..... to God's

16 God chose Noah to make people aware of judgment and the way of

17 God obligated Himself by a .....

to provide protection and a way of salvation; Noah

was obligated to ..... God.

18 Noah was not saved because he was free from the condition of sin, but rather because he ..... God to make a way of escape for him.

19 God had to send judgment upon mankind because people resisted His

20 When Noah entered the ark, he became completely ..... upon God for protection and salvation from judgment