



CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

#31 - The Waters Recede Genesis 8:1-19

PICTURES NEEDED

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| 31-1 Sedimentary rock layers | 31-4 The dove Noah sent out |
| 31-2 Fold mountains | 31-5 Geological column |
| 31-3 Volcanic mountains | |

REVIEW (Before Teaching Lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review) Where did the water that flooded the earth come from? For how long did it flood? How much water covered the earth? What happened to life on earth?
- **The Big Question Review:** What will happen to evil men? Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review:** Psalm 37:1-2 Evil men will die away.

¹Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong; ²for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away.

LESSON CONTENT

Note: The Bible verses included in the lesson are from the NIV 1984 edition. The wording of the questions is derived from that version. If another version of the Bible is used, questions may need to be adapted.

In the last lesson, we studied how the earth was flooded. How did the flooding of the earth occur? In describing the flood, the Bible says that water poured down from the sky and burst forth from the deep, covering the entire earth and the mountains to a depth of twenty feet. How long did it rain for? It rained for 40 days.

What would have happened to the land under those conditions? The amount of water that was poured down upon the earth and came up from the ground would have created a great upheaval of the ground and washed away everything in its path. The plants and trees would have matted together as they were washed away and then buried under massive amounts of mud.

Once the water stopped moving around what would have begun to happen to the ground? When dirt that is churned up by water begins to settle, it does so in layers. Some of the dirt would have begun to settle during the flooding and then been churned up again by more movement of water. It wouldn't have been until it stopped raining and the water started receding that all the dirt and rocks would have had a chance to settle into one place and stopped being moved around.

What would have happened to the animals that died? Lots of dead animals would have been buried in the layers of sediment under conditions that would have fossilized them. The layers of dirt and rock would have been compacted by the weight of the mud on top of them and solidified into sedimentary rock containing fossils. **(picture 31-1)**

Visual demonstration: To represent what happened to the earth in the flood put some sand, dirt, and pebbles into a quart jar. Stick a few twigs in the dirt and some leaves and grass to represent the plant life on the earth. Don't fill the jar more than half full. Talk about what happened in the flood then add water to the jar from a pitcher up to an inch from the top and tighten the lid. Shake the jar violently for 30 seconds and then set it on a level table to observe what happens during the lesson time (about 30 minutes). The heavy pebbles will tend to settle first, then the dirt, and then the finer sand. The leaves and twigs will get buried in the earth and may cross over different layers. As you read the account of the receding of the waters, keep checking on what is happening to the dirt in the jar.

Genesis 8:1-5

¹But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and he sent a wind over the earth, and the waters receded. ²Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky. ³The water receded steadily from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the water had gone down, ⁴and on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵The waters continued to recede until the tenth month, and on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains became visible.

What does it mean to recede? Move back or away.

What caused the waters to recede? The Bible says that God sent a wind over the earth and the waters receded. We have to think about and figure out possibilities for some of the things that were going on because the Bible doesn't give much information. Geologists who study the make-up of the surface of the earth can give us an idea of what might have happened. For the waters to recede they would have needed an ocean basin to flow into.

It is likely that many of the mountain ranges that exist now were pushed up at the end of the flood or shortly thereafter as the sedimentary layers would have still been somewhat soft and pliable, forming what are known as Fold Mountains. Most mountains ranges are made up of Fold Mountains. **(picture 31-2)**

If these ranges were pushed up and the ocean bottoms sank from the weight of the water, basins would have formed, giving a place for the waters to recede into. There is also evidence of massive volcanic activity, which would have made other mountains. **(picture 31-3)** After the flood when the layers were hardened into rocks other movement of the earth would have made other types of mountains.

Visual demonstration: To represent the pushing up of the mountains layer some newspapers and paper towels and spray them with water to moisten and soften them. Have a child put his hands on both sides of the newspaper and slowly move his hands toward each other. The papers should make a ridge in the middle. This demonstrates how Fold Mountains are formed. When these mountains erode the sedimentary layers they are made up of become visible.

Genesis 8:6-19 (picture 31-4)

⁶After forty days Noah opened the window he had made in the ark ⁷and sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth. ⁸Then he sent out a dove to see if the water had receded from the surface of the ground. ⁹But the dove could find no place to set its feet because there was water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah in the ark. He reached out his hand and took the dove and brought it back to himself in the ark. ¹⁰He waited seven more days and again sent out the dove from the ark. ¹¹When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth. ¹²He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

¹³By 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. ¹⁴By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry.

¹⁵Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶"Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. ¹⁷Bring 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 upon it."

¹⁸So Noah came out, together with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives. ¹⁹All the animals and all the creatures that move along the ground and all the birds--everything that moves on the earth--came out of the ark, one kind after another.

How long were Noah and his family in the ark? Noah and his family were in the ark for an entire year before the land was dry and God told them to come out. It was a year of waiting and trusting God. Noah walked with God and during the time on the ark, he knew God was taking care of him and his family. God takes care of those who put their trust in him.

King David, who also trusted God, wrote many Psalms expressing his trust. Psalm 18:2 says, The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

What can we learn about trusting God from Noah? When we trust God, we don't have to be afraid in difficult circumstances. Noah and his family went through a terrible time in a catastrophic flood that changed the face of the earth but they relied upon God who was with them in the midst of it all and brought them safely to rest on the mountains of Ararat. God fulfilled the promise he had made to Noah. Because Noah was faithful, the human race and animals were preserved.

LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Overview Questions:** Where did the ark come to rest? (4) How did Noah know that the water had receded? (10-11) What did Noah do after the dove came back with the olive branch? (13) How old was Noah when the water dried up? (13) What did God tell Noah to do once the land was dry? (15-17)
- **Thought Questions:** What kinds of things do you think Noah and his family talked about while they were on the ark? What would they have been concerned about? What do you think made them most afraid? How would they have coped with being cooped up in the ark for a year?
- **Prayer:** Thank God that he is with those who put their trust in him. Thank him that he is always watching over us and that we can trust in him. Pray that you would learn to look to God, trust in him, and be used by him to be a blessing to others as Noah was.
- **The Big Question: What can we trust in times of trouble?**
Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.
- **Memory Verse: Psalm 18:2** We can always trust that God is our rock and keeps us safe.

*(The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge.)
He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.*

Questions: What does it mean that God is our rock? Our fortress? Our deliverer? Our shield? Our salvation? Our stronghold? What will happen to us if God isn't these things for us?

ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Have the children answer the two questions individually or as a group. What did you learn from this lesson? How can you put into practice what you learned?
- ★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the class notes and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse.
- ★ **Activity Page:** Crossword Puzzle Review
Have the students fill in the crossword puzzle with answers from the flood account.

Across

3. What mountains did the ark come to rest on? Ararat
5. What did water burst forth from in the deep? Springs
7. What became visible on the first day of the tenth month? Mountains
8. What bird did Noah send out the second time? Dove
9. What did Noah take on the ark besides his family and the animals? Food

Down

1. What did the second bird bring back the second time it was sent out? Olive branch
2. What opened up in the skies? Floodgates
4. How many days did it rain? Forty
5. How many years old was Noah when the flood came? Six hundred
6. What bird did Noah first send out? Raven

- ★ **This Week's Big Question:** Have the students fill in the blanks for the way the memory verse answers the big question.
We can always trust that God is our rock and keeps us safe.
- ★ **Coloring Page:** Color the lesson picture.

- **Craft:** Make a Card

As a reminder that God watched over Noah and his family on the ark and caused the waters to recede, make a card that reminds you of his love and protection. You can send the card to someone who is going through trouble.

Materials: light blue cover stock paper, white copy paper, scissors, glue sticks

Preparation: Run off the card of craft 31 on light blue cover stock paper and the doves on white copy paper. Cut apart.

Instructions: Cut out the dove and paste it on the card. Cut out and paste the olive branch to its mouth. Cut out and paste olive leaves on the branch.

- **Game:** Find the Olive Branch (Variation of Hide the Hanky)
As a reminder that Noah sent out a dove that came back with an olive branch once the waters receded, play find the olive branch.

Instructions: Use either a picture of an olive branch or a real olive branch and select one child to hide it while the others have their eyes covered and closed. Once it is hidden the children get up to search for it. Anyone who sees it sits down and waits for the others to find it. The one who saw it first gets to hide it next.

JOURNAL

The journal is passed out at the end of class for the students to complete at home. It has six poetic readings and related Bible verses. It would be beneficial for the teacher to read through and be familiar with its content.