

## Lesson 6 The Rainbow: God's Promises for the Future

Read: Genesis 8:1-9:17

How do you feel when you see the long-awaited fulfillment of one of God's promises? Perhaps your response is similar to that of Noah and his family. In the previous study we saw them safe within the ark as the deluge destroyed all life on earth and eventually covered the mountains. Now we see how God fulfills his promises to them and how Noah's response can be an example to us today.

1. Read Genesis 8. Noah and his family were in the ark a little more than a year (7:11; 8:13-14). Put yourself in their place and describe how you would feel from the time God shut the door until he said, "Come out of the ark."
2. What do we learn about God's concern for the passengers of the ark and his activity to end the flood (vv.1-5)?
3. What initiative does Noah take during this period (vv.6-12)?
4. How does his example help us to understand what our responsibility may be during a period when we are depending on God to work?
5. Noah's first action after emptying the ark is to offer a sacrifice to God (v.20). What does this reveal about his priorities amid the pressure of urgent tasks calling for immediate attention?
6. What aspect of Noah's example- his obedience, faith, courage, endurance- is most meaningful to you in a situation you are facing?
7. How does the Lord respond to Noah's sacrifice (vv. 21-22)?
8. Why is his promise especially remarkable against the backdrop of the flood?
9. What commission does God now give Noah and his family?
10. How is the sign of the rainbow especially appropriate to the promise?

## Lesson 7 The Tower of Babel: Problems in Family and Society

Read: Genesis 9:18-11:32

A recurring problem in every generation is self-centered disrespect for authority, both human and divine. This attitude continued after the flood in Noah's own family, then on a larger scale in society. In the previous study we saw that Noah's new commission was similar to the one given to Adam. Now we see how sin again spreads from father to son to succeeding generations in both the private and public realms as self-indulgence generates waves of evil in ever-widening circles.

1. Read Genesis 9:18-29. Describe what happens in the brief story of Noah and his three sons (vv.20-23).
2. In what ways does Ham's conduct dishonor his father?
3. How do his actions contrast with those of his brothers (v.23)?
4. What curse does Noah pronounce on Canaan (Ham's son) and his descendants (vv.24-28)?
5. Scan Genesis 10, which traces the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. What interesting facts does this chapter reveal about the spread of humanity after the flood? (Note especially vv. 5, 8-15, 25)
6. Read Genesis 11:1-9. What action do the people of Babel take, and what is their motive?
7. It is amusing that the Lord must come down (v. 5) to see this tower that will reach to the heavens. What is his reaction (vv. 5-9)?
8. In the Bible this city, also known as Babylon, came increasingly to symbolize a godless society, whose sins reach up to heaven. Why must all human efforts to achieve world unity fall short of what God desires?
9. Read Genesis 11:10-32, which traces the line from Shem to Abraham. Why do you think the author is beginning to shift from all the families of the earth to one family?
10. How do the first eleven chapters of Genesis emphasize the need for God to save people of the earth?

This concludes Part One. Next Lessons will be Part Two of Genesis Chapters 12-36