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**Review:** *From your experience at the Cornerstone meeting last week, share something that helped build your faith.*

**DAY ONE**

Read Genesis 8:1-5

**NOTE: Chronology of the flood: Genesis 7:11** In the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, ...the fountains of the great deep burst forth...; 8:4 in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest...(5 months to the day after the flood began); 8:5 in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.; 8:13 In the 601st year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the waters dried up... ; 8:14 in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the land was dry; 8:15 Noah left the ark at God's command. Noah was in the ark for a full solar year of 365 days. *Scullion*

1a. Noah and all those on the ark have been floating for 150 days. What did God remember according to verse 1?

b. What do you think it means that God *remembered* Noah? Does it mean more than simply recalling facts about Noah and the Great Flood? See also Genesis 19:29; 30:22.

**NOTE: Verse 1 marks both the midpoint and the turning point of the flood narrative when God begins to drain the prevailing waters off the earth. *Ignatius Study Bible***

2. God made a wind blow over the earth so the waters subsided (verse 1). This is not the first time we have encountered the wind from God. Read Genesis 1:2 and note the similarities between these two verses.

**NOTE: It is no accident that the biblical author reveals the story of Noah in language similar to that of the Creation story in Genesis 1-2. Although there are many allusions to the creation accounts, this is not a simple retelling of that first story but something new. *Commentary***

3. The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed to stop the rain (verse 2). How did this impact the earth according to verse 3?

4. According to verse 4, the ark finally came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. Noah was adrift in the ark for seven months in flood waters. Try to imagine what you think his life and the lives of his family members might have been like during that time. Record a few thoughts.

**NOTE: The mountain country of ancient Arartu in northwest Iraq, was the highest part of the world to the biblical writer. There is no Mount Ararat in the Bible. *NABRE***

5. The waters continued to abate until the tenth month (verse 5.) On the first day of that month, the tops of the mountains appear. What do you think is significant about this event?

6. CONNECTION: Noah and his family are nearing the end of their ordeal. In a little while when they are able to leave the ark, uncertainty awaits them on dry land. All they knew before has been washed away. They will need God's guidance more than ever as they walk out of the ark to begin new lives. We encounter new beginnings in our lives frequently like a new job, a move, a new year. How can we make God a part of those transitions to calm our fears and guide us into the future with joyful hope? Can you share a success story of a new beginning?

Read Lamentations 3:22-24 and record a phrase that gives you hope as you contemplate change and the future.

## **DAY TWO**

**Read Genesis 8:6-14**

**NOTE: The multiple strands of tradition that we see in the story of the Flood makes for some complicated reading. *Commentary***

7. Today's lesson begins as the floodwaters began to withdraw. When and what did Noah do (verses 6-7)?

At the end of forty days

that he had made

and it went to and fro

8. Describe how Noah sent out the dove to see if the waters had subsided any further in verses 8-9.

9. Noah waited another seven days and sent out the dove again. This time the dove came back with an olive leaf in its beak so he knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. When he sent the dove out for a third time, it did not return (verses 10-12). What do the dove and the olive leaf symbolize in today's world, and how could this be connected to today's passage?

10. Read the Commentary, page 28, and comment on the importance of the imagery of the dove to subsequent Christian revelation.

11. Verse 13 marks the date when the Great Flood dried up from the earth. This means that almost ten and a half months passed since the beginning of the flood (refer to Genesis 7:11). What action did Noah take and what discovery did he make on that day?

**THINK:** What might be the significance that this occurred at the very beginning of a new year? In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was finally dry (verse 14). How long did it take for the earth to finally dry if Noah first saw it from the ark in the first month on the first day?

12. CONNECTION: In this lesson we learn that Noah sent out a raven and then a dove from the ark to discover if the floodwaters had subsided. His actions showed that he was hopeful to begin a new life and confident that the LORD would be with him. Just as the ark was the vehicle through which God brought Noah's family through the waters of chaos and death, so too our Church is the vehicle through which God saves humanity from the chaos of the world bringing us salvation in Christ Jesus (*Agape*). How does the Church offer you courage and guidance as you face the chaos and uncertainty of our world today?

Psalm 27:14 cautions us to "Wait for the LORD; be strong and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!" As you pray today, meditate on waiting for the LORD, as Noah did, to tell you when the time is right.

**DAY THREE**  
Read Genesis 8:15-22

**NOTE:** The Flood is an exciting story that includes heroic characters, a global natural disaster, and repeated warnings that went unheeded. The main import of the story, however, is not the disaster which befell the sinful, but the blessings that were bestowed upon the new created order. This is our created order, which began when the waters subsided. *Commentary*

13. Though he had lived on the ark for over a year and the earth was finally dry, Noah, ever obedient, waited for God to speak before disembarking (verse 15). God commanded Noah and his family to, "Go out of the ark," and directed them to bring out every living thing that was with them (verses 16-17). Compare the new blessing of creation God gave at the end of verse 17 with Genesis 1:22.

14. Noah went out of the ark leading the way with his household (verse 18). According to verse 19, the other occupants of the ark, the animals, creeping things, birds and everything that moves "went out of the ark by *families*." Why do you think this word was used?

15a. Noah and his family confronted many tasks as they left the ark. The first thing he did, however, was build an altar to the LORD to offer burnt offerings of every clean animal and bird (verse 20). The LORD smelled the odor of the offering and was pleased (verse 21). Look up one of the following bible verses that describes how sacrifice pleases the LORD.

Exodus 29:18

Psalm 141:2

Sirach 45:16

b. Today, the Church burns incense for worship at various liturgies. Compare how this contemporary practice is similar or different to the ancient practice of burnt offerings.

16. In response to Noah's sacrifice, the LORD made two promises "in his heart." Complete the following phrases from verse 21 that include his words.

I will never again curse the ground

for the inclination of the human heart

nor will I ever again destroy

17. The LORD spoke poetically to Noah in verse 22. Rewrite this verse in your own words to make the LORD's promise meaningful to you.

18. CONNECTION: Though he had had been adrift on the ark for over a year and land was in sight, Noah continued to wait for God's command to depart. To the very end, Noah remained obedient, silent and patient.

Throughout the flood story, Noah has not said one word but has listened for the LORD to speak. In our world today, we are encouraged to rush with enthusiasm into every new challenge and share our opinions. Here is yet another example of Noah's faithfulness in the Lord; to listen and wait for God to say *when*. How can you apply this example from Noah's story in your life today?

Read and record [Colossians 3:12](#). As you begin your prayer today, ask the LORD to help you grow in the grace of these virtues.

#### DAY FOUR

Read Genesis 9:1-6

19. The LORD was pleased with Noah and blessed his family using words similar to the blessing from [Genesis 1:28](#), "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it." However, the words of blessing were different in verse 2. Select one of the phrases from that verse below and comment on what you think the change means.

The fear and dread of you shall rest on every animal of the earth

into your hand they are delivered

**NOTE: Pre-flood creatures, including human beings, are depicted as vegetarians (1:29-30). In view of the human propensity to violence, God changes the original prohibition against eating meat. *NABRE***

20. Before the Flood, God had given humankind green plants to eat but now he gave them every moving thing that lives as food (verse 3). Record the one important restriction God placed on the food his people were allowed to eat (verse 4).

**NOTE: Because a living being dies when it loses most of its blood, the ancients regarded blood as the seat of life, and therefore as sacred. Jewish tradition considered the prohibition against eating meat with blood to be binding on all, because it was given by God to Noah, the new ancestor of all humankind; therefore, the early Christian church retained it for a time (Acts 15:20). *NABRE***

21. Although humans were given permission to eat meat, they were forbidden to eat flesh with its blood. Blood was considered sacred, the source of life which is God-given. Complete the phrases below from verse 5 that described the "reckoning" that will be required for the taking of blood.

from every animal

and from human beings

I will require

22. The requirement of a reckoning (accounting) was mentioned three times in verse 5. What is the most important part of this rule? See the Commentary, page 29.

23. Look up a definition for the word *reckoning* as it is used in in verse 5. How does it apply to the taking of a human life in verse 6?

**NOTE: The image of God, given to the first man and woman and transmitted to every human being, is the reason that no violent attacks can be made upon human beings (verse 6). That image is the basis of the dignity of every individual who, in some sense, "represents" God in the world. NABRE**

24. CONNECTION: In the beginning of God's perfect creation, all living things were in harmony, but when sin entered the world, life was adversely affected. With the onset of a carnivorous diet, enmity grew between man and beast. It is not realistic to expect to stop the consumption of animal flesh. At the same time, it is important to remember that God also commissioned us to care for his creatures and, as Christians, we are called to be prophets of change. Describe one practical thing you might do to help lessen the impact of this practice and help protect God's creatures.

In his encyclical, *Laudato si'*, Pope Francis encourages us to employ "an ecology of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness" to become better stewards of the earth's natural resources (Paragraph 230). Let this thought lead you into prayer today.

#### DAY FIVE

Read Genesis 9:7-11

**NOTE: Today God makes a covenant with Noah and his descendants and remarkably with all the animals who come out of the ark; never again shall the world be destroyed by flood. The sign of this solemn promise is the appearance of a rainbow. NABRE**

25. God continued speaking to Noah and his sons in verse 7 and again blessed them saying, "be fruitful and multiply, abound on the earth and multiply in it." This was similar to God's blessing in verse 1 but this time he added a word. Look up the word *abound* and explain how the blessing changed with the use of this word.

26. In verses 8-9, God spoke to Noah and his sons a second time to say that he was establishing his covenant with them and all their descendants. Considering God's words, can you answer one of the following questions?

How long would this covenant be in effect?

Was this covenant unilateral (one-sided) or bilateral (both parties agree to do something)?

Record a phrase from verse 9 that supports your answer.

27. Refer to verse 10 and list the additional creatures included in the covenant.

28. There were two promises made to Noah by which God established his covenant with him. Complete the following phrases from verse 11 that illustrate the two parts of this covenant.

never again shall all flesh

and never again shall there be a flood

29. Does verse 11 mean that God promised that he would never destroy the earth again by any means? Why or why not?

30. CONNECTION: God in his mercy made a promise, a covenant, never again to destroy the earth; and God's Word is faithful and eternal. Promises are statements we make out of love, friendship or duty to our family, friends or our community and are serious commitments. Think of the first time someone broke an important promise to you and how that affected you. Why is it important that we keep our promises and what can help us do that?

Record a favorite promise of God from Scripture that you rely on. Use that verse to write a prayer today.

**DAY SIX**  
**Read Genesis 9:12-17**

31. We have studied that God promised that a flood would never again destroy the world and humankind. What assurance of these promises did God offer in verse 12?

**NOTE: Covenants often require a sign, usually a written document.**

32a. Record the words that describe the sign of the covenant that God gave to Noah in verse 13. (Good memory verse)

b. Just as the rainbow is a *sign* of the covenant, God sends us *signs* of encouragement when hardships arise in our lives. Reflect on a recent time of difficulty when it seemed that God sent a sign or symbol to reassure you that the future would be brighter. Briefly describe it.

33. Verses 14-17 are a repetition of the terms of the covenant that God promised to remember. The author uses repeated words or phrases to show how important the covenant was to God and his people. Select a few of the words or phrases below from verses 8-17 and explain why you think they are important.

Covenant (7 times)

Every living thing (4 times)

The earth (6 times)

(Rain)bow (3 times)

Remember (2 times)

34. A covenant with God is an everlasting promise – an agreement between parties that creates a family relationship with them. The covenant in today’s passage was with Noah and his family, but there are other covenants between God and man referenced in Scripture. Read one of the following passages and summarize the main promise of the covenant.

Genesis 17:2-4 (Abraham)

Exodus 19:5-6 (Moses)

2 Samuel 7:12 (David)

35. The last covenant between God and his people recorded in Scripture is found in the New Testament. Instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper, it is known as the New Covenant. Read Matthew 26:28 and, in your own words, record what was promised.



36. CONNECTION: In today's passage, God sets the rainbow in the sky as a sign of his covenant. It's wondrous to think that whenever God sees the rainbow, he will remember all that the covenant implies. The rainbow is a natural expression of blessing on our world. Appearing as it does as the sun shines after the rain, it is a symbol for us of many things. When you see a rainbow, what thoughts come to mind? Do you think this will change after studying Genesis?

Read and record Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) 43:11-12. As you pray today, give thanks and praise to God for the signs all around us that remind us of his love.

**NOTE: As we conclude Lesson 6, we come to the end of Noah's story. Because of time constraints, the lessons will not cover the rest of chapter 9, but there are a few additional facts about Noah you might find interesting. Noah was a man of the soil and was the first to plant a vineyard (9:20). After the flood Noah lived three hundred fifty years and died at the age of nine hundred fifty years (9:28-29).**

Read pages 27-30 in *The Book of Genesis* by Lawrence DiPaolo, Jr., Ph.D. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study acknowledges that scripture quotations in this study are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, Catholic Edition. Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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