# God's Deep Grace



### Topic

God's grace and justice

### Theme

God showed His gra­ ciousness and justice in the events of the Flood.

### Desired Learner Response

**The learner will take his sin seriously and will endeavor to witness**

**to those who need to hear of God's grace and justice.**

**Materials**

* Resources 1 ands
* Video of tsunami
* Visual 1 from resource CD

### Scripture Focus

**Genesis 6-9**

### Summary

Because of the incredible expanse of sin in the centuries following the fall, God grew weary of the evil conditions upon the earth. He determined to judge the world in a manner that would bring cleansing and also relief from some of the effects of the curse. Thus He sent a worldwide Flood that destroyed all living things except those that were hid safely with Noah and his family inside the ark. The Flood event consumed more than a year and brought great changes to the world.

**Outline**

1. **The Days of Noah (6:1-12)**
2. **Preparation for the Flood (6:13-7:9)**

Ill. **Salvation and Destruction (7:10-24)**

1. **Promise Fulfillment (8)**
2. **God's Covenant with Noah (9:1-17)**
3. **Noah's Foolish Sin (9:18-29)**

**Memory Verse**

*"The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever"*

*(Psalm 29:10).*

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## GETTING STARTED

##### Tsunami Warning

Search the Web for a short video of a tsunami. Play the video for your class.

**ASK:** Why are t sun ami s and fla sh floods so dangerous? (Ql ) *They come with little or no warning, they are very powerful, and theyare hard to escape.*

**ASK:** If you knew a tsunami was going to hit a particular area, how wou ld you respond ? (Q2)

Tsunamis and flash floods of our day are a small picture of what it was like during the worldwide flood in Noah's day. Noah warned the world of the coming flood, but no one heeded his warning.

God has given us the opportunity to warn the world of coming judgment. This lesson will challenge us to do that.

##### Grand Canyon Beauty

Display the pictures of the Grand Canyon (visual 1). Or show any personal pictures you have taken of the Grand Canyon.

**ASK:** What do you see when you look at these pictures of the Grand Canyon?

Point out the rock layers evident in the pictures. The layers we can see are actually made up of smaller layers. Each layer was laid down by water that was carrying sediment. As the water slowed down, the sediments settled and formed uniform layers. Before the layers hardened, more water came through and cut away large sections of the newly laid layers.

The most plausible explanation for the formation of the Grand Canyon is the worldwide flood as recorded in Genesis. The Flood is the topic of our lesson for today. It helps us sees both God's grace and justice. It also helps see our need to be warning people of God's coming judgment by fire.

## SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

* 1. **The Days of Noah (6:1-12)**

Having previously revealed Himself through the glory of creation (general revelation) and the wonder of the first promise of the gospel (Gen. 3:15), God reveals Himself in judgment in Genesis 6-9. This judgment was first prophetically announced specifically to Noah (6:13-21).

The population of the earth was doubtless exploding before the Flood (6:1) with people still living extremely long lives (5:5, 27) under the cover of the vapor canopy (1:6-8). The most harmful genetic effects of the curse were surely yet to take full effect. But apart from obedience to God and His revealed truth, the longevity and

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It is unclear exactly how the presence of *giants* (6:4) relates to the other

details in this passage. Certainly, there were giants who lived at var­ ious times- especially perhaps during this era closer to the dawn of cre­ ation when mankind was more genetically pure (cf.1 Sam. 17:4). Moses may have been stating that the offspring of the marriages described in verse 2 were giants, or he may have merely alluded to their existence during that same stressful time period. The giants likely posed other threats of

their own.

physical strength of mankind only allowed him to multiply his transgressionsand plumb the depths of depravity. The presence of sin was also exploding.

What exactly was involved in the spread of sin is not clear. Specifically, who the sons of God and the daughters of men were has been the subject of much debate (6:2-4). Some Bible scholars identify these *sons of God* as the godly descen­ dants of Seth and believe the *daughters of men* were the ungodly descendants of Cain. Thus the intermarrying broke down the wall of separation between believ­ ers and unbelievers. Others have identi fied the sons of God as kings and nobles, despotic rulers who became polygamous in order to expand their dominion. Those who hold this view believe the children of these marriages were political giants.

Still others identify these sons of God as fallen angels whose union with beautiful women produced monstrous, infamously wicked giants. Some who hold this view teach that the fallen angels took possession of men's bodies in an action similar to demon possession. They point to Jude 6 and 7 in supportof their view. Jude wrote that angels *kept not their first estate.* Like the Sodomites in Abraham's era, they went *after strange flesh.*

**READ:** Genesis 6:5. **ASK:** Describe the depth of depravity mankind had reached. (Q3) *They were abandonedto wickedness. Their thoughts were con­ tinually evil.*

In the Old Testament the *heart* (6:5) is viewed as the seat notonly of emotion but also of the understanding and will. Mankind was corrupt in feelings, thoughts, and choice of actions. Human depravity knew no restraint. The Lord had been long-suffe ring with those corrupt people, but finally He said, *My spirit shall not al­ ways strive with man* because mankind *also* is *flesh* (6:3).In other words, since peo­ ple are flesh, they are capable of every ldnd of evil imaginab le. The exact meaning of the Spirit's striving is not clear. But we can surmise that God had had enough

of man's wickedness and that He was leavingthem to their ways. The apostle Paul referred to a similar action in the book of Romans.

**READ:** Romans 1:24-28. **ASK:** To what did God give the sinners up according to the apostle Paul? (Q4) *Uncleanness, vile affections, and a reprobate mind.*

The 120 years identified as mankind's *days* probably refers to the length of time God would give mankind before He judged them. This would be in line with the time it took Noah to build the ark.

**ASK:** Why would God give mankind 120 years before judging them? He was certainly capable of wiping them all out with just one breath. (QS) *This was a measureof God's long-suffering with humanity. He would give them time to repent and turn to Him even though their wickedness had already become great in the earth.*

Seeing manldnd's terrible, sinful condition, the Lord repented that He had made man (Gen. 6:6). That does not mean He wished He had not created people. Nor does it mean He considered His creation of humans a mistake. The Hebrew word for *repent* means *to breathe deeply,* as onedoes in great pain or sorrow. God *grieved Him into His heart* (literal translation) that human beings had become so depraved.

God is holy and just and, therefore, must judgesin. He judged the universa l corruption described in Genesis 6:5 with universa l judgment:*The LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth* (6:7). This judgment included all land animals, birds, and creeping things.

Up to this point, no one knew God had decided to destroy the inhabitants of the earth. But that was about to change. For *Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD* (6:8). God gave His messageof destruction to Noah. Along with that mes­ sagealso came a message of graceand hope.

Like Enoch, Noah walked with God as a righteous believer (6:9). The term *per­ fect* means *blameless.* Noah was a man of integrity in a world of utter depravity.

**READ:** Hebrews 11:7.**ASK:** What motivated Noah to be faithful to God? (Q6)

*He feared God.*

Imagine what it must have been like living in a world in which you could count on no one else to be upright, honest, or humble.

**ASK:** What must Noah have thought about humanit y's future, being an eye­ witness to its depravity? (Q7) *He musthave been overwhelmedwith the hope­ lessness of humanity and the thought that they all would one day haveto answer for their sin.*

This righteousfather of three sons stood against the current of evil (Gen.

6 :10 - 12). His s tark contrast to the world around him must have made him the focus of ridicule and abuse. What a scary position to be in. There were no police to ensure his safety. He had no person to appeal to. Yet it was his fear of God that directed his life, not his fear of man. So giving into the world and joining them in their depravity *scared* Noah more than ris king his life by stand ing against them.

#### Preparation for the Flood (6:13-7:9)

The Lord gave Noah a prophetic warning that Noah was to make widely known through his preaching and his obedience to God (6:13). God alreadydeter­ mined the timeline of 120 years for His judgment (6:3), although we have no record that that detail was revealed to Noah at this time. Perhaps God never revealed His intended timeline to Noah, leaving him to work and preach in light of an immi­ nent judgment.

God gave Noah explicit instructions regarding the building of the ark: it was to be of gopher wood covered with pitch on both sides and at least 450 by 75 by 45 feet. It would havethree decks with a windowand a door. In add ition to the animals who would board the ark, there was plenty of additional space for any people who would heed his preaching.

As Noah built the ark, it became a sign of God's coming judgment. Noah's building would have been intermingled with his preaching as both the curious and the ridiculers came by to see what he was up to.

Noah dared to preach to dissolute people who had no intention oflistening to him. God's approval was infinitely more important to him than finding favor with his godlesscontemporaries.

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**RESOURCE:** Display re so u rce 5 with the right half cove red.

**God's Grace and Justice**

Noah Preached

God's Grace

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Noah's message would have included both God's coming judgment and God's grace. The message of the ar k was pointless without the message of the flood.

**READ:** 2 Peter 2:5. **ASK:** What did Peter say Noah preached? (Q8) *Righteousness.*

Noah's audience needed righteousness in order to escape God's judgment.

That righteo usness would come through faith in God.

**RESOURCE:** Reveal the right half of reso urce 5.

**ASK:** What point is there in preaching the cross if we do n't also preach God 's coming judgment on sin? (Q9) *The cross doesn't make sense without the mes­ sage ofJudgment by fire.*

**ASK:** What would you say to those who prefe r to focus on God's love and grace in their witnessing in stead of God' s coming judgme nt on sin? (Ql 0) *They are diluting the gospel message and failing to give theconsequences of reject­ ing Christ.*

The Flood would bring the first rain upon the earth. God promised that *every thing that* is *in the earth shall die* (6:17). However, Noah and his sons and their wives would be saved through the flood by means of the ark he would build, on the basis of God's covenant with Noah. In that way, God would also preserve the

an imals by having at least a pair of each kind enter the ark with Noah. Noah was also to bring food on the ark for the animals.

Having listened intently to God's stern warning and covenantal promises, Noah obeyed God to the fullest extent of his ability to do so (6:22).

Chapter 7 jump s ahead to the conclusion of the 120-yearperiod of preparation for the flood . When the time drew near at which God would send the flood, God clarified his instructions to Noah (7:2). The clean animals would enter by sevens and the unclean in pairs. The fowls would also come by sevens (7:3)

This final warning came one week before the flood. God revealed that the rain phase of the flood would last 40 days and 40 nights, during which *every living sub­ stance* would be destroyed (7:4). Noah and his family boarded the ark, with God

a lso bringing the animals into the ark in accord with His plan (7:5-9).

* 1. **Salvation and Destruction (7:10-24)**

The Flood then came at God 's appointed time (7:10). It involved the first rain, during which the water vapor canopy may have broken down. Previously God had designed for the eart h to be watered by a mist (cf. 2:5, 6). The Flood would bring massive and lasting changes to many of the earth's natural systems. The rain last­ ed forty days. The fountains of the deep also broke open causing water to explode from the ground (7:11).

The next section retells the events but adds details (7:13-24). As the flood be­ gan, God shut the door to the ark. All of Noah's pleas for people to jo in his family

in the spacious vessel had gone unheeded, and now it was too late. One can only wonder if some of those people remembered Noah's warnings and repented as the judgment of the flood began to consume them.

The flood covered the highest pre-flood hills and mountains by at least fifteen cubits (7:19, 20). The ark was 30 cubits high (6:15), so it could pass over any part of the earth's surface. Without any question, these chapters teach that this was a worldwide catastrophe.

**READ:** Genesis 7:21-23. **ASK:** How doe s reading about the complete destruction of man and beast make God's justice real to you? (Ql 1)

**ASK:** How shou ld it affect your view of sin? (Ql 2) *It should cause us to under­ stand the seriousnessof sin and its offensiveness toGod.*

**ASK:** How does God's justice in the Flood affect your appreciation for salvat ion? (Ql 3)

The Flood consumed all people and animals that were outside the safety of the ark (7:21- 23).God's revelation of Himself in judgment was thorough to the point of complete fulfillment of His Word. The chapter closes by stating that the waters continued to exert their destructive force for 150 days-well beyond the initial forty days of rain.

##### Promise Fulfillment (8)

God had promised that He would preserve Noah, his family, and all the occupants of the ark. In fulfillment of that promise, God remembered Noah and the animals and made a wind blow over the earth until the waters were subsided. The ark providentially landed on Mount Ararat (8:1-4).

Noah used birds to test whether the earth was ready for them to depart. Noah opened the ark's window and sent out a raven and a dove; the dove returned. A week later he sent the dove out again, and this time it returned with an olive leaf. Another week later, he let out a dove again and this time it did not return. A year and 10 days after the flood first began, the earth dried. God called Noah and his family out of the ark, along with all of the animals, who where to go and repro­ duce abundantly (8:5- 19).

Noah's first act on emerging from the ark was to worship. He built an altar and sacrificed an offering to the Lord (8:20). God was both his Friend and his Lord, Who had saved him and his family from a devastating flood. He rightly expressed his thanksgiving by offering sacrifices.

**ASK:** Imagine you came off the ark with Noah. How frequently do you think you would tell God thank you for saving you from the Flood? (Ql 4)

Mt. Ararat-and all other post-flood mountains­ were created by the catastrophic forces of the flood, which completely altered the earth's terrain and probably the shapes of the earth's continents.

**ASK:** How often shou ld we thank God for saving us from our sins? (Ql 5)

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Peter clarifies in 2 Pet. 3:5-7 that, although the world will never again by consumed by water, it will be destroyed by fire.

We can be sure that during the year Noah spent on the ark, his knowledge of God had vastly grown. The display of God's power must have overwhelmed him. He had seen more fully the holiness of God and His fierce anger against iniquity. He had seen the faithfulness of God in fulfilling His promise to destroy the wicked. And he had experienced the grace of God and His tender loving care in the strangest yearof his life. No wonder Noah worshiped. He was learning what we need tolearn: that God's sovereignty, justice, and mercy extend vastly beyond all we have thought or imagined. Yet He allows us the privilege of worshiping Him in an intimate, personal way.

Noah's sacrifice arose to God as a sweet fragrance (8:21), and God made the covenant with Noah that He had promised before the Flood (6:18). He would never again judge mankind with a universal flood. The shining rainbow in the sky would always remind always people everywhere of that pledge (9:11-14).

The chapter ends with a promise: the post-flood world will be marked by sta­ bility, continuity and predictability (8:22). Thus, believers need not fear that any type of natural phenomenon is outside of the Lord's control. He who created the world still upholds and sustains it (Col. 1:17).

##### God's Covenant with Noah (9:1-17)

The Flood now past, chapter 9 opens with God giving Noah's family the com­ mand to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Everyone who has lived on the earth since the time of the Flood has come from the lineage of Noah and his sons and their wives.

God used the occasion of the Flood to bring relief from some of the effects of the curse. Fierce animals-which had presumably held men in the bondage of fear since the Fall-would now fear man (9:2). Also, people were now authorized to eat the meat from animals (9:3). The only requirement was that they not eat animal blood (9:4).

God instituted the first human government to rule over men (9:5). Anyone who commits murder must forfeit his own life in payment for the life he has taken (9:6). Only such a remedy for this heinous sin can convey the immeasurable worth of human life created in the image of God.

God made a covenant with Noah and humanity at large that He will never again send *a flood to destroy the earth* (Gen. 9:11). The sign of God's covenant is the rainbow. It reminds us of God's promise to Noah but also of the fact that a sinful world does deserve God's judgment.

##### Noah's Foolish Sin (9:18-29)

Though God destroyed the wicked from the earth, sin still remained. For Noah and his sons were still sinners. In the conclusion of this passage (9:18-29), we get a glimpse of Noah's only public failure, recorded to remind us that he, like us, was a sinful man in spite of his great acts of faith, obedience, and heroism.

Noah drank wine from one of his vineyards one day and became drunk and was discovered by Ham. While we may not understand exactly what happened in this situation, it led to a curse being placed on Ham's descendants. At the same time, Noah used this opportunity to pronounce a blessing on the descendants

of Japheth and Shem-the latter including the Jewish people, who would begin under Abram in Genesis 12.

**ASK:** How does Noah'sfailure help you understand the grace God showed in saving Noah and his fami ly from the Flood? (016) *Noah didn't deserve to be on the ark. He was there because of God's grace.*

Noah went on to live an additional 350 years- presuma bly spent serving the Lord faithfully. He had quite a story to share with the expanding number of inhab­ itants of the newlyrepopulated earth.

**MAKING IT PERSONAL**

##### SinIsSerious

**ASK:** Why do we sometimes forg et about God's justic e? (017) *We know our sins are forgiven; we areguaranteed eternal life; wedon't see God's justice in action immediatelyafter we sin; we figure that to sin is humannature.* .

**ASK:** How has the account of the Flood affected your view of sin? (018)

Encourage your learners to take sinseriously.They should regularly confess their sins, seeking to put off se lf and live in Christlikeness.

##### Message of Grace and Judgment

Perhaps the best lesson to come from the account of the Floodis the amazing­ ness of God's grace. No one on earth deserved to get on the ark. God was gracious in savingNoah an d his family.God was also gracious in giving the world 120 years to repent, though none did.

**ASK:** How diligent have you been in telling the lost about God's grace avail­ able through the cross of Christ? (019)

**ASK:** How shou ld the reality of the Flood help you see the desperateness of the lost today? (020)

It is easy to get caught up in the temporary aspects of life and lose sight of the eternal. Challenge your lea rners to keep the eternal state of those they know always before them, lookingfor opportunities to share Christ.

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##### Summary and Memory Verse

**RESOURCE:** Di splay resource 1. Add a summary statement for lesson 3 or use the fo llowing : Take sin seriously and share God's grace.

Encourage learners to memor izePsalm 29:10. Give them an opportunity to say the verse in class next week.

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# Two Plans, Two Results

### Topic

God's sovereignty

### Theme

God is sovereign over rebellious humanity.

### Desired Learner Response

The learner will eval­ uate his life in light of God's sovereignty, making sure he is not

trying to live according to his own plan.

###### Materials

* Resources 1 and 6
* Building blocks or Legos
* Permanent markers

### Scripture Focus

Genesis 10 :1- 11:3 0

### Summary

Genesis 10 gives the table of nations and provides clues as to where the na­ tions settled. Genesis 11 gives the account of the tower of Babel. God demon­ strated His sovereignty in thwarting the plans of those rebelling against His command to fill the earth. God's sovereignty is then seen in the record of the line of Shem, the line through which the Savior would eventually be born.

###### Outline

1. **Formation of the Nations (10)**
	1. Descendants of Japheth (10:1-5)
	2. Descendants of Ham (10:6-20)
	3. Descendants of Shem (10:21-32)
2. **Spreading of the Nations (11:1- 9)**
	1. The people's pride (11:1-4)
	2. God's judgment (11:5-9)

**Ill. Continuationof the Line of Shem(11:10 - 30)**

Memory Verse

"/ *know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee"*

*(Job 42:2).*

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