



Noah

Adam lived to tell the story of creation to many children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. God let Adam live a very, very long time. He was nine hundred and thirty years old when he died. Most of Adam's children and grandchildren lived a long time too. The world was becoming full of people. God was pleased that some loved and trusted Him.

I am sorry to say that most of the people on earth did not love God. Most of them relied not on God but on their own strength. They took whatever they wanted, and hated and fought whoever got in their way. There was wickedness everywhere. At last there was only one family left that served God. Noah still trusted God, and tried to do what was right. All of the rest of the human race were utterly corrupt.

God is a God of goodness. He cannot stand wickedness. God created man to have fellowship with Him. But it is not possible for a good God to have fellowship with such desperately wicked people. He decided to destroy them all, and start over again with Noah.

God told Noah to build a big ship, so that he and his wife and his sons and their wives might be saved from the flood God was going to send on the earth. They were to take into the ship with them two of every kind of animal to keep them alive, and to start a new world after the flood.

God told Noah just how to make the ship, or ark. He was to make it very large, so that there would be room for all the animals. Noah was to take a great deal of food into the ark so that he and his family and all the animals might have enough to eat. For the flood was to last a long time.

It took Noah more than a hundred years to build the ark. While Noah was busy with it, he preached to the people. He warned them that if they did not turn away from their sins, God would punish them for all their wickedness. God would send a flood to drown them all. But the people laughed at Noah. They did not believe there was going to be a flood. They thought Noah was very foolish to build such a big ship on dry land.

Over and over Noah told his neighbors about the flood God was going to send. Over and over he warned them to change their wicked ways, to trust in God instead of in their own ways. This was God's amazing mercy extended this one last time to these wicked people, urging them to repent and turn from their sins. For God has no delight in the death of the wicked, but wishes that they would turn from their sins and live.

At last the boat was finished. The terrible day of judgment had arrived. "Come into the boat," God said to Noah, "you and all your family. Take with you two of each of the animals, and a pair of each of the birds."

So Noah, and his wife, and his three sons and their wives, went into the ark.

Then was seen such a sight as has never been seen before or since. Noah did not have to go into the fields and woods to catch the animals. They came on their own, each one moved by the secret call of God, walking together into the boat. Here came the lions, the giraffes, elephants and tigers. Birds large and small flew straight into the ark. Even creeping animals like snails, toads and lizards came in. At last the long procession came to an end. Two of each kind of animal had come into the ark.



When all were safe in the ark, God Himself shut the door. Then God sent the rain. You have never seen rain like that! It did not come down in drops. It poured down. The Bible says, "God opened the windows of heaven, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up."

Soon all the land was covered with water. The rain came down in torrents from the sky, and great tidal waves rose up from the ocean and swept over the land with terrific force and swiftness. The flood rose higher and higher. The waters lifted the ark up, and it floated upon the waves. It rained for forty days and nights.

Every living creature was destroyed both human and animals, creeping things and birds. They were all destroyed. Only Noah and those in the ark remained alive.

At last after forty days and nights, the rain stopped. They remained in the ark a total of one year and ten days. The ark rested on a high mountain called Mt Ararat. After the land dried up, God spoke to Noah and told him to come out of the ark with his family and all the animals.

The first thing that Noah and his family did after they came out of the ark was to kneel down and thank God for keeping them alive, and to promise that they would always trust Him, and try to live so as to please Him.

So God blessed Noah and his sons, and told them to have a great many children, to fill the earth with people again. God also made a covenant with Noah and with all the animals that had been in the ark. A covenant is a solemn promise. God's covenant was that He would never again send a flood to destroy all the people and animals in the world.

God gave a sign to Noah to reassure him when storms came again. "I will set my rainbow in the clouds," God said, "and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth." You have seen the beautiful rainbow many time. Whenever you see it, remember that this is God's sign that He still remembers His promise not to destroy the whole world again with a flood.