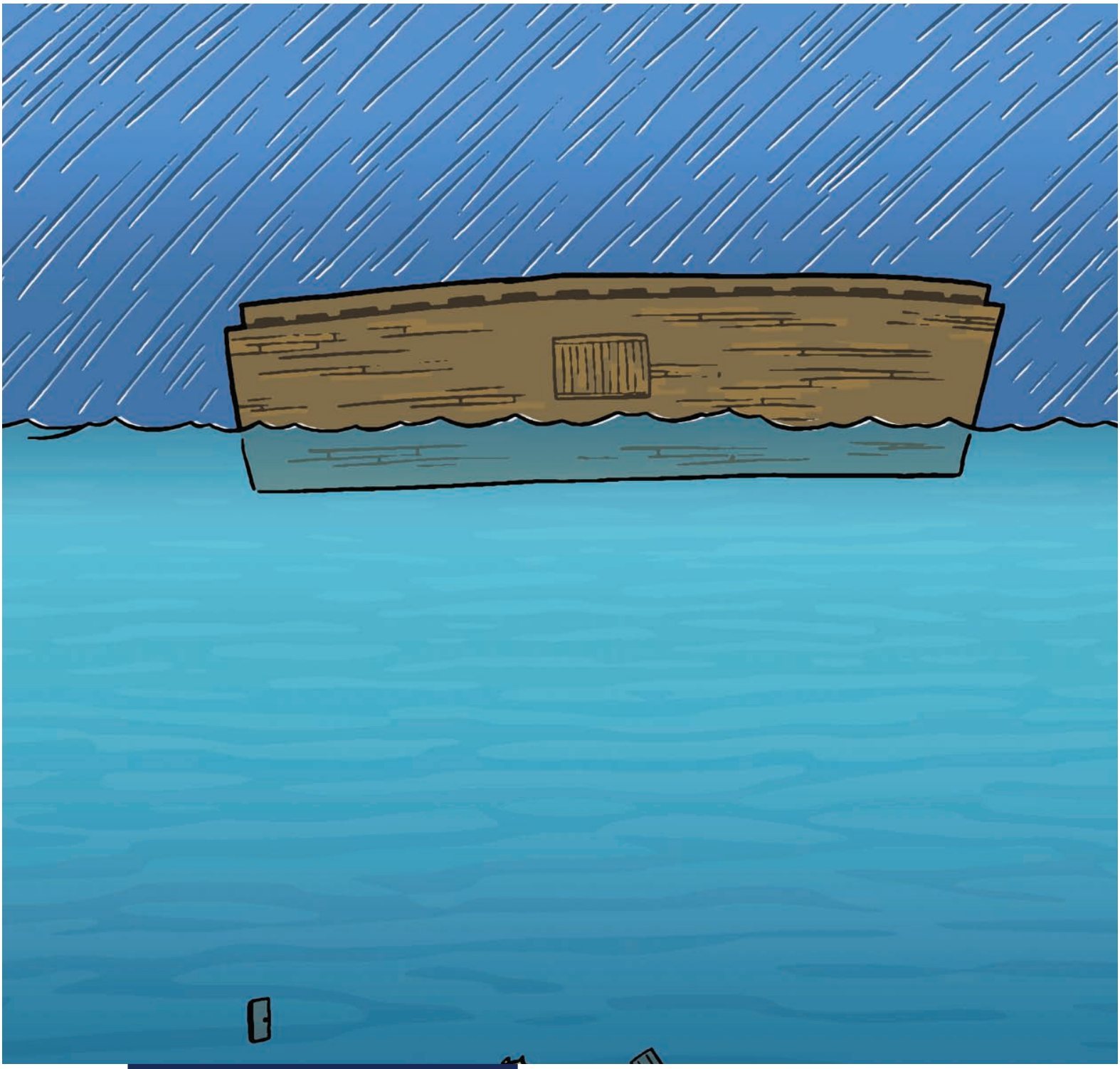


LESSON 5

God floods the earth

GENESIS 6:5–7:24

CENTRAL TRUTH

God judges the wicked and saves the righteous.

KEY VERSE

"And God said to Noah, 'I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth'" **(Gen 6:13).**

Supporting Truths

1. God judges the wicked.
2. God is gracious.
3. The righteous obey God.
4. Adam's sin infected the entire human race.
5. God saves a remnant, a small group of people who remain faithful.

Objectives

1. Describe the flood and its results.
2. Identify God's gracious act toward Noah.
3. Describe how Noah pleased God.
4. Describe how wicked the people were.
5. Discuss God's faithfulness to save Noah as He had promised.

Lesson Summary

God saw that mankind was totally sinful. They had stained God's image within them and had corrupted all of God's creation. Although God is patient, giving much time for repentance, God also hates sin because He is holy. So God displayed His wrath by drowning the world in a flood. But He also showed His grace, choosing one man, the righteous Noah, to build an ark that would save both man and animals.

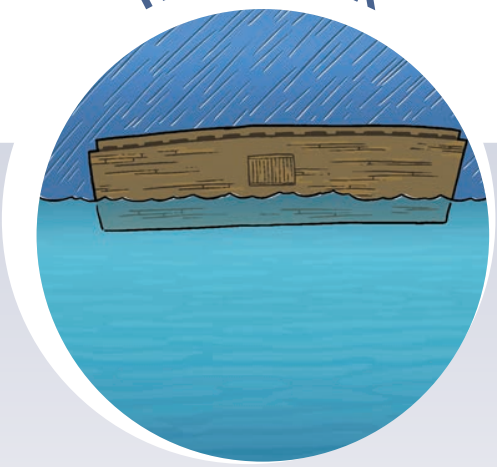
Spotlight on the Gospel

By the time of the flood, sin had polluted all of God's creation, and it seemed Satan was destroying the image of God in man. But God kept one righteous man, Noah, in order to keep His promise of a coming Savior. The Savior saves those who trust Him, just as the ark saved Noah from the flood. But those who reject God's grace should be afraid: when God's patience ends, He will destroy the unrepentant just as He did in the time of the flood.

LAST WEEK

Cain rebels against God
Genesis 4:1–24

THIS WEEK



God floods the earth
Genesis 6:5–7:24

NEXT WEEK

God preserves Noah
Genesis 8:1–9:17

Lesson Commentary

God judges the wicked and saves the righteous.

The story of the flood bridges two accounts in the book of Genesis. It begins at the conclusion of the story about Adam and those born from him (Gen 5:1–6:8) and continues through the story about Noah and those born from him (6:9–9:29). The first story, up through Genesis 6:8, lists the descendants of Seth, emphasizing the phrase "and he died" to show that sin had indeed brought death into the world (2:17; 3:19). The second story, beginning in Genesis 6:9 with the generations of Noah, chronicles the devastating spread of sin. When God looked at the earth He saw that "all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth" (6:12). In response to such far reaching sin, God told Noah that He would bring a flood of water upon the earth to destroy everything that breathes (6:17).

THINK ABOUT IT
Satan tried to destroy the line of Christ by perverting marriage.

The LORD was disappointed by sinful mankind (6:5–7)

Sin had multiplied on the face of the earth. The "sons of God" saw beautiful women and took wives according to their own pleasure (6:2). These marriages were motivated by sinful desires, not holy ones. But who were the sons of God? Although there are several theories, it is likely that the sons of God were fallen angels (demons). The daughters of men were human women, and the sin included the improper marriage between the supernatural and the natural. There is biblical evidence to support this theory. First, the specific Hebrew phrase for "sons of God" elsewhere refers only to angelic beings, never to humans (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7). Second, the New Testament refers to the angelic sin of Genesis 6 (1 Pet 3:19–20; 2 Pet 2:4–6; Jude 6–7). If this is the correct view of who the "sons of God" are, then it shows not only that man is thoroughly sinful, but also that the mongrel race born from these marriages was threatening to destroy the image of God in man (Gen 6:4). Satan tired to destroy the line of Christ by perverting marriage. This sin had to be destroyed before the line of the promised Savior perished.

Whatever interpretation is correct, the main point is the same: mankind was very wicked. Their thoughts were always evil (6:5) and their actions were violent and cruel (6:13). They were evil inside and out. God called them "corrupt" three times (6:11–12), using the same Hebrew word used to describe how Jeremiah's belt had become so rotten it was good for nothing (Jer 13:7). Mankind had ruined God's image in them, and their sin had tainted all of creation.

THINK ABOUT IT
God is not like man. He never lies or changes His mind.

God responded with sorrow and wrath. The word "regretted" (Gen 6:6) does not mean that God was taken by surprise, or that He decided His first try had been a mistake. God does not change either His nature or His predetermined plan (Num 23:19). God is not like man. He never lies or changes His mind. Rather, it expresses His sorrow. God loves His creation, and He grieves deeply when He sees mankind dishonoring Him and turning from their greatest good. Mixed with His sorrow is also wrath. The word "grieved" (Gen 6:6) expresses God's violent hatred of sin. This is God's ***wrath***, God's severe anger against sinners because of His holy hatred of sin.

Even in His wrath, God was patient and fair. God had already waited at least over a thousand years since sin first began, giving much time for repentance. Even after declaring his plan to send destruction, He gave mankind another 120 years to repent (6:3). Not only did God wait, but He was actively involved, sending His Holy Spirit to restrain human wickedness (6:3). But mankind did not listen to the warning, so they deserved to be destroyed. The word for "destroy" (6:13) is the same word used for "corrupt" (6:11–12). Mankind ruined themselves and the earth, so God chose to ruin them. He would give them what they deserved.

People make the same mistake today, taking advantage of God's patience and concluding that judgment will never come. In response, Peter used the flood as an example to show that judgment is definitely coming, but God is patient to give time for repentance (2 Pet 3:3–12). The correct response is to repent while God is still patiently waiting, for just as God's patience came to an end in Gen 6:3, so it will come to an end at the final judgment. We must not take His patience for granted.

While the story of Genesis 5:1–6:8 is dominated by sin and death, at the end there is a small glimpse of hope: the LORD looked with favor upon one man, Noah (6:8). Why? At this point in the story, no reason is given. God simply showed grace toward Noah. **Grace** is *undeserved favor*. It is like a gift. God took pleasure in Noah and gave him a blessing that he did not deserve or earn. Comfort and rest would come through the godly life of Noah (5:29), who is an "heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Heb 11:7).

THINK ABOUT IT
What three words or phrases describe the character of your life?

The LORD was pleased by righteous Noah (6:8–7:16)

Noah was **righteous**, or without guilt or unforgiven sin. He was acceptable to God. Noah believed and obeyed God with a pure heart. He stood out so much from the world around him that Genesis 6:9 describes his righteousness in three ways: He was righteous, he was blameless, and he walked with God. What three words or phrases describe the character of your life? Walking with God shows that Noah enjoyed a very special friendship with God, just as Enoch did (5:22). It is amazing the difference one faithful person can make. Sometimes God only seeks one obedient person in order to deliver a whole nation, or even the world (Ezek 22:30).

Noah was a man of faith (Heb 11:7), and faith always produces obedience (Jas 2:17). When God told him to make an ark and gave instructions for filling it, Noah did exactly as God commanded (Gen 6:22; 7:5, 16). He seems to have spent about 100 years building the ark and filling it (5:32; 7:6). The ark was made from cedar or cypress wood and was a huge box: 450 feet long (1 ½ football fields), 75 feet wide (slightly less than an average length high school basketball court), and 45 feet tall (4 story building). It was capable of holding provisions and all the species as God commanded: one pair of every unclean animal to repopulate the earth, and seven pairs of clean animals, since these would also be used for sacrifices after exiting the ark (7:2; 8:20). Because Noah obeyed, God confirmed that Noah was indeed a righteous man (7:1).

The LORD destroyed all that had breath except for Noah's family (7:17–24)

Noah obeyed God's instructions, and God did as He promised: He drowned the wickedness that had polluted the earth, but He saved Noah and his family. The flood was massive, with the earth erupting and the sky pouring rain for 40 days (7:17). Even then the water continued to cover the earth for 110 more days (7:24). It covered all the mountains (7:20). It killed everything that breathed (7:21). With great power, God commanded nature to destroy the wicked.

As He promised, God spared Noah. God even supernaturally shut the door of the ark (7:16). By saving Noah, God preserved the line of Christ so that the Savior promised in Genesis 3:15 could be born. God always saves a ***remnant***, a small group of people who remain faithful to God (Rom 11:5). Today God saves a remnant through Jesus Christ. Those who are united with Jesus are saved in Him just as Noah was saved in the ark (1 Pet 2:18–21).

Lesson Outline

God judges the wicked and saves the righteous.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE

1. **God sent the flood to destroy sin (6:3–12; 7:17–24).**
2. **God saved Noah because Noah pleased God (6:8–7:16).**

AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE

1. **The LORD was disappointed by sinful mankind (6:3–7).**
   - The LORD had been very patient and restrained sin (6:3).
   - The LORD saw that mankind was evil and violent all the time (6:5, 11–12).
   - The LORD felt grief and wrath because of man's great sin (6:6).
   - The LORD planned to destroy all living things (6:7, 13).
2. **The LORD was pleased by righteous Noah (6:8–7:16).**
   - Noah found favor in God's eyes (6:8).
   - Noah was righteous, blameless, and walked with God, even during a wicked time (6:9).
   - Noah proved his righteousness by obeying God's command to build an ark (6:14–7:1).
   - Noah proved his righteousness by obeying God's command to gather animals (7:2–5).
   - Noah proved his righteousness by obeying God's command to get into the ark (7:6–16).
3. **The LORD destroyed all that had breath except for Noah's family (7:17–24).**
   - God sent a flood which covered even the highest mountains (7:17–20).
   - Except for those on the ark, all that had breath died (7:21–23).
   - Only righteous Noah and the remnant with him survived (7:23).

Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.

Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **Were the people who lived in Noah's time good or bad?**
   They were bad and sinned a lot.
2. **What did God decide to do because people sinned a lot?**
   God decided to send a flood to destroy the sinful men.
3. **What did God tell Noah to make?**
   God told Noah to build an ark.
4. **Did God save anyone from the flood? Who?**
   Yes. Noah and his family.

Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **When God looked at the people on the earth, what did He see in their hearts?**
   Man was very wicked and evil. People only thought about evil things all the time.
2. **Why does man's wickedness grieve God?**
   God hates sin, which always is ultimately done against Him.
3. **When God saw how wicked the people were, what was His response?**
   He was sorry that He had made man on the earth.
4. **What did God decide to do to punish the sinfulness of the people on the earth?**
   God decided to destroy the earth with a flood.
5. **What three things do we learn about Noah that were pleasing to God?**
   He was a righteous man; he was blameless in his time; he walked with God.
6. **What plan did God have for Noah and his family?**
   In Genesis 6:13, God told Noah about the wickedness of man and what He was going to do. He commanded Noah to make an ark and said that he and his family would be saved by entering it.
7. **Describe what happened after God shut the door to the ark?**
   The water came and flooded all the earth. God destroyed every living thing that was on the land and in the sky.
8. **Did God succeed in His plan to destroy everything that lived on the land?**
   Yes. God carried out His plan of judgment and God graciously protected those in the ark.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5

INTRODUCE

BUILD THAT ARK!
Place a large sheet on the ground. As the children enter the classroom, direct them to the sheet. Give them small boxes and let them build their own arks. Tell the children that in today's lesson, they will learn about Noah, a man who listened to God and obeyed.

Variation: Place a pile of wooden blocks in the center of the room. As the children enter the classroom, direct them to the wooden blocks. Tell them to work together to build a very large boat.

ANIMAL PAIRS
Give each child some Play-Doh and tell him to make animal pairs. Let him tell the class what type of animals he made.

ILLUSTRATE

TWO BY TWO
Bring in a selection of stuffed animals in pairs (two teddy bears, two cats, etc.) to use while teaching the lesson.

AN ARK OF SAFETY
Form a large circle of chairs in the center of the classroom. Leave an opening for an entrance. This is your ark. Select children to represent Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, and their wives. Pair the remaining children into matching pairs of animals. You will need braying zebras, roaring lions, barking dogs, etc. Make sure each child knows what animal he is supposed to be. Once everyone is ready, have the children enter the ark.

Variation: Bring a wide, flat board to use as a gangplank. Lay it flat on the floor.

APPLY

ENTERING THE ARK
See Year 1 Craft Book, Book 1.
Materials: Glue and animal crackers.

Directions: Make copies of the page in the Craft Book. Have the children color the picture. Next, give each child some animal crackers to glue to the page, representing the animals entering the ark.

Entering the Ark
See Year 1 Craft Book, Book 1

TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God floods the earth • Genesis 6:5–7:24

AGES 6–8

INTRODUCE

SINK OR FLOAT

Fill a small washtub with water and place it in the center of the room. Direct the children to sit in a semicircle around the tub. Pick up an object and have the children guess whether it will float or sink. Put the object into the tub. Repeat with another object. Explain to the children what a flood is and where rain comes from. Tell them that in today's Bible story they will learn where the floodwater came from in Noah's time.

FIND YOUR PAIR

See Year 1 Craft Book, Book 1.

Make two copies of the "Find Your Pair" sheet on cardstock. Cut out the cards, and group them by pairs. Use only as many pairs as you need—each child should have one card, and every card must have a match. Give one card to each child. When you say "go," each child should find the person whose card matches his own. When the two animals find each other, they should sit down. The last pair to find each other are out. Remove their cards, shuffle, and hand out again. Play until two children are left as the winners.

ILLUSTRATE

FILL THE FISH TANK

Bring in a large fish tank. Set it on a sturdy table or stand. Put gravel in the bottom. Decorate the "ground" however you wish. Put army men or other figures in the bottom (make sure they don't float). Make an ark (a block of wood or foam) and place it on the gravel as well. Have a number of buckets filled with water. When you get to the part of the story where God sent the rain, pour the buckets of water into the tank. This will illustrate the flood's devastating effects on the earth and the people in it.

ARK

Before class, draw an ark on a large piece of butcher paper. Cut out the ark and display it in the classroom. Another option is to make a large ark out of a refrigerator box. Some children may even be able to get inside.

APPLY

WALL OF WATER

Materials: White butcher paper, crayons, blue plastic wrap or cellophane, construction paper ark, glue, and typed out verses Genesis 6:8, 13.

Directions: Place a long piece of white butcher paper horizontally on the wall. Let the children draw scenes of birds, mountains, and creeping things. When the drawing is done, cover it with blue plastic wrap or cellophane to demonstrate that the flood covered everything. Then place a construction paper ark on top. Glue Genesis 6:13 on top of the water at the bottom edge and Gen 6:8 on the ark.

Variation: Give each child a vertical half sheet of white paper instead of using a long piece of white butcher paper.

AGES 9–11

INTRODUCE

SPEED TEST

See Year 1 Craft Book, Book 1.

Give the children the speed test. Tell them that all the instructions they need are on it and that they have four minutes to complete it. Explain to the children that in today's lesson they will see that God gave Noah instructions and Noah followed them because he was righteous.

CHARACTER STUDY

Ask the children to identify information about Noah as you read through Genesis 6:4–7:24. Have children raise their hands and share their answers with the class.

Name: Noah (Gen 6:8)

Age: 600 years old when floodwaters were on earth (Gen 7:6); lived to be 950 years old (Gen 9:29)

Family: Married (Gen 6:18); three sons (Gen 6:10); his three sons were married (Gen 6:18, 7:7, 13)

Character: Found grace in God's eyes (Gen 6:8), a just man (Gen 6:9), "perfect" in his generation (Gen 6:22, 7:5, 9, 16), and was righteous (Gen 7:1)

ILLUSTRATE

AND THE MOUNTAINS WERE COVERED!

Ask the children if they know the name of the tallest mountain on earth today. Show the children a picture of Mount Everest and ask whether anyone knows the elevation (29,035 feet). Explain that the tallest mountain in the area where the ark floated was Mount Ararat (near modern-day Turkey). The top of the mountain was about 17,000 feet high. We do not know the elevation of the highest pre-flood mountain (since the geography of the earth was changed so drastically by the flood), but the Bible does tell us that the floodwater rose 22.5 feet over the tallest mountain.

SIGNIFICANT REPETITIONS

Write the phrase "did according to all that God commanded him" on the board. As you teach through Genesis 6:4–7:16, tell the children to watch for this phrase or similar phrases (See Gen 6:22, 7:15, 9, 16). Ask the children why Moses repeatedly recorded this about Noah in this passage. Emphasize that Noah was an excellent example of obedience to God's commandments.

APPLY

SUGAR-CUBE ARK

Materials: Precut cardboard bases (three feet by one foot), sugar cubes (210 cubes per group), liquid glue, colored markers.

Directions: Divide children into groups. Explain that God instructed Noah to build an ark that was perfectly designed to withstand the catastrophic events involved in the flood. Inform the groups that they will be building a sugar-cube model of the ark to scale. Each sugar cube represents 10 cubits. God told Noah to build an ark 300 cubits (30 sugar cubes) long, 50 cubits (5 sugar cubes) wide, and 30 cubits (3 sugar cubes) tall. Instruct the children to draw a legend in the bottom left corner of their cardboard base, writing out the scaled dimensions. Explain that each group must work together to build the ark accurately before the floodwater comes on the earth.