

General Church Education



Family Lesson: Genesis 8

End Of the Flood

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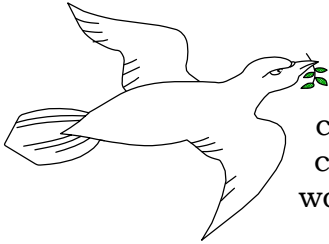
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Family Lesson 1 - F

The End of the Flood
Genesis 8

Family Talk:
THE FLOOD COMES TO AN END

by the Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss



Can you imagine what it was like to be in that ark for one hundred and fifty days? Partly it must have been very comforting because all around you the rain would have been coming down and the water would be over all the earth yet you would be safe in the ark.

Then the rain stopped, and Noah and his family wanted to come out of the ark and start their lives. They wondered how long it would be before the waters went down upon the earth. But the waters seemed to go down a bit and then go up a bit. So Noah sent a raven to fly around to see if it could find dry land. The trouble was that the raven had strong wings and it could fly around for days until the land appeared. It didn't come back. Therefore Noah sent out a dove. The first time it came back. He waited seven days and sent it out again, and then it came back with a leaf in its beak, so he knew it had found a tree. After seven more days he sent it out again and it did not come back. Then he knew that the waters were really going down, and after a little while more the ark came to rest on Mount Ararat, and he and everyone and everything in the ark could come out.

What was the first thing he did? He built an altar to the Lord, didn't he? Why? Because the Lord had kept him alive. And the Lord was pleased with Noah and made a promise. He said He would never again send a flood on the earth.

“While the earth remains, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”

We can learn a lot of things from this lesson. For example, we can learn how to be patient when we're waiting for something to happen. Noah had to wait many days while the waters washed back and forth on the face of the earth. He wanted to come out of the ark, but he knew he had to wait until it was safe. Do you remember how the dove brought him a sign that the waters were nearly low enough — an olive leaf in her beak? That helped him to be patient.

We can learn what is the first thing we should do when something good happens to us. Noah came out of the ark. He could have gone about his business and just enjoyed being on earth again, without thinking of the Lord who had saved him from the flood. But he didn't. He remembered the Lord and the first thing he did was to build an altar and thank Him. So it should be with us. When something happens to make us very happy, then that night, before we go to sleep, we should remember to thank the Lord. After all, He is the one who gives us all things happy.

And the most important thing in this lesson is to realize that the Lord does take great care of those who trust in Him. If they let Him help them, He keeps them safe. Just as He kept Noah safe, not only during the rains, but also afterwards, so He looks after all the people who trust in Him and finds ways to make them happy.

The End of the Flood

Genesis 8

LEVEL 1 – THE FLOOD COMES TO AN END

MATERIALS NEEDED

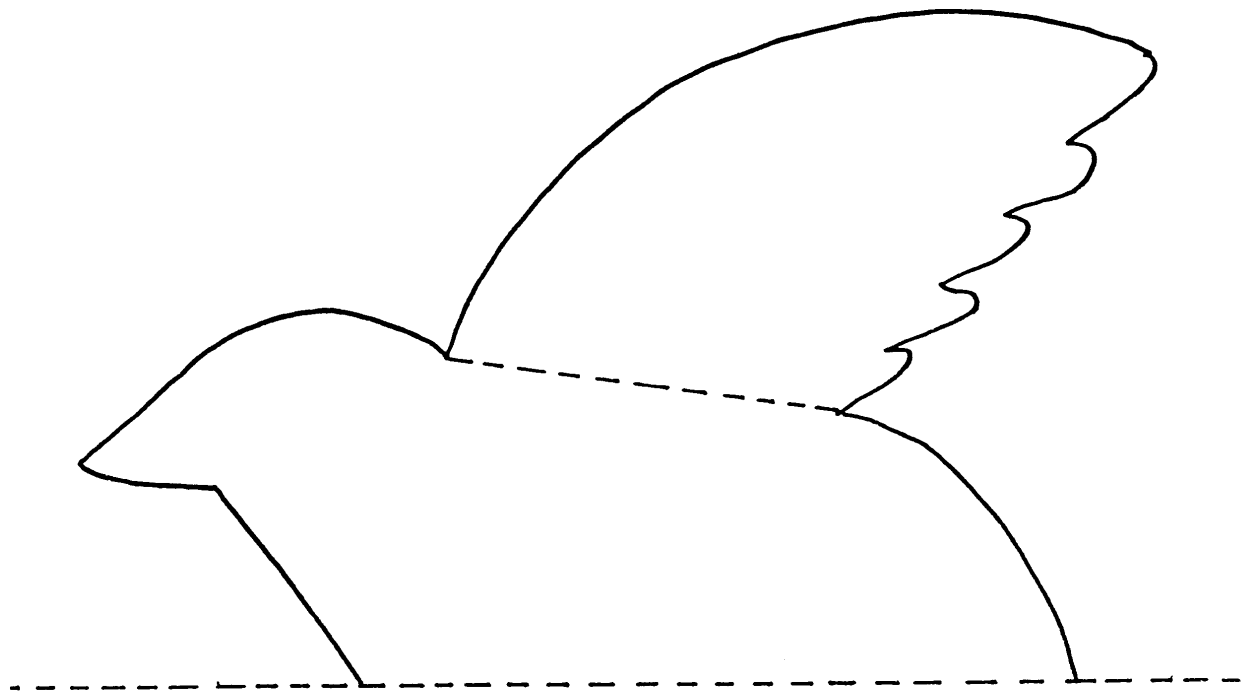
scissors
glue
leaf
needle
thread or yarn

THE FLOOD COMES TO AN END

The Dove



1. Fold the next page (with the outline of a dove) in half on the dotted line.
2. Cut around the outline of the dove.
3. Fold the wings down on each side along the dotted line.
4. Find a leaf and glue it between the halves of the beak (or make a slit in the beak to hold the leaf).
5. Hold the dove at the bottom and move your hand up and down to make the wings flap. Now the dove is ready to fly to Noah.
6. You could also hang the dove from the ceiling or light fixture. Use a needle to attach the thread or yarn.



The End of the Flood

Genesis 8

LEVEL 2A – THE LORD’S WORDS TO NOAH

What do you do when you’re especially happy? Do you clap your hands, laugh or maybe hug someone? And how about singing?



When your friends or family have birthdays, you *sing* to them!

And on Christmas and Easter you sing special songs.

When your parents rock a little baby what do they do? Yes, they sing soft and gentle songs.

When you’re just plain happy you sometimes hum, whistle, or sing a song of your own.

In the Word, there are many beautiful songs and poems. One comes at the end of our story for this lesson. Noah built an altar to the Lord when the flood was over. This made the Lord very happy. The Lord knew He would never have to send a flood again. So the Lord said:

“While the earth remains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Winter and summer,
And day and night
Shall not cease.”

(Genesis 8:22)



The Lord said beautiful words to Noah. They are so beautiful that you will want to learn them by heart. And after you learn them you will be happy. So happy that you may even *sing* the Lord’s words to Noah. Why don’t you try it and see if you can make the Lord’s words into a song!

In the blue songbook called *First Songs for Little Children* (published by the General Church of the New Jerusalem), there is a song on page 26 about Noah and the Lord. If you have the book, try singing it with someone to help you!

The End of the Flood

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LEVEL 2B – MAKE NOAH’S ARK

MATERIALS NEEDED

Shoebox (the kind with a lid that lifts all the way off)

Several pieces brown construction paper

Glue, paintbrush

Small sewing scissors

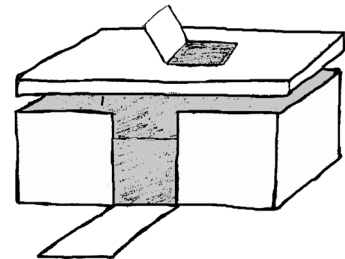
Optional: lots of popsicle sticks—preferably the wide kind (to be used in place of the brown paper)

Chapter 8 of Genesis tells the story of how the flood rains stopped, what Noah did to test to see if it was safe to leave the ark, and what Noah did when he finally got on dry land again.

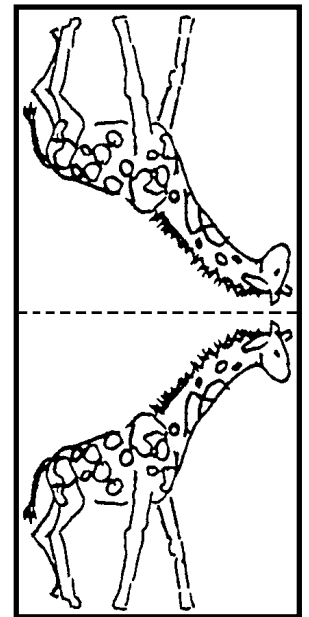
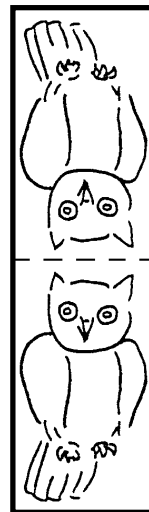
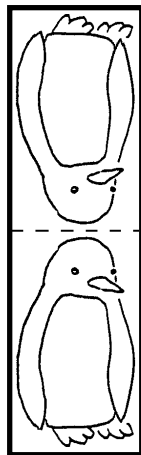
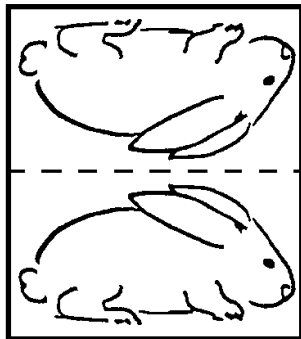
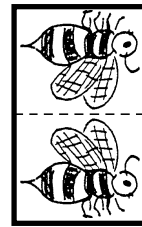
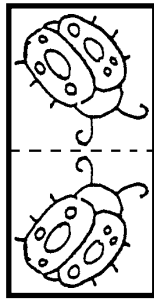
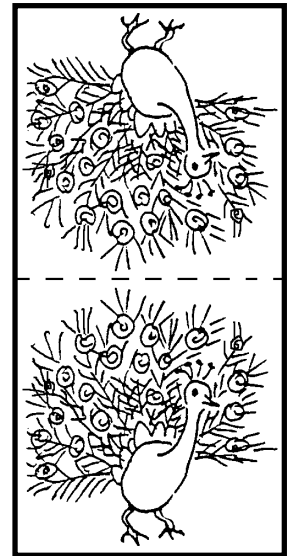
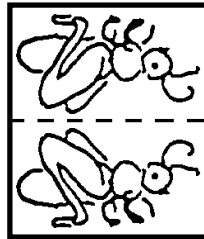
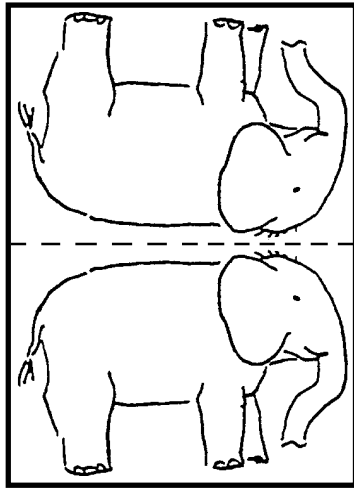
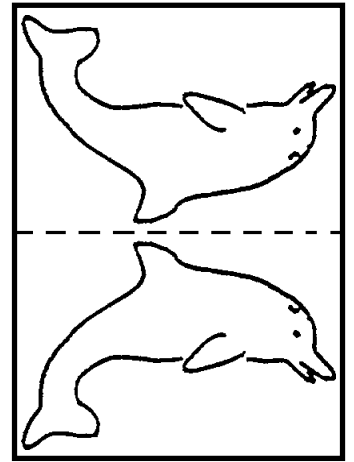
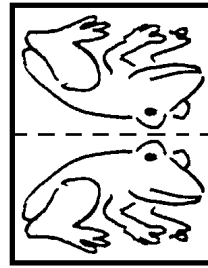
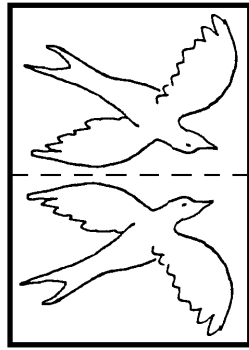
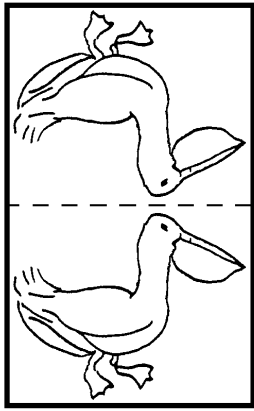
Have you ever wondered why Noah couldn’t look out the ark window to see for himself if the waters were gone from the earth? The ark was actually in the shape of a box—a very big box—with the window on the top or roof of the ark. So when Noah looked out the window, all he would have been able to see was the sky! He could not see the water at all. So he needed the help of a raven and then a dove to let him know if the waters were dried up.

DIRECTIONS FOR PROJECT: (Parents: you may want to point out to your child that the ark consisted of three stories.)

1. With the lid on the box, cut a window in the middle of the lid. Remove lid and cut a door in one of the long sides of the box. (See illustration.) Remove lid from box and choose a side to cover with either the brown paper or the popsicle sticks.
2. If using paper, cover the side with a thin layer of glue, spreading with a paintbrush. Apply a piece of brown paper (the paper does not have to be flush with all the edges) and let dry. Cut away the excess paper. Repeat until all the sides are covered, including the lid. Cut away paper where the door and window are.
3. If using popsicle sticks, spread glue in small sections at a time on the box and apply sticks to the glue. The sticks can be snapped to make an approximate fit around the door and window. Let glue dry completely before beginning a new side.
4. Color and cut out the animals on the following page.
5. Use your ark and animals to act out the story while a parent or sibling read it aloud. Store animals in your ark.



Perhaps you would like to try telling the story of Noah to someone in your family or, on page 3, write the story of the end of the flood.





A series of ten horizontal lines for writing, each consisting of a solid top line, a dashed midline, and a solid bottom line.

The End of the Flood
Genesis 8
LEVEL 3 – THE FLOOD



In your lesson today you are going to be looking at the story of Noah and the Flood, and also at a flood story from the Greek myths.

If you study the myths of ancient nations you will find that almost all of them have a story about a flood.

In the New Church we are taught that the myths are stories that began in an Ancient Word given to a special church called the Ancient Church. The stories slowly spread to many parts of the world.

“the things of religion spread into the Indies and their islands, and through Egypt and Ethiopia into the kingdoms of Africa, and from Asia into Greece, and from thence into Italy.”

Doctrine of the Holy Scripture 117

Over time, the stories changed. Instead of each story telling something special about the Lord, people began to think they were about many different gods.

“...the things of religion among many of the nations were turned into idolatry, and in Greece into fables, and the Lord’s qualities ...into many gods...”

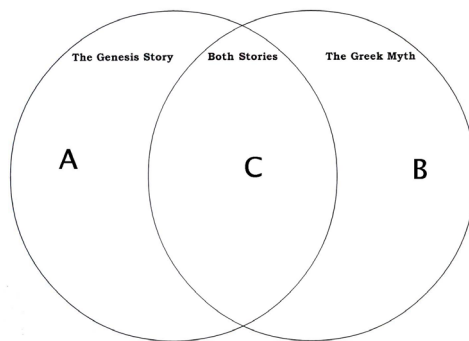
Doctrine of the Holy Scripture 117

Application

You are going to compare the story of Noah and the Flood in the book of Genesis, with the Greek flood myth. You will find that the two stories have many details that are the same, but also many differences.

Here are three suggestions for different ways to work on this project:

- a) You can do this project by yourself.*
 - b) Have a brother or sister also fill in the circles (an extra page is included), then compare your diagrams to see which details you missed.*
 - c) The whole family can work together, helping each other to notice details and decide which part of the diagram they belong in.*
- 1) Read the story of Noah and the Flood again in Genesis
 - 2) Read the Greek flood myth on pages 2 and 3
 - 3) Fill in the Venn Diagram on page 4



You have probably worked with Venn diagrams in school. There are two overlapping circles, so that the center part is actually part of both circles.

In section A you are going to write all the details you can find that are part of the Genesis story, but are not in the Greek story.

In section B you are going to write all the details you can find that are part of the Greek story, but are not in the Genesis story.

In section C you are going to write all the details you can find that are the same (or almost the same) in both stories.

*(*If you like to draw, you could draw pictures in each section instead of writing.)*

A Greek Flood Myth

After the Golden Age there came a time when people began to quarrel with one another. Then the gods sent hot summers and cold winters. People made themselves places in which to live, in caves and grottos, where they might be protected from the hot sun in summer, and from cold winds in winter. They ploughed the ground and grew grain that they laid away for food during the cold season.

As the world grew older, people became more quarrelsome. At last they dug gold out of the ground, where it had lain for so long a time, and they dug out iron too. They quarreled more sadly than ever over the possession of the bright gold they had found; and, what was worst of all, they made sharp knives and other weapons out of iron, and fought fiercely with each other.

After this, robbery, murder, and many other crimes were common on the earth. Things grew worse and worse, till a person's life was not safe anywhere. Finally, in all the world there were only two people who continued to sacrifice to the gods. These two were Deucalion and Pyrrha, who were good and gentle, like the people who had lived in the Golden Age.

Jupiter, the father of the gods, looking down from Mount Olympus and seeing how wicked the people of the earth had grown, made up his mind that he would destroy them all. So he shut up the North Wind in the caves of Aeolus, and sent forth the South Wind, for the South Wind was the wind that would bring the rain.

Clouds gathered over all the earth, and great drops of rain began to fall, slowly at first, then faster and faster. It rained till the grain was laid flat in the fields, still the clouds did not lighten, nor the rain cease falling. The rivers overflowed their banks, and rushed in over the plains, uprooting great trees, and carrying away houses and cattle and men. The sea, as well as the rivers, flowed in over the land, till dolphins played among the branches of forest trees. Still the rain never stopped, and the water rose higher and higher.

People and animals made their way to the hills as well as they could, wolves, lions, and tigers swimming side by side with sheep or cattle, all in one common danger. They made their way first to the hills and then to the mountains, but the water came creeping up, up, till all but the tops of the highest mountains were out of sight. At last, when the rain stopped, and the clouds broke away a little, only the top of Mount Parnassus, which was the highest mountain of all, remained above water.

Deucalion and Pyrrha were sailing in a little ship, which they had managed to keep afloat. When they saw that the top of Mount Parnassus was still out of water, they anchored their ship there, and sacrificed to the gods.

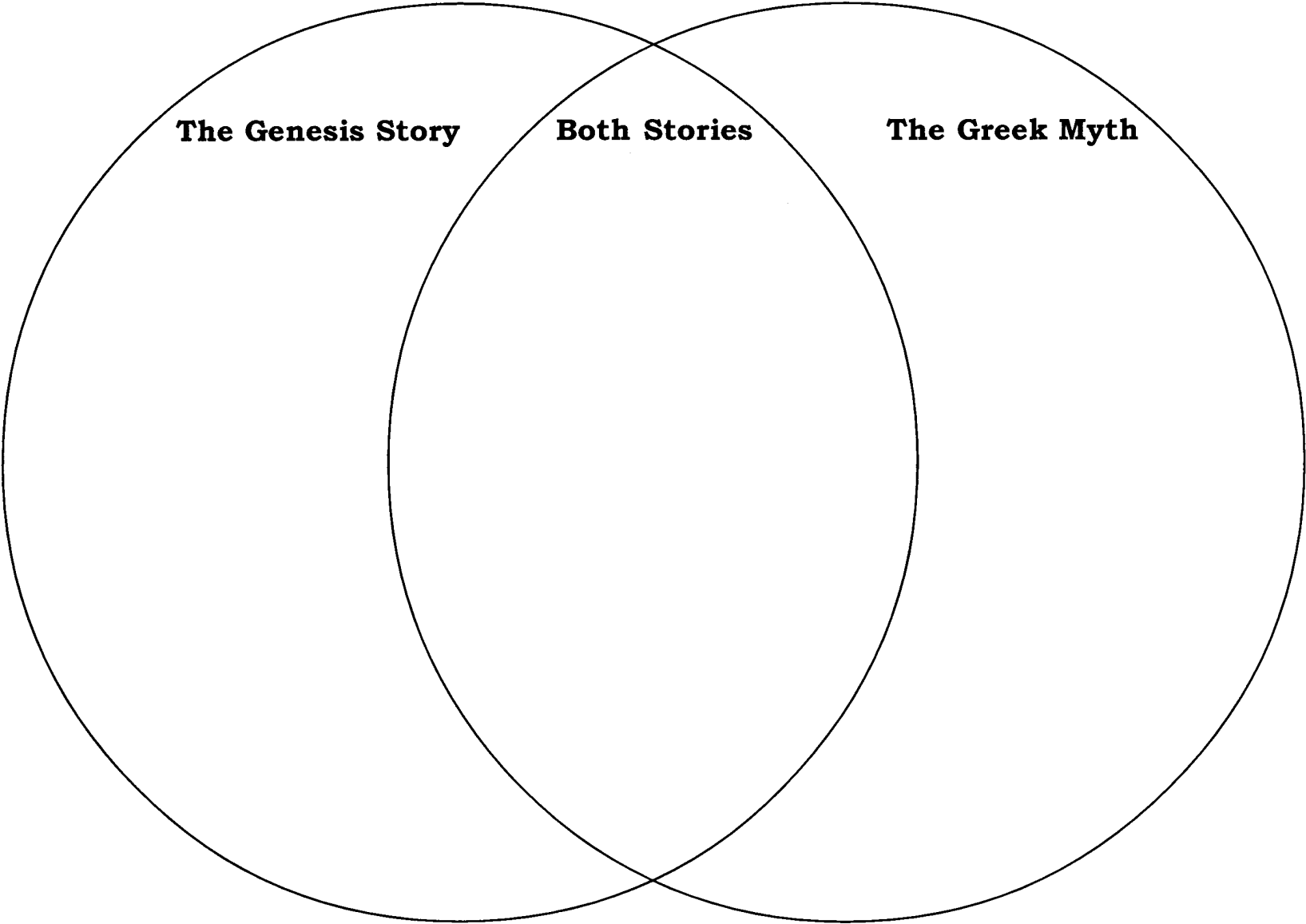
When Jupiter saw that only these two were left, he sent out the North Wind to blow away the clouds. Then Neptune, the god of the sea, sent his chief Triton, to blow a long, twisted horn, and the sea heard, and went back to the place where it rightfully belonged.

As the waters rapidly fell away, the earth appeared again, but what a change! Everything was coated with a dismal coating of yellow mud. And it was so very still—not a sound from any living thing!

Near by, with its fires out, and covered with mud, was the temple of one of the gods. Deucalion and Pyrrha went and sat there in the shade, wondering what would become of them, alone in such a great world.

Then a mysterious voice told them to throw the bones of their great mother behind them. They could not imagine what was meant by “the bones of their great mother.” After they had puzzled over it for some time, they came to the conclusion that their great mother must mean Mother Earth, and that her “bones” must be the stones that lay around them. So, standing with their faces toward the temple, they threw the stones behind them. Then they turned to see what had happened, and found that the stones which they had thrown had changed into men and women!

In this way, after the Great Deluge, the earth was peopled again, but it is to be feared that some of the people of this new race had hearts as hard as the stones from which they were made.



The End of the Flood
Genesis 8
LEVEL 4 – COVENANTS



The rainbow was a sign of the covenant that the Lord made with Noah:

While the earth remains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Winter and summer,
And day and night
Shall not cease.

(Genesis 8:22)

And for us, the rainbow is a reminder of the Lord's presence with us. It is an outward way of showing us the Lord's inner presence.

Many years later the Lord made another covenant. A covenant is a promise between two or more people. This time, the Lord gave the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS ARE A COVENANT

The commandments were given on Mt. Sinai on two tables of stone. One of the tables is the Lord's table:

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.



The other table is man's table.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor,

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.

So far as we keep the laws on our table, the Lord enables us to keep the laws on His table. (*Divine Providence* 94, 95). This is why the commandments are called a covenant. They are a bond between the Lord and his people.

First we have to learn to love the neighbor. To love the neighbor means not to act insincerely and unjustly towards anyone, not to hate anyone or want revenge, not to steal from anyone, or to commit adultery, or to bear false witness against them or to covet what belongs to the neighbor. If we keep the commandments on the second stone, the Lord can join himself to us and enable us to love Him, and treat His name with reverence, and love His Word and worship Him.

Do you remember the New Testament story of the young man who came to the Lord and asked,

“Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life.”

What was the Lord's answer?

“...if you want to enter into life keep the commandments.”

(*Matthew 19:16-19*)

What about the fourth commandment?

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

The fourth commandment is part of both tables. It joins them together. It is part of our table because we have an earthly mother and father to honor. It is part of the Lord's table, because He is our heavenly Father, and the church is our heavenly mother that we are to honor.

We honor our father and mother by being obedient to them, by doing what they ask. We honor our country by being obedient to its laws. We honor our church by obeying and living according to the true things we learn from it. And when we honor all of these, we honor the Lord. We open our hearts to honoring the Lord's leading, and obeying His commandments. We love the Lord when we keep His commandments.

Our conscience reminds us of our covenant.

Keeping the commandments is what our conscience is all about. The Lord showed His presence to Noah as a rainbow in the cloud. He shows His presence with us in the voice of conscience. Our conscience reminds us of the Lord's laws. It reminds us what we should do and what we shouldn't do.

The rainbow is shaped like a bow. It is a similar shape to the bow that is used to launch arrows. We are taught that a bow is a picture of the teachings of the Word. From these we can launch the true things we learn to knock down what is evil and false.

THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS ARE A COVENANT

The Pharisees asked the Lord which is the great commandment. Do you remember what He replied?

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

If we keep the second great commandment, it makes it possible for us to keep the first. The Lord promises if we do the one, He will do the other for us. It is a covenant.

Application: Covenants in your life

We have many covenants in our lives. We have a covenant with the Lord. We have a covenant with our parents. We have a covenant with a friend. We have a covenant with our country, with our school, or our scout troop or a club or a team. As adults, we even have legal covenants that are signed.

Write about one or more of these covenants in your life, what it is, why it is important, how you honor it, what would break it, why it is important.

This could also be a subject for discussion with your family. Try it at dinner time. Other family members can tell about their part in covenants.

The End of the Flood
Genesis 8
LEVEL 5 – ENDING THE FLOOD



The Ups and Downs of Life

Have you ever felt great one day and very low the next? Is it sometimes easy to settle down to a job you are doing, and an absolute drag at other times? If you play a sport, have you been right on the top of your game one day, and hoped that you'd always be that way, only to find the next day you play terribly?

These highs and lows catch a lot of people by surprise. I remember a Peanuts cartoon in which Lucy was feeling low. Charlie Brown told her, "That's life, it has its ups and downs." "Not for me," said Lucy. "I only want ups. I want to go from an up to an upper up."

Most of us would like that, but we're sensible people, and although we don't like the downs we accept that they're part of life.

The "downs" can help us make progress

The lesson this morning talks about the value of the downs as well as the ups. The flood was coming to an end. The rain had stopped. But the waters ebbed and flowed upon the earth. Noah kept thinking the trial was over, but then the water seemed to get higher again.

In the internal sense this speaks of the highs and lows of a person who is being prepared for heaven. His or her highs are great, but the lows also perform a service. When he or she is being tempted, there is a low. During that low period the person fights temptation and overcomes it and makes real progress. Then the next high is most happy.

Why do we have downs as well as ups? Because during the down periods we make progress. You see, the reason is that when things are tough you have to work to succeed, you have to invest a lot of yourself in what you are doing. You are exercising your freedom to overcome obstacles.

Take a marathon runner who is training for a race. Some days she goes out and runs and it feels just great. She cruises along at a good pace, the birds are singing in the trees above, she doesn't feel tired after many miles. On other days she's tired after a few hundred yards. She wants to stop and go home and have a swim instead.

But if every time things were hard she went home and hopped in the pool, she'd never get any better. She wouldn't overcome the lack of training that's making those days hard! She knows this, so what does she do? She says to herself, "I'll keep going. I'll put one foot in front of the other and finish this training session. It's doing me good." Every time she takes a step she's exercising her free will, and the effort is making her stronger.

Of course, she mustn't overdo it. You only fight through the hard times when you know you need to. Sometimes people force themselves beyond what is sensible. The rule is, when your judgment tells you that you should be pushing yourself, do it. When your judgment says you're overdoing it, follow your judgment.

We can choose our reaction to "downs"

a) Reactions that are not useful

So what do you do when you hit a low period in your life? Some people are tempted to think it will never end and get terribly depressed. Guard against this feeling. Remind yourself that you will come out of it. Some people—adults as well as young people—look for an artificial way to get out of a low. They take drugs; they drink a lot of alcohol. The trouble with this is that the artificial high is followed by another low. It's no way out, and the dependency on drugs can ruin their lives.

b) Reactions that are useful

What do you do when you hit a low period in your life?

Find something useful and make yourself do it.

It might be a job that you've been meaning to do, it might be visiting someone who would like to see you. It might be just going about your normal work and trying to forget that you're feeling low.

The point is that by using your free will to do something good, even when you're not feeling good, you get through the low times, and you get through them as a better person. It makes the next low less hard, and the highs in between a lot more enjoyable.

The angels have "highs" and "lows"

Even in heaven the angels have quiet periods, followed by periods of great joy. They have their "highs" and their "lows." But their lows are not unhappy, and they know that happiness is going to follow, so they don't worry about it. Neither should we. If we just put our minds to doing something we will make real progress, and, if we are patient, the lows will come to an end.

