

NOAH AND THE FLOOD

Adam and Eve had kids.

And their kids had kids. And their kids had kids. Grandkids and great-grandkids and great-great-grandkids—spreading all over the wild world. And **SIN** was spreading with them.

They were fighting. Stealing. Lying. Hurting each other. Making God's world an ugly place.

Finally, God said, "Enough!"

It was time to start again. God decided to pick one person—one good person—to start His world over again.

*But who? In all that sinning and fighting and hurting, was **ANYONE** good and kind enough to trust with such an important job?*

Yes!

God chose Noah. Noah was a righteous man—he tried very hard to make the right choices. He tried hard not to fight or steal or lie.



Noah walked with God. That means that, in a world where everyone was doing their own thing, Noah was thinking about God. Talking to God. Listening to God. Noah was always ready to do what God asked.

Oh, yeah—and there’s one other thing we know about Noah. He was more than 500 years old. Yep, 500 years old. People lived a long time back then.

Not only was Noah a righteous man who walked with God, but Noah had been practicing walking with God—and listening for God’s voice—for more than **500 YEARS!** That’s a **LONG** time!

So when God had a really big job to do, He knew who to call because He knew who had been listening. **FOR MORE THAN 500 YEARS!!**

God said, “Hey Noah. Build a boat.”

And Noah said, “What’s a boat?”

And God said, “It’s a thing you can float in if there’s a flood.”

And Noah said, “What’s a flood?”

And God said, “It’s when water covers everything. It’s why you need a boat.”

And Noah said, “How big?”

And God said, “Big enough for your family.”

And Noah said, “Anything else?”

And God said, “And some animals.”

And Noah said, “How many animals?”

And God said, “All of them.”

At this point Noah probably fainted, and God probably had to poke him with a stick to wake him up again. Then God gave him plans for building a boat.

A very, very **BIG** boat.

Noah and his family set to work building a boat **SO BIG** it could hold all of them, plus two of every kind of animal!

Building a boat that big took years and years, and Noah’s neighbors probably came by often to laugh at him for building a boat where there was no water.

But Noah didn’t care about the laughing. He’d been walking with God for a long time, and he was going to keep on walking with God no matter what. Noah wanted to be God’s friend, even if everyone else thought he was silly.

Then one day, it started to **RAIN.**

The animals came from **EVERYWHERE.** Big animals, little animals, tall animals, and short animals. God sent the animals to Noah, and Noah packed them all in his big, big boat.



And it kept raining. Harder and **HARDER**. Suddenly, having a boat looked like a pretty good idea.

God covered the land with water, so that all the sinning and fighting and hurting could finally stop. All the fighting and hurting died. But so did most of God's creation.

It was a very sad time.

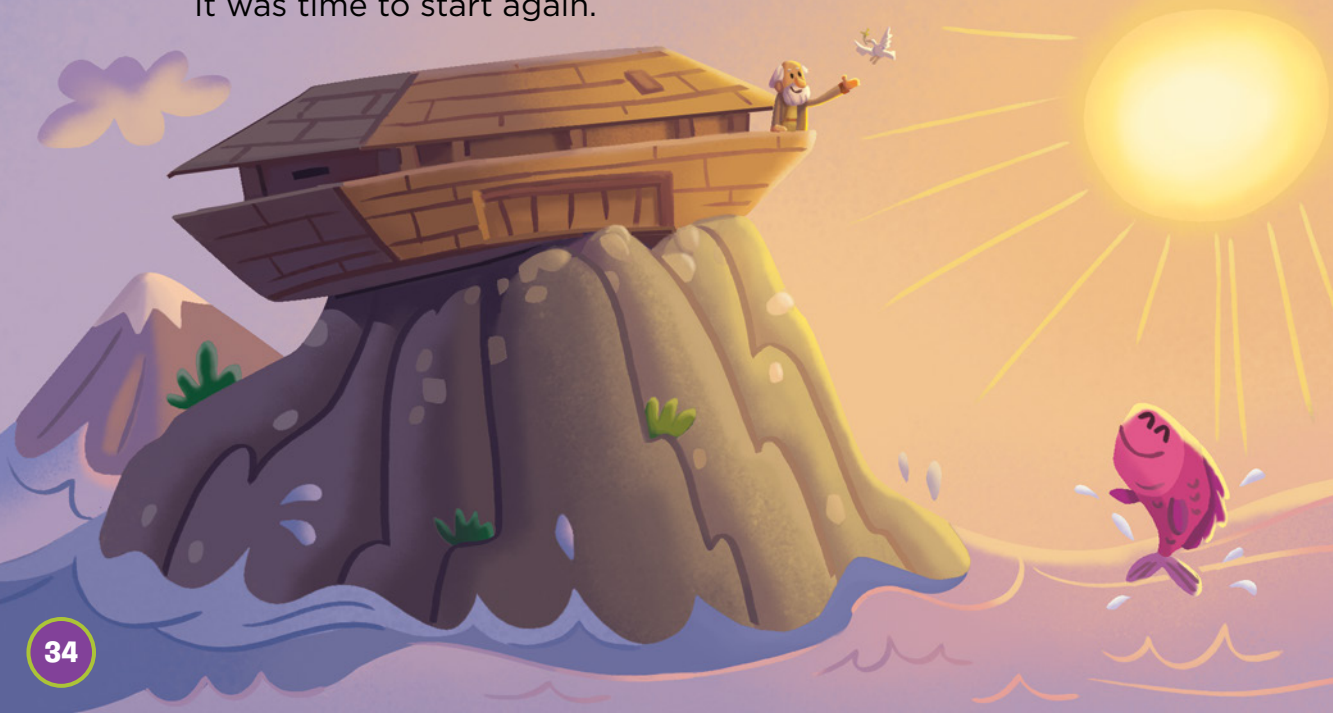
It rained and poured for **40 DAYS**. Noah's big, big boat floated on the water . . . 50 days . . . 60 days . . . 100 days! After 150 days, the big, big boat was getting very, very **STINKY!** *Have you ever been on a pig farm or in the elephant house at the zoo?* Stinky like that—only worse!

Then finally, the water started to go down. Down, down, down . . . One day, at long last, Noah's big, big boat came to rest on top of a mountain.

"Let's start again," God said.

So Noah and his family—plus a whole bunch of seasick animals—walked out of the big, big boat into a clean, fresh world.

It was time to start again.



NOAH AND THE FLOOD

FAMILY CONNECTION

GENESIS 6



FUN FACTS

A *cubit* is a unit of measurement often used in biblical times. It measures approximately 1½ feet. The ark was 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high. That's big enough to hold one and a half football fields or two large airplanes!

TALK

Why did God save Noah and his family from the flood?

Why do you think Noah ignored those who laughed about his big boat?

Dear God . . .

PRAY

Dear God, thank You for being faithful to Noah because he was faithful to You. We want to be faithful to You too. Amen.



LAWS, LAWS, LAWS

Have you ever heard the word HOLY?

It's an important word in the Bible, and many people don't understand what it really means. Lots of people think the word **HOLY** means "better than."

But that isn't what it means at all. *Holy* doesn't mean "better than." It means "different from."

Specifically, the word *holy* means "set apart for God."

When we say that something is "holy," it means that it has been set apart to be used only for God. When a person is holy, that person has been set apart for God.

So what do we mean when we say God is holy? That God has been set apart . . . for God? That doesn't really make any sense.

No, when we say God is holy, we mean God is set apart from **EVERYTHING**. God is completely different from anyone or anything. There is no one like God. Anywhere.

As Moses led the Israelites through the desert, God was forming them into a nation. He wanted this nation to be holy—to be set apart for Him. This was the kingdom of God, and it was a **REAL** kingdom in a **REAL** place, with people, walls, houses, horses, farms . . . everything needed to be a new nation.

But if Israel was going to be a real nation, Israel needed lots of laws. So God gave Moses laws for how they should treat each other, for buying and selling land, for loaning and borrowing money, for worshipping Him, and for giving money or animals or crops as a sacrifice or payment for their sin.



God also gave Israel laws about the food they could eat. And the clothes they could wear. Even about their hair and their beards! That's right—God's people had **BEARD** laws!



And this is where things can get a little confusing for us today. When you read all the laws God gave to Moses, you might notice something—we still follow many of those laws today. But many others we do not.

Why is that? Aren't all of God's laws good for us to follow?

For example, God told the Israelites not to murder, lie, or steal. And today, we still believe it is wrong to murder, lie, or steal.

But God also told the Israelites not to eat any meat that comes from a pig. He told them to put little dangly tassels on the corners of their coats. He told the Israelite men to never, ever trim their beards. Just let them **GROW** and **GROW** and **GROW**.

Today we don't follow those rules. We eat bacon and ham, which come from pigs. We don't put tassels on our coats. And **EXCEPT** for hipsters and lumberjacks, we usually don't let our beards grow and grow and grow. We shave them right off if we want to!

To understand why we follow some of Israel's laws but not others, we need to understand the three different kinds of laws God gave to Israel.

First, God gave Israel **CIVIL** laws. *Civil laws* are laws for running a city or country. Laws about governments and armies and taxes. Laws about buying and selling houses and land. Because we don't live in Israel, we don't follow Israel's civil laws. We follow the civil laws of the nations we live in today.



LAWS, LAWS, LAWS

FAMILY CONNECTION

LEVITICUS

TRICKY BITS

Why do we follow some of the laws in the Bible but not all of them? To understand why, look at the types of laws God gave to Israel:

TYPE OF LAW	BASED ON ...	TODAY ...
Civil Laws	the government we live in	we follow the laws of our government <i>(laws about taxes, land, and houses)</i>
Ritual Laws	the culture of the day	we observe some rituals to honor God's story <i>(laws about food, clothes, and holidays)</i>
Ethical Laws	moral right and wrong	we still live God's way, choosing what is right <i>(laws about stealing, lying, hurting people)</i>

God also gave Israel **RITUAL** laws. A *ritual* is “an action you do over and over as a symbol of something you believe.” Remember, God wanted the Israelites to be *holy*—to be set apart for Him. So God gave them rules about the food they ate, the clothes they wore, even how to grow their beards and hair. He gave them rules about special days and special feasts. All of these things reminded the Israelites every day that they were different from the nations around them. They were a nation **SET APART** for God.

Today, God isn't setting apart a nation for Himself like Israel, so he doesn't ask us to follow Israel's ritual laws.

And finally, God gave Israel **ETHICAL** laws. *Ethical* means “how we act,” so *ethical laws* are laws about how we treat each other. Laws about lying and stealing and murdering. About wanting things that don't belong to us. These are ethical laws, and they weren't just for Israel. They're for all of us. Everywhere. All the time.

That's why today, God doesn't mind if we eat bacon. Unless it's someone else's bacon.



TALK

What does it mean to be *holy*?

What are the three types of laws explained in the Bible?

Dear God ...

PRAY

Dear God, we want to be set apart for You. Please show us how to live Your way every day. Amen.



FROM WRONG TO RIGHT

We are justified by grace through faith!" According to Paul, this is really important to know. So important that he says it over and over.

"We are justified by grace through faith!"

Great. *But what does it mean? What is "justified"? What is "grace"? And what is "faith"?* Let's dive in and see if we can figure out why Paul says this is so important!

To **JUSTIFY** someone is to say that what the person has done is good and right. No need for punishment—what the person has done is the right thing to do!

Imagine if someone wants to put you in jail because you walked out of a store with a bunch of bananas. "You **STOLE** those bananas!" they yell. "Put her in jail!" They put a sticker on you that says, "**WRONG!**"



But then the owner of the store runs out and says, "No, she paid for the bananas! It is **RIGHT** for her to take them home!" The storeowner takes off the "**WRONG**" label and puts on another sticker that says, "**RIGHT.**"

Now you have been **JUSTIFIED**. You are not a banana thief. The storeowner said that what you did was right.

Get it?

Grace is a word that means “undeserved favor.” Favor means kindness. So, grace, or “undeserved favor,” means you have been given a kindness—a gift—that you didn’t earn.

If your neighbor gives you ten dollars after you mow her yard, have you earned that money?

Yes. You mowed the yard. You earned the money.

But what if you don’t mow the yard, and your neighbor gives you ten dollars anyway, just because she likes you? Now did you earn the money?



Nope. You didn’t **EARN** the money. The ten dollars was a **GIFT** you didn’t earn.

And that’s what **GRACE** is. A gift you didn’t earn.

What is the gift Paul talked about that we haven’t earned?

Well, it’s much better than ten dollars. The gift we haven’t earned is **FRIENDSHIP** with God. It’s the forever-kind-of-life with Jesus, in a world without sadness and sickness—a world made **RIGHT!**



Remember, sin keeps us **AWAY** from God. When we ignore God and do whatever we want to do—like when we put ourselves first instead of putting other people first—we break our friendship with God. We can’t have the forever-kind-of-life with Jesus.

To be friends with God again, we need to have our labels changed from “wrong” to “right.” From “enemy of God” to “friend of God.”

But we can’t change our own labels. That’s why Jesus came. That’s why He died on the cross. **JESUS** took our labels that said **WRONG**, and put them on Himself, even though He hadn’t done anything wrong. Then He took His own label that said **RIGHT**, and put it on us. Jesus justified us!

We are justified by grace through faith.”
What’s faith? It’s simple. **FAITH** is trusting that Jesus can do what He says He can do. Faith is **BELIEVING** the good news about Jesus and the forever-kind-of-life we can have with Him.

Our labels are changed from “wrong” to “right,” even though we didn’t earn it, because we have faith in Jesus and trust Him with our lives.

To Paul, **NOTHING** was more important than this!

JUSTIFIED



FROM WRONG TO RIGHT FAMILY CONNECTION

EPHESIANS 2:1-10



EVERYDAY TRUTH

Because I have faith
in God, He changes me
from the inside out!

TALK

What does *grace* mean?

How does our relationship with
God change our “label”?

Dear
God ...

PRAY

Dear God, Your grace and love are so much
more than we deserve. Thank you for inviting us
into a forever-kind-of-life with Jesus. Amen.

