

# (In place of AIG Lesson 28)

## Thank God!

### **Bible passage**

Genesis 8

### **Lesson Focus**

Just like Noah, we can rely on God to help us thank Him in everything.

### **Lifeline Verse**

In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

## Introduce It!

### First Impressions (5 minutes)

Teacher One: Today, I'm going to give each of you a piece of play dough. As soon as you get it, shape it into something that represents you. For instance, if you like football, you can make a football. If you like to read, make a book. If you like dogs, make a dog. You'll have just a minute so work quickly. When you're done, turn to a neighbor and tell him what yours is and why.

Pass out a small ball of play dough on a paper plate to each person and have them do as instructed.

Teacher Two: Now we're going to make an impression in your play dough by pressing an animal or shell in it, then lifting it back out. Flatten out your dough like a pancake while we pass out these supplies.

Pass out small shells and/or small plastic animals and have them do as instructed. Look at each other's impressions and tell them it reminds you of a fossil impression. Ask if they know what fossils are. Explain that when plants or animals are buried quickly in sand and mud, they can turn into a fossil (stone). Tell them that a guest expert named Detective B. Smart is coming to tell them about a case he's been working on that involves fossils.

## Teach It!

### Genesis 8 in Miniature (10 minutes)

Teacher One: Seeing all those fossils and all the destruction that happened during the Flood reminds me of how thankful Noah had to have been to be saved. I mean, except for the seven relatives who were with Noah on the Ark, everyone he knew had died because they had not followed God. And you know, every person nowadays still has the same options that the people back then had—to trust God to save us, or to reject God. I'm so thankful I trusted God to save me and I became His child. Share a little about your testimony and how thankful you are to God for saving you, by His grace, and remind them of how thankful we should all be if we're part of His family. We can't work hard or earn it by being good. God saved us! Wow!

Divers, let's get back to finding out what happened next in the account of Noah and his family. Remember we have been talking about Noah and his family and the animals in the middle of that HUGE, worldwide Flood. Volcanoes and earthquakes were going off, rain was pouring down for at least 40 days and 40 nights, and the earth was being drastically changed. But Noah and his family were safe. Let's pick up the account there. I need your help as I share this next part from Genesis chapter 8. As I read it, you need to make the accompanying item out of your play dough. For instance, while I read this first part, you should make an ark. Pass out the play dough again.

Show Poster 1 (Ark poster) and read Genesis 8:1–2 from your Bible as they sculpt the Ark from their play dough. (Teacher Two may want to model how to do so, in a simplified way.)

Read Genesis 8:3–5 as they sculpt a mountain. Point out that the boat came to rest in the mountains of Ararat, which is in the region of where Turkey is today. Nobody has found the boat, but it is likely that it was taken apart and used for wood (recycled!), or it deteriorated. Wood structures most likely wouldn't still be around from that long ago, although it is possible that it could be trapped in ice high in those mountains.

Show Poster 2 (Dove poster) and tell them to make a bird as you read or summarize Genesis 8:6–12. Comment on the raven and the dove.

Show Poster 3 (Off the Ark poster) and tell them to make a person as you summarize Genesis 8:13–19. Comment on what it may have been like to be Noah coming off the Ark. When he went in, the world was a beautiful place with trees and flowers and grass. Now he steps out and sees a broken world—very little plant life, higher mountains, canyons, gorges, etc. Also,

the volcanoes and earthquakes that started with the Flood would continue erupting, so much so that the volcanoes and earthquakes we experience today are thought to still be the aftershocks of the Flood. Isn't that something to think that the earth is still feeling the aftereffects of that Flood all these years later?

Show Poster 4 (Altar poster) and tell them to make little stones to pile on top of each other into what's called an altar. Do so as you read Genesis 8:20–22. Comment that the very first thing Noah did when he got off the Ark was to build this altar to thank and worship God. Can you imagine how thankful he must have been that God saved him and he had escaped that terrible death? Remind them that for any of us who are part of God's family, we should thank God for saving us, too!

### Part 3: Small Group Time (10 minutes)

When Noah got off the Ark, he was so thankful God had saved him! How about you? What's the number one thing you're thankful for?

If you're a child of God, have you thanked God recently for saving you?

Let's go around and see if everyone can think of one thing to thank God for.

Let's imagine there's something called a Thanks-o-Meter that goes from 1 to 10. One means "I grumble a lot." Five means "Sometimes I'm thankful and sometimes I grumble." Ten means "I try to be thankful in everything." Let's be honest and evaluate ourselves. Where do you think you fall on the Thanks-o-Meter and why? What can you do to improve your score? Realize that you need God's help to transform you from a grumbler to a thanker!

### Part 1: Lifeline Verse

**Today's Verse:** "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 Thessalonians 5:18

**Challenge:** Say the verse in a variety of voices, such as an underwater voice, speaking "whale," a crabby voice, a frog croak, and a quiet, bottom-of-the-ocean whisper.

### Part 2: Go and Do

Before you go to bed tonight, think over your day and write something you're thankful for. Put it in your Ocean of Thanks Box or in a journal (write "Ocean of Thanks" on the front). Get in the habit of doing this every night before you go to bed.

As you go throughout your day, thank God for as many things as you can think of.

Ask an adult to share about something/someone that he or she thanks God for.

Ask yourself this question: Do I want God and others to know me as a grumbler or a thanker?