

# (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

## Preparing for the Lesson

Read Genesis 8 several times.

Pray.

## 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 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).

At this point, collect the shells and animals. Also collect the play dough so they aren't playing with it during the next part. Keep it in separate balls because they will need it again in Teach It! Part 2. Or, if the kids are sitting in chairs, have them put it under their chairs, on their plates.

## Teach It!

### Genesis 8 in Miniature (5–10 minutes)

Teacher One: 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 saved! Let's pick up the account there. I need your help as I share this next part from 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.

Teacher One shows Poster 1 (Ark poster) and reads or summarizes Genesis 8:1–2. Teacher Two shows them how to flatten their play dough and fold the sides up to make a boat.

Teacher One reads or summarizes Genesis 8:3–5. Teacher Two shows them how to make their play dough into a mountain. Comment that it says 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.

Teacher One shows Poster 2 (Dove poster) and reads or summarizes Genesis 8:6–12. Teacher Two shows them how to make a window that the birds flew out of. Comment on the raven and dove.

Teacher One shows Poster 3 (Off the Ark poster) and reads or summarizes Genesis 8:13–19. Teacher Two shows them how to make a volcano. Comment on what it must 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?

Teacher One shows Poster 4 (Altar poster) and reads or summarizes Genesis 8:20–22. Teacher Two shows them how to make little round stones for the altar. Comment that the very first thing Noah did when he got off the Ark was to build an 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? Briefly elaborate on how thankful we should be if we have been saved by God, too.

### Part 3: Small Group Time (7 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 Him 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!

When small group time is done, have everyone gather again facing the puppet stage.

### Part 4: Puppet Pal—Count My Blessings (3 minutes)

Puppet: Come up talking softly to yourself and counting.

Teacher: It sounds like you're counting. Why are you doing that?

Puppet: Well, I was just trying to count my blessings.

Teacher: What do you mean?

Puppet: You know. Blessings. Good things God has done for me or given me. Things I want to thank God for.

Teacher: Oh, that's fantastic! How many have you counted so far?

Puppet: Well, I just started, but I thought of five different foods that I want to thank God for.

Teacher: Hmm . . . I wonder if the boys and girls can think of some foods they want to thank God for. Let's see. Take answers.

Puppet: They did a good job!

Teacher: What else would you like to thank God for?

Puppet: Well, I was thinking of some people I want to thank God for. So far, I've thought of four.

Teacher: That's great! Boys and girls, can you think of anybody to thank God for? Take answers and see who they come up with.

Puppet: And, of course, I thank God for my home, my bed, clothes, books, church, Jesus, and the Bible!

Teacher: Sandy, there's one very important thing you didn't thank God for yet.

Puppet: What's that?

Teacher: Being part of God's family. Being in God's family, a child of God, means you have come to realize you're a sinner and you will be separated from God and His love and kindness. You realize you can't be good enough or work hard enough to save yourself. You do things wrong and are a sinner, and only God can forgive you and save you. If you've realized you're a sinner and that Jesus died to take the punishment for you, then you need to ask God to forgive you and to be part of His family. If you have done that, then you should always be thankful you belong to God!

Puppet: I guess I never thought about it like that.

Teacher: We should never get over the fact that God loves us and reached out to save us so we could be in His family.

Puppet: Wow, that's true. God is soooooo wonderful and amazing. He cares for each one of us and loves us. It's the greatest blessing of all to be part of His family.

Teacher: It sure is! Why don't we talk to God about that right now?

Pray with the kids

### 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:** Try saying 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 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?