

# Noah's Ark

## The Story of the Big Flood

There was once a kind and good man named Noah. He loved God, just as we love a good friend. But although Noah was honest and good and kind, most of the other people who lived in the world at that time were not. They were always fighting and stealing and doing bad things. God sent messengers to the people, to tell them to stop being so bad. But they paid no attention at all. They only laughed at the messengers and told them to go away. Noah was one of God's messengers, and he tried to warn the people to change their bad ways. But they wouldn't listen.

Finally the people got to be so bad that God said to Noah, "I have made up my mind to put an end to all the people in the world. They are too bad. I shall destroy them all. Everyone but you, for you are good. You and your wife and children, I shall save"

"But this is what you must do, Noah: You must build a large houseboat—an ark. You must make it exactly as I tell you to, so that it will be very strong. For I am going to cause a tremendous rain to come upon the earth. It shall rain for days and days. It shall rain so much that the streets as shall be covered with water and all the people shall drown in the great Flood. But you and your family will all be safe, for you will be in the ark, and the ark will float on top of the water, just like a big boat.

“When the rain starts, take your wife and your three sons and their wives and children and go into the ark. Put plenty of food into the ark, so that everyone will have enough to eat for many days. I want you to take into the ark with you, also, two of every kind of bird and beast that there is in the world, to be saved with you.

“Be sure to do exactly as I tell you.”

So Noah did everything that God told him. He built the ark, large and strong. He stored plenty of food in it. And no sooner had he finished than the rains came. Quickly Noah got his whole family into the ark. Then he led all the animals into the ark, two by two. There were places for all of them.

When they were all safe inside the ark, the rain came down harder and harder. Soon water covered all the houses. But the ark was boat and it floated on top of the water.

Day after day it rained—for forty days and forty nights—until even the tops of the mountains were covered up and the whole world was like a great big ocean. But though all the other people in the world were drowned, Noah and his family and all the animals that were with him in the ark were safe.

Finally the rain stopped. Oh, what a happy day that was! Then little by little, the waters began to get lower, until finally Noah saw dry land around him. Then Noah said, "Come let us leave the ark and go down on to the dry land. See how beautiful the earth is. Everything has been washed clean. We are the only people left in the world. Let us make a new start. Let us all make our minds never to be bad again, but to be the way God wants us to be—kind and gentle and honest."

Then Noah and his whole family thanked God for having saved their lives.

And just then, while they were all praying, a beautiful rainbow appeared in the sky. And God spoke to them and said, "See that rainbow; it is a sign of a promise I make to you. I promise that never again will I destroy the world. Even if it should happen that people should again become wicked, still I will not destroy the whole world. So whenever you, or your children who come after you, see the rainbow in the sky, remember that I have placed it over the clouds to remind you of my promise that I will never again send a flood to destroy the earth and the people on it."

And to this very day, if you watch the sky after it has been raining, every now and then you will see a beautiful rainbow. That will remind you, and all of us, of God's wonderful promise.



