



God Keeps Noah Safe Through the Flood

Genesis 7:17-9:17

Target Truth: God shows love by keeping His promises.

Once Noah and his family were safely inside the ark, something happened that had never happened before. Lightning flashed against the darkness as clouds filled the sky, and the thunder rumbled. Then the people outside the ark felt something wet on their arms and faces. It was starting to rain.

For forty days, water poured down from the clouds and gushed up from the ground. The water rose higher and higher until the highest mountains were covered. When Noah looked out the window, all he could see was water.

Many days went by, and Noah, his family, and all the animals were safe inside the ark, floating on top of the water. God loved them so much that He took care of them. They didn't get wet; they were safe and dry.

One day, the rain stopped. Slowly the waters got lower. Then the tops of mountains began to appear. Noah, his family, and the animals waited until the day when the earth would be dry and ready for them to enjoy once again.

When it was time, God opened the door of the ark and said, "There you go, animals. You frogs and dogs, you rats and cats, fill up the earth again." And they did just that.

It was a new start. God commanded Noah to fill the earth again with people and to once more enjoy all that God had made, and Noah worshiped the Lord.

God said, "I have brought rest to My world, Noah. I promise never to flood the whole earth with water again. I will hang up my bow in the sky so everyone can see the promise I am making right now."

To this day, God still hangs His bow—a rainbow—in the sky after a rainstorm. God has kept His promise to Noah, and He always will.



Gideon Fights Against the Midianites

Judges 6:1-7:22

Target Truth: God alone is powerful to save us.

While Joshua was alive, the people obeyed and loved God, but after he died, the people began to worship idols once more. This was a terrible sin against God. To bring the people back to Himself, God sent an enemy nation, Midian, to attack them.

The Midianites would ride their camels into town and steal all the people's money and food. It got so bad that God's people were about to starve. Just as God had planned, His people cried out to Him for help. God answered their prayers by sending them a man named Gideon.

One day, Gideon was hiding from the Midianites, preparing some food. Suddenly, the Lord's messenger appeared and said, "Greetings, you brave and mighty man! The LORD is with you." When Gideon heard the news that God wanted him to fight Midian, he couldn't believe it. He was hiding. He wasn't a brave man.

To fight the mighty Midianites, Gideon gathered an army of 32,000 men! To Gideon this seemed like a good size for an army, but God said, "Gideon, you have too many soldiers."

Gideon couldn't believe his ears. He thought to himself, *What? Too many?* Even though it seemed crazy to him, Gideon believed God and sent home every soldier who was afraid. More than half of the soldiers went home!

Again, God said, "There are still too many soldiers in your army," so Gideon sent home more soldiers until there were only 300 left. God would rescue His people with just these few men.

God told Gideon exactly what to do. That night with torches covered by clay pots, the 300 men circled around the sleeping Midianite army. Then Gideon put the horn to his lips, and all at once the darkness exploded with sound and light. The rest of the men blew their horns, smashed their pots, and held their flaming torches high. All together they shouted, "For the Lord and for Gideon!"

The Midianite soldiers didn't know what was happening. They thought a huge army was attacking the camp. In the darkness and confusion, they started fighting each other. God didn't need a huge army or even a brave leader to rescue His people. God loved His people and wanted to rescue them Himself.



Jesus Eats with Sinners

Luke 5:27-32

Target Truth: Jesus welcomes sinners.

One of Jesus' disciples was a man named Matthew, a former tax collector. After he became a follower of Jesus, Matthew threw a big party at his house. He invited all his friends, many of whom were also tax collectors—a group known for their sinful actions. Matthew wanted them to hear the news that he was going to follow Jesus now.

At Matthew's party, Jesus sat down at the table with all these sinners. When the Pharisees saw Him, they couldn't believe what He was doing.

The Pharisees thought, *Why is Jesus talking to all those sinners? What kind of teacher is He?* A good teacher would never get so close to wicked people.

The Pharisees didn't understand Jesus. They thought the real Messiah would come and punish all the sinners. They thought He would be a friend only to "good" people, but Jesus loved all kinds of people—even tax collectors and sinners. The Pharisees didn't like that at all.

The Pharisees grumbled to the disciples, "Why does your teacher eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

Jesus heard the Pharisees and answered them. He said, "Doctors spend time with sick people because they're the ones who need doctors. Healthy people don't need doctors. In the same way, I came from God to call sinners to repentance."



Jesus Feeds Five Thousand People

John 6:1-13

Target Truth: Jesus uses little things to accomplish His great plans.

Many people loved to hear Jesus teach. One day, about 5,000 men took their wives and children, left their homes, and followed Jesus all the way out into the wilderness, far away from stores and good places to eat.

As it got later in the day, there was a problem. It was almost dinnertime, and the people had not brought food.

Jesus looked at the hungry crowd with love. He asked Philip, one of His disciples, “Where are we going to buy bread so all these people can eat?”

Philip answered, “We don’t have that kind of money! We can’t even buy enough to feed each person a crumb.”

Andrew, another of Jesus’ disciples, said, “There is a boy here who has given five little loaves of bread and two tiny fish. But how many people will that feed?”

This wasn’t much food, yet with Jesus it would be more than enough. He took the five loaves and two fish and thanked God for them. Then He started breaking the bread and fish into pieces and giving them to His disciples.

The disciples took the pieces and gave them to the people. Jesus kept on breaking, the disciples kept on giving, and the people kept on eating.

Before long everyone was nice and full, and there were even twelve baskets of leftovers! Jesus had worked another amazing miracle!