

SALVATION (JESUS AS SAVIOR)

ILLUSTRATION / DEMONSTRATION

PREPARATION:

Obtain a model or picture of a large ship, like the *Titanic*, the *Cutty Sark*, or a modern cruise ship. Make copies of the “Words to Treasure” on page 1029 of the *NIV Adventure Bible*, to pass out to children after the sermon.

DURING THE CHILDREN'S SERMON:

Show kids the model or picture of the ship. Talk about how big the ship was, how long it must have taken to build it, and what its purpose was. Then ask these three questions:

1. How big was Noah's ark?
2. How long did it take for Noah to build it?
3. What was the purpose of the ark?

Allow a few children to guess the answers, but don't reveal whether their guesses are correct.

SCRIPTURE READING

Open the *NIV Adventure Bible*, saying to the children, “Let's take a look at the story of Noah's ark and find the answers to these questions. Then you'll know whether your guesses are right! This is from the book of Genesis, chapter 6, verses 9–22.”

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God. Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. Make a roof for it and finish the ark to within 18 inches of the top. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.”

Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

FEATURE READING / MESSAGE

Turn to page 9 in the *NIV Adventure Bible*, telling the children, “Now listen to this ‘Life in Bible Times’ article from the *Adventure Bible*, called ‘Noah’s Ark.’”

Noah built the wooden ark in which he, his family, and the animals escaped the waters of the flood. The ark was 450 feet long, as long as 1½ football fields put end to end. It was 45 feet high, as tall as a five-story building. It had windows—probably long, continuous windows—that ran along the length of the ark just under the roof. The door must have been quite large to allow for entry of large animals. It took Noah about 120 years to build the ark.

(Optional: Show children an enlarged copy of the illustration from the above “Life in Bible Times” article, which shows the ark next to a football field, a house, and an elephant for perspective.)

Tell the children, “Okay, now we know how big Noah’s ark was and how long it took him to build it. And we know that the ark’s purpose was to rescue Noah and his family and all the animals from the destruction that was coming because of people’s sins. Did you realize that this was very much the same purpose for which Jesus was born on earth? He came to rescue people from being destroyed because of their sins. The Bible talks about people being ‘in Christ,’ much the same way as it talks about Noah and the others being in the ark. When Jesus came to earth, it was as if God had provided the world with a rescue ship big enough for everyone who wanted to get on board.”

APPLICATION

Tell the children, “If you’re not already on board God’s rescue ship, make sure you get on it, just like Noah and his family and all the animals did! You definitely want to be ‘in Christ.’ If you don’t know how to do this, ask me or your parents later and we’ll tell you how. Once you’re on board, show God how grateful you are that you’re safe in Jesus here on this earth and can look forward to heaven someday. Finally, do your best to help your family members, neighbors, classmates, and friends understand that if they want to be saved from the consequences of their sins, they need to get ‘in Christ’ too!”

To wrap up the sermon, say to the children, “Listen to this short excerpt from the *NIV Adventure Bible Book of Devotions*.”

The tale of Noah’s ark proves that God is able to rescue his people. Other Bible stories prove this too. God saved Moses and the Israelites from the Egyptian army. He saved Daniel from the lions’ den. He saved the apostle Paul from a shipwreck. Through Jesus’ death on the cross, God saved all of his people from sin.

Read the “Words to Treasure” on page 1029 of the *NIV Adventure Bible*. Pass out copies of it, challenging the kids to memorize the Scripture verse it contains.

The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save.

—Zephaniah 3:17