



LIFE LESSONS FROM THE LADIES

Mrs. Noah ... Joan of Ark? Lesson 18

This week is going to be fun! We get to learn about a lovely woman who is married, but we don't know much about. Scripture doesn't even give us her name, although the fact that she's mentioned speaks volumes. Meet "Mrs. Noah." Most everyone, even unbelievers, knows the story of Noah. We learn it on day one of Sunday School. We paint murals of the boat with all the animals on the walls of our babies rooms. We probably can all sing, "Rise, and shine, and give God the glory glory," right? But the one character who is never really talked about is Noah's wife. You can't find much about her in any commentaries, obviously. Some don't even mention her. Even some of the books on "All the women of the Bible" leave her out. Trust me, I looked. In her book, [Lost Women of the Bible](#), Carolyn Custis James gives her an entire chapter, although very small. Genesis refers to her five times, but never by name. I read that when *USA Today* conducted a survey of Biblical knowledge, they included the question: "Who was Noah's wife?" Forty percent of those responding believed her name was "Joan of Ark." I found that hysterical! (Did you know that's who I'm named after? Joan of Ark, not Mrs. Noah ...) So ... we may be speculating and wondering a lot, but that's ok. Her story was swallowed up by her husband's, and in that fact alone, how many of us have felt like our lives are overshadowed by another. But her life does tell a story. Although many have tried to bury it, I'm all about digging it up. Are you with me?

First Day

Before we look at Mrs. Noah, we need to understand more about the time period she was living in, as well as more about her husband. Let me say this up front. Noah was a great man of God, as we will see throughout our story. He was God's man for the job, that's for sure. I'm not trying to diminish his role at all, especially since he is the leading man in this story. But I am going to try to focus more on her role in support of him. Please don't think I'm prejudiced or

that I'm ignoring him! My job this week is to try to bring her out of the shadows and into the light to figure out who she was. Let's have at it, shall we?

1. Please read Genesis 6:1-9:19. I know it's a lot of reading but try to do it if you can. It will remind you of the whole story before we get started. It's a great one. **Then see if you can summarize it in no more than 4 sentences!**
2. Describe what was happening in the culture at the time, according to 6:5-7.
3. How did God feel about all this?
4. Why were Noah and his family chosen for the job? What do these chapters tell us about him?
5. Read the following verses about Noah to give us additional insight. Hebrews 11:7, 1 Peter 3:20 and 2 Peter 2:5
6. Mrs. Noah was one of eight survivors of this catastrophic incident! That's pretty amazing. She is mentioned five times. Read these verses and note what you find out about her. Genesis 6:18, 7:7,13, 8:16, 18

That's right. Nothing! Again, just the mention of her name, as well as how she was present in whatever was happening. Mrs. Noah lived in wicked and violent times. The entire culture had no fear of God, resulting in chaos and evil. God was disgusted. I'm writing this three days after the shooting at the middle school in Florida. America is reeling from yet another horrific act of violence. I bring this up to remind us that Mrs. Noah undoubtedly felt the same way. She lived in a violent culture that made no room for God, and I assume it was a pretty dangerous time to live. We can understand this because we know how anxious we are feeling about sending our kids out into the world where violence is becoming so common. Similarly, people today seem to care less about how God views the way we live, what we do, and how we treat others. It's every man for himself! In this regard, we can sympathize with what she must have been feeling at the time.

7. The first thing we know about her is that she lived in terrible times. How are you feeling about the times we live in right now? Do you have fears? Concerns? Anxiety? Mrs. Noah must have had fears and concerns for her future as well. Please feel free to share those concerns with your group.

8. After discussing our concerns, what shall we do about them? As believers, how are we called to live in this world? Read Philippians 2:14-16,4:7, John 14:27,16:33, and 1 Peter 5:7.

I know there are valid things to be afraid of, but we can't live "in" fear. "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7) I pray that we can embrace this truth and truly believe that He can overcome this world!

Memory Verse of the Week: "But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you." Genesis 6:18 (I know it's a strange memory verse, but I really want to honor her!)

Second Day

Memorize your verse. It should be easy!

The first thing we learned about her is that she lived in troubled times. The next thing we learn is that she is married. Let's explore this, shall we?

1. We know that Noah was called to build an ark at a time when most believe it hadn't even rained yet! He was a just and righteous man, which set him apart from all others at the time. Obviously the seven others in his family were believers and stood by his side. (I wonder if they helped him build?) What do you think it would have been like to be married to the man the rest of the community probably thought was CRAZY?? What emotions do you think she could have been feeling or wrestling with?

2. If you're married, how do you handle it when others mock or judge your husband? Or your kids? What about if they're right? Does that change anything?

The Bible doesn't tell us if her faith was as strong as Noah's, or if she was totally "in" with the whole "ark" thing. But we do know that she stood by him and with him, thus becoming one of the eight survivors. Whatever her inner feelings were, she supported him, against all the talk, ridicule, and taunting that probably came his way. This had to be tough, right? Her husband was, as Custis puts it, "A bright spot in the early history of the world. This man stood out from the rest of the population because of his faithful devotion to God. It is, however, a mixed blessing to be married to such a man. Strong Godly character in a husband, comes at a stiff price in a world that rejects his values. The size of the ark alone, not to mention his preaching, exposed Noah to the ridicule and smirks of neighbors. Any preacher's wife can tell you, it is painful to see your husband mocked and rejected. It is lonely and isolating when God sets you apart from everyone else."

3. In what ways could Mrs. Noah have supported this man during this difficult time?

4. How about you? Discuss some ways that you can also be a support and helpmate to your husband during difficult times. If you're not married, how can this still apply to you? Who is going through difficult times in your life?

5. Have you ever been in a position of being mocked or made fun of because of some decision you've made in regard to being obedient to the Lord? How did you handle it?

6. In our culture today, it seems that the divide between the morals and standards of believers and unbelievers is getting wider and wider. How can we guard against succumbing to peer pressure and adopting some practices and habits that don't please the Lord? (Read Galatians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:4, 1 John 2:15 and Romans 12:2.)

7. Read Joshua 24:14-15. Have you done this? Look at your life at this point. Are you being true to this commitment?

8. Elizabeth George offers us some insight on Mrs. Noah and the way she may have been used to support her husband as he followed the Lord. She gives us seven suggestions. Read through them and answer the bolded questions.
 - a. **Pray.** She could pray for the world, pray for her husband, and pray for her kids. **Are you doing this?**
 - b. **Choose.** She could choose to enter into the righteousness of the Lord rather than go the way of the world. **Have you chosen?**
 - c. **Encourage.** Every husband, including Noah, thrives on a wife's cheerful, steady, hope-filled words of support and affirmation. She could encourage Noah in his work. **How good and how consistent are you at affirming your husband, or others in your life?**

- d. **Instruct.** She could persist in sharing her faith with her sons and their wives. This was not the time to be silent and hope they learned from her example. She must speak up. Their lives as well as their souls were at stake! **Do you speak up to your family? Are you sharing your faith when the Lord opens the door? Their lives are at stake too!**

- e. **Believe.** She may have wondered about the ark and about the “flood of waters” but she chose to believe the prophecy. **Do you “choose” to believe His Word daily?**

- f. **Help.** She could not help much with the building, but she could help gather animals and the food they would need for their mysterious journey of faith. **Do you help others while you support them? Are you willing to go the extra mile with them?**

- g. **Follow.** She could, by faith, follow her husband’s leading day after day for 43,800 days ... right into the ark of salvation that transported her family into an unknown future. **Are you following your husband as he leads your family? And if you’re not married, are you following the Lord?**

That’s it for today! See you tomorrow! I’m praying that Mrs. Noah is coming alive to you!

Third Day

Work on your verse!

1. Today let’s look at Mrs. Noah as a mom. We know having kids in that culture was a very big deal. Women were often defined by how many sons they gave their husbands! How many children did Mrs. Noah have?

2. Can we tell anything about her parenting skills from our story? How can the fact that she supported her husband speak volumes to her children?

3. How does the way we honor our role as a wife “teach” our children? What lessons can they learn, both good and bad?

4. Think back to when you were a child. (For some of us, that’s a LONG time!) What “lessons” did you learn from watching your mom in her role as a wife?

5. Is there anything you need to change as you ponder your example to your children, grandchildren, or others?

I don’t know about you, but when I ask myself about the kind of example I’ve set, I almost shudder. Not because of the things I KNOW I would have done differently, but for the things I don’t even remember or know I did! Being a mom is such a high calling that comes with such a big responsibility. I pray that we continue to do our best as we long to instill faith and a passion for Christ in our kids, no matter how old they are.

I think Mrs. Noah must have done something right. Her kids followed into the ark, along with their wives, without delay or coercion. They could have followed the world, but they didn’t. None of them were dragged; they followed freely.

6. For those of us who are moms, I know our biggest desire for our children is for them to follow into the ark freely, forsaking the world and following Christ. Is there a prodigal in your family, or a child who doesn’t believe, who you can continue to pray for? Can you stop now and spend time praying for them to forsake all and follow Christ?

Fourth Day

Can you tell our memory verse to someone?

1. Today let's look at Mrs. Noah as a survivor. It's written that "No other flood, earthquake, hurricane, or war in history caused the loss of life and destruction of property left behind as this global flood." How do the Sunday School pictures usually portray this?
2. What personal losses do you think Mrs. Noah could have experienced? What emotions do survivors typically deal with?
3. Would you consider yourself a "survivor" of something? What emotions did you, or do you, experience?
4. One author wondered if Mrs. Noah even liked animals. I hadn't thought of that. How could that have added even more tension, if she didn't? (I have two dogs that sleep with me, and even that brings tension!)
5. I know that we, as women, can struggle with finding purpose in our life. Mrs. Noah's kids were raised, her daughters-in-law would be responsible for populating the earth, and Noah was the preacher. What might she have been feeling as she looked toward the future?
6. Sometimes we get to a place where we can feel "washed up" (pun intended) or useless. Perhaps our role has changed or ended, leaving us feeling like we no longer have purpose. Have you ever felt like that? What did you do about it?

I read a good quote this week: “God’s purposes aren’t just for those who stand in the spotlight. They apply to those of us who remain hidden in the shadows.” I think this applied to Mrs. Noah her whole life. Mrs. Noah, I believe, was used by God at that time of history. He had a grand purpose for her, even if she was in the shadows.

7. Have you ever felt “overshadowed” by someone else, whether it be your husband, your friend, or your boss? How does Mrs. Noah’s story encourage you?

Custis James writes a funny, well, maybe not so funny, story about this. She says, “If it’s happened once, it has happened dozens of times. I am often introduced at conferences by a wife who is married to one of my husband’s former students. Typically the introduction goes something like this: ‘Let me tell you a little about Carolyn,’ then promptly shifts to, ‘Her husband, Frank, is a seminary president and professor of historical theology ...’ followed by a lengthy description of my husband’s degrees, accomplishments, and his impact on her husband’s life. Somehow I get lost in my own introduction.” I find this quite hilarious and very relatable. Please forgive me for being so honest, but this would explain my introductions for most of the years of my life! It used to bother me, but not anymore. I can take it in stride now, knowing that no one is trying to be rude or offensive. But it used to bother me. I wanted to say, “No, I’m just Kelly” I’m glad the Lord worked on my pride in this category, but if I’m not careful, it can still rear its ugly head.

8. Has this ever happened to you? Perhaps you’re so-and-so’s wife, or mom, or best friend? Does it continue to bother you? James 4:10 has always helped me. What helps you? How does Mrs. Noah encourage you as well?

Fifth Day

Write out your verse by memory!

I've been pondering Mrs. Noah a lot, and I have some random thoughts for all of us to ponder. Bear with me if they don't all "flow" together! First, when they got off the ark, no one was there, right? No Christian friend, no Reasons to Rejoice Bible Study group, no church. She did have a rainbow as a promise from God. All she really had was God and His promises, but that was enough.

1. Have you ever gone through a season of loneliness, or simply felt all alone in whatever you're dealing with? We also have God and His Word. Is He enough for you? How can He alone be your comfort, your strength, and your friend? How can this time be a season of spiritual growth, if you let it?
2. Have you ever become too dependent on a friend or family member rather than on God? How can this be dangerous? What are some of the possible consequences?
3. The rainbow promised Mrs. Noah a future. The same God who saved them from destruction and carried them through the storm would be there for their future. How does this encourage you? What are some practical ways to remind yourself of this truth?
4. What Mrs. Noah did for her husband and her family did not go unnoticed by God. Her life made a difference. Ladies, your life makes a difference in this world too. To your family, your friends, and your neighbors. You matter; you count. You are loved, valued, and purposed. Why is it so important to grasp this truth? If not, what can happen?

5. It appears that Noah and his lovely wife worked as a team. If you're married, do you work together as a team as well? In your parenting, finances, and ministry? Do others see you as a team, including your children?

6. There's another couple in Scripture that worked as a "team" as well. What do we know about them? Read Acts 18:1-3, 18:24-26, Romans 16:3, 1 Corinthians 16:19, and 2 Timothy 4:19. What can we learn from them?

7. I think it's important to be a "team player" in other things besides your marriage. At your workplace, in your ministry, and in your extended family, how can working together bring God glory?

8. Why is "being a loner" dangerous, in some regards? I'm not referring to being shy, but being more of a one-man show? Concerning the church, what does Psalm 133:1 and 1 Corinthians 12:13-31 say about this?

9. I wonder if Mrs. Noah ever got weary of being the "behind the scenes" person in their marriage? What does Galatians 6:9-10 say about this? Do you need to hold on to this promise today?

10. What's your biggest "take away" from reading about Mrs. Noah?

11. What's your biggest "challenge"?

12. What changes, if any, do you need to make as a result of the lesson this week?

Ok, ladies, I want to end with one last question. I read this question in a book, and I liked it, so instead of rewording it, I wanted to give it to you straight:

13. What difference does it make to put the frame of God's character around your situation?

See you next week!

