

## MODULE 5

**Class Title:** Story of Nuh (as) part 1 of a 2 lesson series.

**Aim of the lesson:** to learn key lessons from the life of Prophet Nuh (as)

**Category:** Scripture Stories

**Lesson Format:** Power point presentation with discussion

Greeting to students) *AssalamalaikumwaRahmatullahiwaBarakatuh*

(*Ta'awwudh*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanirRajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *BismillahirRahmanirRaheem*

(*Du'a*) *Rabbishrahlisadriwayassirliamriwahluluqdatummillisaniyafqahuqawli*(Surah Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

Slides 1 and 2:

Can you see what is written on the screen? Has everybody heard the story of Nuh (as)? Everybody is aware of the story? You know the *Qur-an*? Allah (swt) has sent the *Qur-an* as a reminder for us. It is not a book which one reading suffices. It is a book which needs to be gone over again and again. Why is that? Why has Allah (swt) done something like that?

Student: Because we keep forgetting ... to remind us.

Exactly, so I am sure that all of you have heard the story and today we are going to hear the story once again. However, we are going to see it from a totally different perspective. This is a story primarily from the *Qur-an* however we have added details from other sources. OK?

Slides 3 - 4:

This is the family tree of Nuh (as) and it dates all the way back to Adam (as). We don't need to go into the details of whether it is right or wrong because it doesn't change the lessons that Allah (swt) wants us to learn. This is how it goes (read from slide).

This is the time period between the death of Adam (as) and the birth of Nuh (as). Again this is all historic information. It may or may not be completely accurate and it changes nothing. So we are just going to read it and then move on.

Regarding Nuh (as), Ibn Abbas (ra) narrated that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, "The period between Adam and Noah was ten centuries." [Bukhari]

Slides 5 - 7:

This is a map of where we think that Nuh (as)'s people lived. In modern day, this area is part of the south of Iraq. Can you see it? This is present day southern Iraq. Now I have a question for you. Why was Nuh (as) sent? There is always a reason for Allah (swt) to do something. In this case, the reason was that Nuh (as)'s people had fallen into worshipping statues. It started with

some very pious, righteous people in their society. These people were leaders; they used to do good things, obey Allah (swt)'s orders and taught others to do the same. When these people died, in order to remember and honor them, their followers made statues of them and placed them in their meeting places.

Slide 8:

Usually, villagers have meetings or assemblies in the village center, under a big tree or something, just like we do in big halls or auditoriums. So, the people of Nuh (as) made these statues and placed them where people used to gather and talk. Some of the different idols that they had were *Waddan*, *Suwa'an*, *Yaghutha*, *Ya'auga*, and *Nasran*. Each of these idols represented certain things, as you can see here; things like beauty, brute strength, swiftness, sharp sight, etc. By the time Nuh (as) came, his people prayed to these idols if they wanted something. For example, if somebody wanted a son, they prayed to that particular idol in the belief that the idol could give them what they wanted. How did these holy people change from being holy and righteous men to gods? How did this happen?

Now initially the statues were created in the remembrance of these pious people, to remember and honour their good deeds. As generations passed, slowly but surely *Shaytan* (satan) polluted their minds. He insinuated, "Why just have them in a central place? Why not in your houses as well so that you can remember them all the time?" One generation was followed by another and to each *Shaytan* suggested and encouraged tiny changes. Eventually it was forgotten that these were just pious men and slowly, slowly they became gods.

The generations who actually started worshipping the statues did not even know who these holy men were and why they become their gods. After a while, they worshipped them just because their forefathers used to. They did not even think about it. If they wanted rain, they just went to one particular god. If they wanted sons, they went to another particular god. Without thinking, they followed the way of their ancestors. It became such a contaminated society that they totally forgot Allah (swt). Idol worship ruled their lives. It was to reform this society that Nuh (as) was sent.

Slide 9:

Can you connect this to something happening nowadays? Any ideas? Thoughts? In the Hindu religion, when somebody in their family passes away, what do they usually do? They hang up a portrait! At first it is just a portrait for remembrance. This is my grandfather and I miss him so I put up his picture! Is it limited to just that? Is it limited to just that? No, what happens?

They put garlands over it and light incense sticks and *diyas* (oil lamps). Many times that person is just forgotten with time but sometimes it is different. Sometimes he or she is revered and slowly, only Allah (swt) knows where the fine line is between remembrance and veneration, things deviate. The next thing you know, that person is being raised in status. Their status goes

up and up, generation after generation till one day they are a god. This is exactly what happened to Nuh (as)'s society.

Slide 10:

When Nuh (as) became a prophet, he started reaching out to people. He told them that he was a messenger of Allah (swt). He told them things which Allah (swt) had taught him. Did the people listen? On the contrary, his people argued and fought with him. What did they fight about? Their first and foremost argument was that how can you be a messenger of God? You are just a human being like us. If Allah (swt) wanted to guide us, He would have sent angels! Why do you think Allah (swt) chose a human being and not an angel as His messenger?

Why? If Allah (swt) wanted, His messenger could be an angel. As it is angels are messengers. They bring Allah (swt)'s messages to the prophets. *Jibreel* (as) brought Allah (swt)'s message to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Then why did Allah (swt) choose human beings to be His prophets? Why?

Slides 11 – 13:

Allah (swt) understands us better than we understand ourselves. If Allah (swt) had sent angel prophets, the people would have said that angels don't have desires like humans, they are just like mechanical robots. They can't sin, they can't do wrong. It is not possible for a human being to do what the angel is demanding. So, Allah (swt) sent human beings as prophets because they had the same feelings and desires; they felt hungry, they ate and drank, they slept, they wanted companionship, respect, comfort etc just like other human beings. These human prophets were role models; they showed us by doing that it is possible for humans to follow Allah (swt)'s laws.

Yet Nuh (as)'s people kept arguing the same point that if Allah (swt) wanted to send a messenger, He would have sent angels. Nuh (as) kept explaining that I am a human being like you and Allah (swt) has sent me because the world is full of human beings.

As Nuh (as) preached, as usual, the poor and the weak were very attracted towards his message and they started listening to him whereas the rich elite did not want to listen to him.

The rich and the powerful argued that: Firstly, you are not an angel, secondly, you do not have a high or noble status and thirdly, your followers are all poor people. The elite did not want to associate with the poor and the weak because they thought of themselves as superior. They thought of wealth as might.

Slide 14:

As time passed, the conflict between Nuh (as) and his people worsened. They argued with him on each and every point. They told Nuh (as), "Ok, fine, we will start following you but only if

you get rid of these poor people. You must move away from them and only have people of our status with you. We can't associate with the likes of them."

Can any true religion of Allah (swt) be like that, segregating the rich and the poor? Look at Islam. What happens when we go for *Hajj*? Everyone performs *Hajj* together. Regardless of their status or wealth, people dress the same and perform the same rites at the same time.

What happens in *namaz*? Everyone stands shoulder to shoulder. It does not matter if you are poor or rich, if you are a king, a prime minister or a beggar. But Nuh (as)'s people had this thing about wealth. Their attitude was that we are rich and therefore superior; if you want us to follow you, then you do away with these lowly people. Nuh (as) gently refused their demands declaring that he could not move away from the people who were listening to the message of Allah (swt) because if he did that, he would be answerable to Allah (swt). I am not going to do that, so if you wish you may follow the message that I am bringing and if you don't ...

Slide 15:

Do you know what happened next? They started pointing fingers, they called him a liar and told him that he didn't know anything. The leaders of his people said:

"Verily, we see you in plain error." (Surah Al- Aaraf 7:60)

Slide 16:

Nuh (as) said, "Oh my people, there is no error in me but I am a messenger from the Lord of *Al Alameen*. I convey the message of my Lord and give sincere advice to you and I know from Allah (swt) what you know not." (Surah Al- Aaraf 7:61 – 62)

This is a quotation from the *Qur-an*. ) *Alameen* refers to mankind and *Jinns*.

Slide 17:

Nuh (as) preached to his community for 950 years. Is that a long time or a short time? It is a very long time! Generation after generation, he kept on trying. He was a very patient man. He was a very good speaker and all this while ...all this while... he called people to Allah (swt) and did not lose his temper. For 950 years, he kept on preaching and calling, even as he saw the people against him steadily increasing!

When a father would die, he would tell his children that don't follow Nuh (as), don't obey him. Generation after generation, the people revolted against Nuh (as) and only a handful of people followed him. Then, obviously, he was a human being too, right? How long can you go on like this?

When Nuh (as) saw that there was nothing more left to preach, no hope of response, then he prayed to Allah (swt). He told Allah (swt) that, "O Allah, I have tried to touch their hearts in

every way. I have called them in the morning and I have called them in the evening. I have called them by day and I have called them by night. I have called them in loneliness and I have called them in public but they fail to understand and I have asked them to seek Your forgiveness but when I call out to them, they thrust their fingers in their ears or they take their garment over their face.”(reference missing)

Can you see something similar in our own lives? Something that our parents do at home every day? *Namaz*, especially *Fajr*! It happens, right? We do that don't we? Sometimes our mothers are calling us to wake up and pray *Fajr* and what do we do? We put the pillow over our heads so we can't hear them calling us. We do that, right? And Nuh (as) did this for 950 years!

When he accepted that nobody was going to listen to him, he was pretty disheartened. Obviously 950 years is a long time. We try to tell people something once or twice and when they don't listen to us, we quit, irritated and annoyed. Don't we get irritated? 950 years! It is a long, long time.

Slide 18 - 19:

Then Nuh (as), disheartened, prayed to Allah (swt), “My Lord, leave not one of the disbelievers on the earth, if you leave them they will mislead your slaves and they will beget none but wicked disbelievers.” (Surah Nuh 71:27)

Do you know why he prayed that? Because generation after generation, his people used to tell their children: don't obey him, don't follow him. Allah (swt) accepted Nuh (as)'s prayer and commanded Nuh(as) to build an ark, saying "And construct the ship under Our Eyes and with Our Inspiration and address Me not on behalf of those who did wrong; they are surely to be drowned." (Surah Hüd 11:37)

How do you think Nuh (as) responded? Did he start building or did he ask Allah (swt), “Why should I build an ark?” What do you think? He started building it. He did not question Allah (swt). He just prayed to Allah (swt) to not leave any disbelievers and in response to that Allah (swt) told him to build and not talk to Him about the wrongdoers.

This is what a *Momin* or a Muslim needs to do. The attitude of a believer should be, 'we heard and we obeyed.' We don't need to question, ask “Why?” all the time. We want to know “Why? Why should I eat this? Why should I drink this? Why should I sleep now? Why should I wear this? Why should I not wear that?” A lot of times when little children question, “Why?” We say, “Oh, very intelligent!” In certain areas, yes but when it comes to the law of Allah (swt), there is no ‘why?’ There is no ‘why’. You heard it, you obey it. You don't need to know ‘why’.

Allah (swt) ordered something and Nuh (as) heard and obeyed. Allah (swt) commanded, “Build an ark!” and Nuh (as) started building.

Slide 20:

While he was constructing the ark, his people started making fun of him. When he preached, they mocked him and even when he was not preaching, they mocked him! They taunted, “Oh! So you have stopped preaching now! You have left your preaching to become a carpenter, to build an ark?” The place that Allah (swt) had chosen for the ark was far away from the sea. This provided Nuh (as)’s detractors more ammunition against him. Contemptuously, they jeered, “You are so tired of preaching that you have turned to carpentry and started building an ark! Do you expect to command the sea water to come and take the ship away?”

In the olden days it was not like today. There were no cranes, forklifts or machines to lift heavy things. Humans had to lift everything. How could people possibly lift something as large as this ark? So his people laughed and ridiculed, “Are you going to command the winds? To get the sea to blow all the way here...” Nuh (as), through all this provocation, gently reminded, “Seek Allah (swt)’s forgiveness or I warn you of a day where there will be no time to ask for forgiveness. Where the punishment will be for you” and to this, his people replied, “Bring that punishment whichever you are saying”.(reference missing)

This was their way. Nuh (as) would warn them, again and again, and they would respond with defiance. He would ask people to be humble, to leave their statues and turn to Allah (swt) for forgiveness. He would warn of torments and great punishments and other horrors if they continued to disobey Allah (swt). Yet, were they afraid? No. Every time he warned, they defiantly and foolishly challenged, “Fine! If you are Allah (swt)’s messenger, bring that torment on us. Let us see what Allah (swt) can do ....”

Can you imagine challenging a *nabi* (prophet) that go ahead, do your worst, we will see what happens next. And then the day came!

Slide 21:

Allah (swt) had told Nuh (as) to wait for His instructions and for a sign. One day the sign appeared, in his oven. Have you seen a *tandoor* (clay/brick oven)? Clay/brick ovens are some times built into the ground?. (reference – how do we know what kind of oven it was?) Maybe we can add the following with a reference: Historians think that the ovens in ancient times were similar to our *tandoors* (clay ovens). Look at the picture here.

Can you see how this oven goes deep down? In rural south-Asian villages, they make dough and stick it inside the *tandoor* (clay oven) to make into bread. These ovens are made in such a way that they remain dry inside. Suddenly, water started gushing out from an oven near Nuh (as), a sign of Allah (swt)’s mighty power. Allah (swt) can make water flow from an oven!

Slide 22:

Following Allah (swt)'s instructions, Nuh (as) asked the believers to get on the boat. Nuh (as) also collected aboard a pair of each kind of animal, insect and bird. Nuh (as) did not question Allah (swt) but implicitly obeyed these very strange and unusual instructions. He did not stand around asking Allah (swt), "Why should I?" He did not require understanding the logic of a command as a precondition to obeying said command.

Meanwhile, his people continued their insults, "Look at him, first he was preaching to human beings and now he is collecting insects and birds?" Such mockery and insult is typical of what a 'dai'ee' (a person who goes out to spread the word of Allah (swt)) faces. This was true thousands of years ago and it is just as true today. There are always people who laugh, who make fun and still others who insult and condemn. If you are a 'dai'ee', will such words turn you away from your mission? Should insults and jeers turn you away from doing the right thing? Remember, nothing we face is as bad as what the prophets had to face. Are we being asked to make something as difficult and seemingly useless as an enormous ark far away from water?

Slides 23 - 24:

To get back to Nuh (as), it started to rain. It rained and it rained and it rained. It rained as if it was never going to end. It seemed as if the sky had opened its gates and an ocean was pouring down. Not only did it rain from the sky, every crack in the earth started gushing with water as well. People did not know what was happening, it was completely unprecedented. Is anything coming to your mind when I am saying this... floods? What else? Hold those thoughts, ok!

Rain can be a blessing or the opposite. Think of the floods in Pakistan in 2010 which hurt more than 2 million people. Our prophet, Muhammad (pbuh), whenever he saw clouds, he always prayed to Allah (swt) that, "Oh Allah (swt), make this cloud a rainfall of blessings on us." (reference?)

Rainfall can be devastating. Moreover, this was a rain the likes of which the people of Nuh (as) had never seen. Nuh (as) called to them to get on his boat for he knew that only those on the boat were going to be saved. His followers got on the boat, the animals got on the boat but the disbelievers, the rich, the high and mighty, the powerful, the elite, they all refused to get on the same boat as the measly, poor and lowly believers. It kept raining and the disbelievers climbed up the mountains, climbed to high ground to escape the floods but this was no ordinary flood, it had waves! These are the waves, look at the waves. Remember the tsunami of 2004? How were the waves: enormous, ferocious and unstoppable. It rained and poured until everything was submerged underwater!

Slide 25:

Did Nuh (as) need to take his ark to the water? Or did the water come to the ark? Which was it?

Allah (swt) can cause anything to happen. If Allah (swt) wants you to remain safe, then there is nothing and no one that can harm you. If Allah (swt) wants to test you through suffering and loss, there is nothing in this world or in the universe that can save you. This is our fundamental, absolute belief. If my God wants to save me from something then there is nobody and nothing that can cause harm to me and if my Lord wants to harm me (God forbid) there is nothing and nobody on this earth or in the heavens that can save me.

As the ark rose with the flood waters, Nuh (as)'s son was very close to the boat, trying to swim. Nuh (as) called out to him, "My son! Today nothing will save you but that you get on this boat!" Do you know what the son replied? "No father, I will climb on that mountain, that high mountain over there." The water level was rising as the son climbed up the mountain. Suddenly, a huge wave came, submerging the mountain and drowning his son, before his own eyes.

Slides 26 - 27:

Meanwhile, the ship kept sailing for a long while till Allah (swt) commanded the waters to recede! As the waters retreated, the ark came to rest on a mountain called 'Mount *Judi*'. When the ark stopped, Allah (swt) declared,

"Comedown from the ship with peace from Us, and blessing on you and the people on whom you are with and the same for their offspring, but there will be other people to whom We will grant their pleasure for a time, but in the end a painful torment would reach them from Us...".

(Surah Hüd 11: 41 – 48)

Which of the people will a painful torment reach? The people who are the followers? Or the ones who will not obey? Allah (swt) does not look at the wealth of the people, or the color of their skin. It does not matter to Him! What does He want? He values your faith, your good deeds and the purity of your heart. It does not matter to Him if you are black or white, tall or short, or a king or a pauper. It does not matter to Allah (swt).

Slides 28 - 29:

As the waters withdrew, calm returned to the earth. Allah (swt) commanded the skies to stop pouring rain. Water stopped gushing out of the ground and then started receding back. The birds and the bees disembarked from the ark and scattered over the earth. The people got off.

Slides 30 – 31:

Some people say that Nuh (as) is buried in Mecca and others say in Iraq, but again, does it matter? Does it make any difference where Nuh (as)'s grave is? No!

This is the story of Nuh (as). So, what do you think about it? What happened to the rich people? They all died, drowned. Nuh (as), at one point, even prayed for his son and when the son drowned in front of him, cried out that oh Allah (swt), he was my son and you did not save him.



Why do you think that Allah (swt) did not save him? He was a disbeliever and thus even having a prophet as his father could not save him. It does not matter that the father is a believer and the son is not, each will answer for his own deeds.

Look at the reverse situation with Ibrahim (as) and his father. The father's deeds did not affect the son and Ibrahim (as)'s good deeds could not save his father. Each one is answerable for his own self and Allah can bring about anything...anything.

I don't know if I should use the word fortunate or unfortunate that we are seeing so many signs of Allah (swt)'s power these days like disproportionate monsoon rains (too little or too much) and the scientists blame it on global warming, etc. Fine, ok! I am not disagreeing with the scientific theories but there is somebody who is controlling that too. I agree that we are polluting the earth but the consequences of the pollution are Allah (swt)'s will – He chooses which consequences to allow and which ones to not and then the scientists come up with new explanations.

The rains and the floods that affected Nuh (as)'s people, do you think this can't happen to us? It can! You and I could easily have been one of those stuck in the floods of 2010. There were a lot of people who were in places like Indonesia to celebrate 'Christmas' and 'New Year' when the *tsunami* hit. Do you remember the date it hit? 25<sup>th</sup> December was the date. Vacation time! People from all over the world were caught by it.

What happens when you are really enjoying yourself? Happiness, any type of happiness, can conveniently cause us to forget Allah (swt). Say there is a wedding in the family or a pool party – the first thing to go is, sadly, remembrance of Allah (swt)! We have to be God conscious all the time, through good times and bad!

What about the opposite of God consciousness i.e idol worship? Do you think we have idol worship in our society? The instinctive answer is of course not but the reality is that we do; like people going to shrines of saints to pray for their needs. How is this similar to what the idol-worshippers do? Think of how Nuh (as)'s people became idol worshippers. They didn't start by calling their pious people gods. Similarly we don't call our saints gods. We just say that we are praying for this, we are just praying to them, we are not saying he is a god.

Nuh (as)'s people erected statues yet did not say that the statues were gods. The people erecting statues, what did they say? They said that these are statues of our holy people and we just want to remember them for the good that they did...just a remembrance for the good that they did.

That is often how it starts and slowly, slowly, slowly Nuh (as)'s people started deviating. Step by step, decade by decade, the good people became holy people and the holy people became holier and more sacred and more powerful till one day they were gods with powers that belong only to Allah (swt). Only Allah (swt) has the power to grant wealth or 'A' grades or success or children. Nuh (as)'s people were praying to the statues for these things but do you think the statues heard?

Obviously not! In the *Qur-an*, Allah (swt) tells Muhammad (pbuh), these are not the exact words, I am just giving you the broad summary, “Oh Muhammad, tell my people when they ask about me that I am very close to them, closer than this vein here. I am much closer to them than the vein in their neck and I listen to the one who calls out to me” (reference?)

‘*Sami Allahu liman hamida*’ have you heard this phrase? How many times? We say it every day, in every prayer, in every *rak’ah*. We say it but do we know what it means? It means that Allah (swt) hears the call of the one who calls out to Him. Believe in it! Have faith that He hears and call out to Him. We don’t need people in between us and Him, we don’t! We don’t need anybody’s help. There are etiquettes of making *d’ua* but Allah (swt) can be called anywhere, anytime, whether you are sleeping or awake. The important thing is to have conviction in our hearts.

All these rituals which come between you and just calling out to Allah (swt), if you analyze them, there is a lot of money involved. For example, take the ritual of *Niaz* which translates into pleasing the saints by distributing food to the poor in the name of said saint. This costs money, takes a decent amount of time in planning it and involves effort in carrying it out. Furthermore, when people go to shrines, it is not limited to just going to the shrines. To start with they need money to get there. After that they need to buy flowers and shrouds for the graves. What happens to those thousands of flowers and shrouds? Waste! So how are we different from the idolaters? The biggest difference that I can see is that the idol worshippers’ statues are some sort of figure and they are standing, whereas ours are lying down and buried!

Shouldn’t we fear the wrath of Allah (swt)? Look what Allah (swt) did to other idol worshippers. Don’t think we are immune and special and He will never punish us simply because we say ‘*La ilaha il lalah*’ (There is no god but Allah (swt)). That was a mistake the Bani Israel made.

Yes it can happen to us! So what are we going to do about it? Are we going to do something about it or not? Fix our ways? Yes but is just fixing ourselves enough? Allah (swt), in the *Qur-an*, demands more; He demands that we spread the Truth. If you try to spread the truth about Islam, what do you think will happen? Exactly, everyone will not listen.

Still, we should reach out and be prepared for what happens when we reach out. Can we expect a smooth, straight ride all the way with people everywhere accepting and embracing what we tell them? On the contrary, as Nuh (as) showed us, we can expect a little success mixed with large amounts of opposition, contempt, insults and mockery. It is inevitable, so don’t let it anger you or derail you! Always remember Nuh (as)’s example; How many years did he call people to Allah (swt)? 950 years! You might say that he was a prophet but didn’t Allah (swt) choose human beings as prophets deliberately so that we could take lessons and imitate them? The life of a prophet is a beautiful example for us to follow. Even if all we spread is little, itsy-bitsy things, with each one of us taking a little message and passing it on, it is going to make a difference to the world. Won’t it?

It will! We don't need to be aggressive. It is important to pass on knowledge tactfully and without demeaning or hurting the other person. For 950 years, Nuh (as) tried and tried. Only after a very long time and after trying and failing in every way possible did he say to Allah (swt), "Allah (swt) I have told them in public and told them in seclusions also" (*reference*).

Seclusion refers to the fact that he would talk to each person individually, in the hope that they would listen to him. Sometimes people don't want to listen because of peer pressure. He tried to talk to them in gatherings too. Sometimes, because of peer pressure, you may listen and start doing good things. So many of us do things simply because the friends we like to hang out with are doing it. Go to any social get-together and if four people offer *salah*, others will join in who wouldn't by themselves. People do that right? That sort of peer pressure is good but ultimately whatever good you do, has to come from inside.

Three friends have started wearing a *hijab* (head covering), the fourth one is feeling left out so she is pulled, as if by a magnetic force, towards doing the same. True or not? That is why it is said that one should keep good company or that one is known by the company she keeps. Your company exerts a powerful effect on you. You may not be bad at all but if the company you keep is, it will slowly but surely compel you to be like them! True or not?

Another lesson from Nuh (as) is 'don't give up!' Never give up. Nuh (as) never gave up. He just kept going on and on for 950 years. Even after the flood, he kept at his work as a prophet with the people who were saved to build a good community.

It is said that when Allah (swt)'s punishment comes, may He forgive us, it comes with a heart rending sound. Pray for Allah (swt)'s mercy while we have the time and are alive, try to obey His rules, and try to spread His message as much as possible. Try to remember that if Allah (swt) wants to harm us there is nothing that can save us and more importantly, Allah (swt) does not want to harm us! He loves us.

Does anybody here think that Allah (swt) wants to harm us just like that, for no reason? That's nonsense. Allah (swt) only wants the best for us. Even if we suffer loss or harm from Allah (swt), it's for our own good. There is always a reason behind everything. All that rain, with the scary thunder and lightning, and the floods were for a purpose. When Allah (swt) sends tribulations, it is either to get our sins forgiven or to turn those who have strayed back towards Allah (swt). When do you remember Allah (swt) more? When you are having fun or when you are in trouble?

Another lesson from Nuh (as) is comprehending Allah (swt)'s power. Do you remember Nuh (as)'s people mocking and challenging, "Tell your God to send the *azaab* (punishment), tell Him". Allah (swt) created us and this entire universe. Do you think He can't destroy a few humans? He can't destroy us? He can, in a second! Within hours, Nuh (as)'s entire community was gone except a handful of people.

When you read the story of Nuh (as), you find that the estimated number of people who escaped on the boat varies from 10 to 84. That means Nuh (as) managed to save less than a hundred people in how many years? 950 years! We don't know which one is the authentic figure but even if we take the highest estimate of 84, is that a whole lot of people? A handful! A handful of people from that entire nation were saved. How many generations did Nuh (as) preach? How long did it take Allah (swt) to destroy an entire civilization? All He has to do is say, "*Kun!* (Be!) and it is done.

These are not just stories. They are reminders, over and over again. You may portray Nuh (as)'s story in different ways for adults versus children. It all depends on what mindset you are in and what lesson you are deriving from it. Every story of every prophet comes with multiple lessons. Are these stories and lessons in the *Qur-an* simply so we can listen and forget? Just to hear and move on? The *Qur-an* has so many miracles and even more reminders in it. Again and again and again, Allah (swt) reminds us. If you do this then that will happen. If you do that then this will happen. Unfortunately we remember it, we know it, but we turn our backs to it!

All the prophets came with the same type of message. They would say that we are messengers from Allah (swt). We do not have knowledge of the unseen or the future. We only give the message that Allah (swt) has asked us to give. We do not ask you for wealth, rewards or anything at all. Nuh (as) never asked these rich people for wealth. He said that his treasures are with Allah (swt) and that it did not matter to him if a believer was rich or poor. My work is to just convey Allah's message, as it is, without polluting it. To follow or not is up to you. Nobody tried to force anybody to believe.

Allah (swt) knows everything about every person. When these people told Nuh (as), "Do away with these poor people, they know nothing, they are just brainless people following you without even thinking", Nuh (as) answered, "I can't do that. I can't let them go because only Allah (swt) knows what is in their hearts." Nuh (as)'s own son was one of those who pretended in front of his father and only showed his true colors during the flood.

You may have observed that in a panicky situation, like a fire, people tend to follow their instincts rather than following instructions. Children, in fires or during earthquakes, will hide under tables or in closets rather than obeying and getting to safety. Did Nuh (as)'s son follow orders? He did not! His father said, "Today nothing is going to save you, get on this boat, get on this boat!" How did he respond? "Oh my God, what is this measly boat going to do? Is it going to save me? It has animals and insects and a handful of people. No...no...no! That mountain is going to save me! I'll climb that high mountain!" Did the mountain save him?

As for Nuh (as), look at his trust in Allah (swt)! He trusted Allah (swt) and his followers also thought that since he is the prophet, whatever he is saying must be right. They could have drowned as well, right? Nuh (as) declared, "I am a messenger from Allah (swt)" and they

believed him and got on the boat, regardless of the risk and danger. That trust and faith brought them safely through the flood.

(Du'a for end of a gathering) *SubhanaRabbikaRabbulIzzati 'ammayasifunwasalamun  
'alalmursaleen, walhamdulillahiRabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *AssalamalaikumwarahmatullahiwaBarakatuh*