

Safety in the Ark

Genesis 7:1-10

SS Lesson for 11/11/2018

Devotional Scripture: 2 Peter 2:4-9

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Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

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Introduction

Overview and Key Verse of the Lesson

The lesson instructs, through the life of Noah and his family, that all who trust God will have safety just as Noah and those with him had **Safety in the Ark**. The **study's aim** is to understand that those who obey God will be safe. The **study's application** is to obey God even under difficult circumstances, for God will take care of us and keep us safe.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Key Verse: Gen 7:1

Then the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation"

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

6:9-13. In contrast with the reason for the Flood in the Babylonian account (the caprice of the gods because of man's noise), the biblical record presents the Flood as a distinctly moral judgment. The human race had become so **corrupt** (vv. 11-12) and **full of violence** (vv. 11, 13) that God's wrath would **destroy** all flesh, except **Noah**, who **walked with God** (v. 9), and his family (v. 18).

6:14-18. The deliverance was to be by means of **an ark**, a flat-bottomed rectangular vessel **450' long, 75' wide, and 45' high**, with a displacement of some 43,300 tons (Merrill F. Unger, *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954, pp. 59-60) and three **decks**. (The sketch is one artist's concept of how the ark may have looked.) The ship in the Babylonian tradition was of cubical construction and was five times as big as Noah's ark. Genesis alone preserves the description of a seaworthy vessel.

6:19-7:5. Into this **ark** Noah was to take **all** kinds of animals to preserve life on earth. A distinction was made very early between **clean** and **unclean** animals. To preserve life **Noah** had to take on board **two of every kind of animal**, but for **food** and for sacrificing he had to bring **seven** pairs of each **kind of clean animal** (7:2, marg.). The distinction between **clean** and **unclean** animals became a major point in the Levitical order (Lev. 11:2-23).

7:6-20. After all preparations had been completed, **the Flood** came. On the one hand there was a torrential **rain** for **40 days and nights** (vv. 11-12). On the other hand there were corresponding gigantic upheavals and shiftings of the earth's crust which caused the oceans' floors to rise and break up their reservoirs of subterranean waters (v. 11; cf. Unger, *Archaeology*, p. 61). As a result, the whole earth was flooded in the disaster (v. 19). No doubt the surface of **the earth**, the manner of life, and the longevity of life were changed by this catastrophe.

7:21-24. Everything **living... on the earth** (outside the ark) was destroyed. Only marine life survived. Sin had infected every aspect of life, and nothing short of a new beginning would suffice. Thus it will also be at the end of this Age (Matt. 24:37-39).

Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

One night when my husband and I were traveling, the rain was pouring down in sheets. The windshield wipers could hardly keep up with the deluge. We could barely see the taillights of the car in front of us. When I glanced at my husband, I could see the tight set of his jaw. We were driving through the mountains of Pennsylvania with a heavy load on the back of the semi. I could tell he was having a time keeping the machine safely on the road. I have rarely been so elated to pull over at a truck stop for the night. When we pulled into the spot, both of us looked up and thanked God for safety. We often take God's protection for granted. We go through our days without even thinking about the many times that we are saved from danger. Most of the time, we are probably oblivious to those occasions. It is only when we meet with something extreme that we are truly aware of His protection. That day in Pennsylvania, I could not help but think about Noah and his family. I pictured them standing on the deck of the ark, watching the rain come down. They could no doubt hear the screams of people who were drowning as they watched the ground disappear underwater. When the ark slipped its moorings and they felt it riding on the waves, what thoughts

and emotions must have gone through them! I imagined that they were much like mine that night as I watched the other drivers continue down the highway. Although we were safe at the truck stop, they had not found refuge. While we found freedom from worry and the terrible storm, they continued to face it. We had rest; they would have to fight the weariness of their struggle. We often find ourselves facing storms in life. There may be a job loss, an unexpected illness, or perhaps a broken relationship. Suddenly the rains are swirling around us, and we cannot see clearly. We cry out in fear. We do not have to do that. As God's children, we are already protected. Scripture tells us that we dwell safely with God as our confidence (Prov. 3:23-26). He will preserve us when threatening things happen. Like Noah and his family, we will be carried through the floods in our lives. Unfortunately, there are many people who do not follow Jesus. If they do not turn to Him, they will not find protection; instead, He will cast them out (Luke 13:24-27). When that happens, they will be swept away eternally. There will be no second chances. Like those outside the ark, they will beg for rescue and not find it. They will meet with eternal destruction. Do you know people who need to be rescued? Perhaps they are unaware of their desperate need. As a believer, you have the opportunity to show them the way. If they turn to Christ, you will know that they too are safe inside God's refuge. Would that not be wonderful? Those of us already in Christ's refuge can give praise that we are safely sustained by His grace. Because of this, we, like Noah, can watch the flood waters rise and not fear. With Jesus as Savior, we are secure. We are not only protected on this earth but into eternity. How wonderful that is!

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Safety Invitation (Gen 7:1-4)

- 1 Then the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.
- 2 You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female;
- 3 also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth.
- 4 For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made."

Invitation of the righteous (1)

Righteous because of the cleansing by Jesus' sacrifice (Heb 9:12-14)

12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. 14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Righteous because of the power of Jesus' blood (Heb 12:24)

24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Righteous because God chose Christians to be holy and blameless (Eph 1:4)

4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love

Righteous because of reconciliation (Col 1:22)

22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

Righteous because God enables His people to live holy lives (1 Thess 4:7)

7 For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.

Invitation because of cleanliness (2-3)

Cleansed by coming near to God (James 4:8)

8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Cleansed by focusing on and doing righteousness (Isa 1:16-17)

16 wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, 17 learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.

Cleansed by the word of God (1 Tim 4:5)

5 because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

Cleansed by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:11)

11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Cleansed by my heart being sprinkled by God through faith (Heb 10:22)

22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Invitation before destruction (4)

Destruction because of the evilness of the wicked (Prov 5:22)

22 The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast.

Destruction because it is the destiny of the enemies of the cross (Phil 3:18-19)

18 For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.

Destruction because of sowing to please our sinful nature (Gal 6:8)

8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Destruction because of not knowing or obeying God (2 Thess 1:7-10)

7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. 8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power 10 on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

Destruction because of following false teachers (2 Peter 2:1-3)

1 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2 Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. 3 In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

Destruction because of being ungodly (2 Peter 3:7)

7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

Safety through Obedience (Gen 7:5-10)

5 And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him.

6 Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth.

7 So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood.

8 Of clean animals, of animals that are unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth,

9 two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah.

10 And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth.

Obedience to God's commands (5-6)

Obedience to God's commandments by remaining in Jesus' love (John 15:10)

10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

Obedience to God's commandments by loving Jesus (John 14:15)

15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

Obedience to God's commandments by offering ourselves as God's slave (Rom 6:16)

16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey — whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Obedience to God's commandments to show love for God (1 John 5:3)

3 This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,

Obedience to God's commandments by walking in obedient love (2 John 6)

6 And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.

Obedience of the household (7-9)

Because the household is bound by God's commands (Gen 19:17, 23-26)

17 As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, "Flee for your lives! Don't look back, and don't stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!" 23 By the time Lot reached Zoar, the sun had risen over the land. 24 Then the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah — from the Lord out of the heavens. 25 Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities — and also the vegetation in the land. 26 But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

So that the household prayers will not be hindered (1 Pet 3:7)

7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Because the household is in an intimate home arrangement (Exod 20:9-10)

9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates.

Because the household involves all in the sphere of our influence (Deut 16:11)

11 And rejoice before the Lord your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name — you, your sons and daughters, your menservants and maidservants, the Levites in your towns, and the aliens, the fatherless and the widows living among you.

Obedience rewarded (10)

Reward of an inheritance from God (Col 3:24)

24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Reward of passing the test (Rev 2:10)

10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Reward of the crown of life (James 1:12)

12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

Reward of preservation (Psalm 31:23)

23 Love the Lord, all his saints! The Lord preserves the faithful, but the proud he pays back in full.

Reward of being richly blessed (Proverbs 28:20)

20 A faithful man will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished.

Reward of salvation (Matthew 10:22)

22 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Concluding Thoughts from Bob Deffinbaugh

The Preservation of Man and Animals (7:6-8:19)

The ark, now complete, having been constructed over many years according to the divine design, is entered at God's command (7:1) by both man and animals. Before the flood began, God shut the door. I would imagine that had God not done so, Noah would have opened it to those who later wanted in, but the day of salvation must come to an end.

The source of water seems supernatural. It may well be that it had never rained before (cf. 2:6). Now the rain came in torrents. In addition the 'fountains of the deep' (7:11) were opened. Water, both from above and below, came forth for forty days (7:12). The waters prevailed on the earth for a total of 150 days (7:24), and then subsided over a period of months. Five months after the flood commenced the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat (8:4; cf. 7:11). It took considerable time for the waters to recede and for the ground to be dry enough to walk on. It was a little more than a year that Noah and his family spent on the ark. At the command of the Lord they gladly (I am certain) disembarked.

The Promise (8:20-22)

Noah's first act upon setting foot on the earth was to offer sacrifices to God. It was a further evidence of his faith, and surely an expression of his gratitude for the salvation that God had provided.

In response to the sacrifice of Noah, God made a solemn promise. I want you to understand, however, that this was a commitment made within the Godhead—it is a promise God resolved to Himself. The expression of this determination is given to Noah in chapter 9. This is what God purposed within Himself:

And the Lord smelled the soothing aroma; and the Lord said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease (Genesis 8:21-22).

God's resolve is that He will never again curse the ground or destroy every living thing as He has just done. Why would God make such a commitment? Surely He was not sorry for what He had done. Sin had to be judged, did it not?

The problem with the flood was that its effect was only temporary. The problem was not with creation, but with sin. The problem was not with men, but with man. To erase the slate and start over is inadequate, for what is needed is a new man for creation. This is what creation eagerly awaits.

For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God (Romans 8:20-21).

God has therefore determined to deal differently with sin in the future. While sin has suffered a temporary setback at the flood, it will be dealt a fatal blow at the coming of Messiah. It is at this time that men will become new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17). After men are dealt with, a new heaven and a new earth will be provided as well (2 Peter 3:13).

God's promise of ultimate and final salvation is renewed in response to Noah's expression of faith through a sacrificial offering. Until that day when this salvation is accomplished, God assures man that measures like the flood will not occur again.

The Meaning of the Flood for Men of All Ages

First of all, the flood is a reminder to us of the matchless grace of God. While unbelievers found judgment, Noah found grace (Genesis 6:8).

To a certain extent, all of the people of that day experienced the grace of God. It was not until 120 years after the revelation of a coming judgment that it actually came upon men. That 120 year period was an age of grace in which the gospel was proclaimed.

The difference between Noah and those who perished was their response to God's grace. Those who perished interpreted God's grace as divine indifference. They concluded that God neither cared nor troubled Himself at the occasion of men's sin.

Noah, on the other hand, recognized grace for what it really is—an opportunity to enter into an intimate relationship with God, and at the same time, to avoid divine displeasure and judgment. Noah's years were spent in walking with God, building the ark, and proclaiming God's Word.

The grace of God is clearly evidenced by this promise: "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Genesis 8:22).

Here is the irony of our day. As in the days of Noah, the perishing unbeliever looks at life as it is and asks "How could God be there at all and not do anything to right things—to set things in order?" He concludes that God is either dead, apathetic, or incapable of dealing with the world as it is, disregarding the warning of 2 Peter 3:8,9:

But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow about His promises, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:8,9).

As Noah, the believer recognizes that life as it is a reflection of the sovereign control of a gracious God over all of life:

For in Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him (Colossians 1:16-17).

The continuation of all things as they have been—day and night, summer and winter, springtime and harvest—causes the Christian to bow the knee to God in praise and submission to His providential care. The non-Christian, however, has twisted this promise of God's providential care into an excuse for sin:

Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation' (2 Peter 3:3-4).

They fail to recognize that men are given this time to repent and to be reconciled to God. But just as the time of grace finally expired in Noah's day, so it will for men today:

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up (2 Peter 3:10).

Our Lord taught that the days preceding the flood would be just like those preceding His final appearance to judge the earth:

For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be (Matthew 24:37-39).

These days were not described in terms of debauchery or decadence, but of normality—business as usual. Men in the last days will be doing what they always have. There is nothing wrong with eating and drinking, giving in marriage, or buying and selling. What is wrong is doing so without God, and supposing that we may sin as we please without paying its penalty. The age of grace will end. Let us respond rightly to God's grace.

Second, we are instructed in the matter of the wrath of God. We learn from the flood that while God's wrath is slow, it is also certain. Judgment must eventually be meted out to those who reject God's grace.

Be very clear that while wrath and judgment are certain, they do not delight the heart of God. Nowhere in this passage is there one scene of suffering and anguish described in detail. Even Noah's eyes were kept from beholding the torment suffered by those who died in the flood. The ark had no portholes, nor picture windows to look out on the destruction God wrought. The only opening was that at the top of the ark to allow light to shine in.

God does not delight in judgment, nor does He needlessly dwell upon it, but it is a certainty for those who resist His grace. Do not deceive yourself, my friend, there is a time when the offer of salvation will be withdrawn.

Sometime ago I visited a woman who was dying of cancer. I was unable to share the gospel with her on my first visit because she had to be taken to therapy. When I knocked at the door on my second visit, her husband came and opened it far enough for me to see the woman, obviously failing in her sickness. When he asked her if she wanted to talk to me, she shook her head no. I never saw her again before her death.

Many people seem to think that they will wait until one foot is in the grave and the other is on a banana peel to be saved. It usually doesn't happen that way. God still closes the door of salvation. When we have lived our lives in sin and rebellion against God, we most often will not be given the luxury of making a deathbed decision. It sometimes happens, I grant, but seldom.

Then, too, God's judgment is often allowing things to take their own course. The account of the flood seems almost like creation reverted to the conditions of the second day of creation (cf. Genesis 1:6-7).

In the book of Colossians we are told that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe (Colossians 1:16-17). Men who reject God live as though God did not exist at all. In the Great Tribulation, God is going to give men seven years to discover what living without God is like. God's restraining and controlling hand will be withdrawn and chaos will reign. God's judgment is often giving men both what they want and what they deserve—the natural consequences of their deeds.

Finally, let us consider the subject of the salvation of God. In the case of Noah we must observe that God's way of salvation was restrictive. God provided only one way of salvation (an ark) and only one door. Men could not be saved any way they wished, but only God's way. Such is the salvation which God offers men today.

Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me' (John 14:6).

The salvation of the ark was also instructive. It provides us with a picture of the salvation that was accomplished in Christ. It was for those in Moses' day a type of Christ. The difference between those who were saved and those who perished in the flood was the difference between being in the ark and being outside it.

Those who were saved and those who died all went through the flood. But those who survived were those in the ark which sheltered them from the effects of God's divine displeasure on sin. Those outside the ark, as well as those within, knew the ark existed and were informed that God had warned of a judgment to come. Some chose to ignore these facts, while Noah acted upon them.

So it is today. God has said that there must be a penalty for sin—death. Those who are in Christ by faith have suffered the wrath of God in Christ. On the cross of Calvary the wrath of God was poured out upon the sinless

Son of God, Jesus Christ. Those who trust in Him have experienced the salvation of God in Christ. Those who refuse to trust in Him and be in Him by an act of the will, must suffer the wrath of God outside of Christ, our ark. Knowing about Christ no more saves a man than knowing about the ark saved men in Noah's day. It is being in the ark, being in Christ, that saves!

God's way of salvation was not a glamorous one. I believe that many would have been on board the Queen Mary if Noah had built it, but not on the ark. There was little appeal to the eye on that ark, but it was sufficient for the task of saving men in a flood.

Many refuse to be saved if it cannot be achieved in some glorious way, one that is appealing and acceptable. I would not want to spend a year cooped up with noisy, smelly animals any more than you, but that was God's way.

Our Lord Jesus, when He came to offer salvation to men, did not come as One Who had great personal magnetism or appeal either. As Isaiah spoke of Him 700 years before His coming,

He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him (Isaiah 53:2).

Many would come to salvation if it appealed to them in the flesh. God's salvation is not of this kind.

Sometimes Christians fail at this same point. They think that God's way is a glorious one all the way. All miracles and magnificence. No suffering, no pain, no agony, no heartache. I must tell you that God's way is not always as glorious as we might wish, but it alone is the way of deliverance and peace and joy.

And this salvation which God provided was one that was entered into by faith in God's revealed Word. Noah probably never had seen rain, nor heard the clap of thunder. But God said that there was to be a flood and that he was to build an ark. Noah believed God and acted on his faith.

Noah's faith was no academic faith—a mere faith in principle, but an active faith—a faith in practice. He spent 120 years building that ark, committing himself to the God he knew. Our faith, too, must be active.

Noah, we are told, was a preacher. I do not believe that he often spoke from behind a pulpit, but from behind a plank and a hammer. It was Noah's lifestyle that condemned the men of his day and warned of the judgment to come. Noah's whole life was shaped by his certainty that judgment was coming.

We who are Christians know that our Lord will again return to judge the world. I wonder how much it has affected our daily lives? Can your neighbors and mine tell that we are living in the light of a coming day of judgment and of salvation. I sincerely hope so.

(Adapted from URL:<https://bible.org/seriespage/8-flood-genesis-69-822>)

Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

1. God always provides for those who will obey Him (Gen. 7:1-2)
2. Even as we see God's love in His provision, we recognize His holiness in His judgment (vss. 3-4)
3. The obedient find peace and safety in God's care (vs. 5)
4. Obedience to God displays our faith to the world
5. No one can ever claim to be too old to do God's work (vs. 6)
6. When God gives us a plan, we must follow through (vs. 7)
7. In grace and in judgment, believers can count on God to keep His Word (vss. 8-10)