

**ACT Prep  
YCHS**

**Instructional Packet  
March 25<sup>th</sup>-April 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Coach Bourne**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## ACT Reading

### The Flood Story in World History

*The tale of a devastating flood appears among the legends of ancient peoples throughout the world. In some versions, the story of the flood serves to explain how the world came to be. In others, the flood is heaven's punishment for evil deeds committed by humans.*

### The Torah

*Only one man, Noah, found favor in the Hebrew God Yahweh's eyes.*

"And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. . . . Make yourself an ark of cypress wood. . . . And of every living thing, of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark. . . . they shall be male and female. . . ."

The rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. . . . At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark. . . . and . . . sent out the dove . . . and the dove came back . . . and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. . . .

Then God said to Noah, "Go out of the ark. . . . Bring out with you every living thing that is with you. . . . I establish my covenant with you, that . . . never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

### The Epic of Gilgamesh

*In this Mesopotamian legend, Utnapishtim, like Noah, escapes a worldwide flood by building an ark. Ea, the God of wisdom, warns Utnapishtim of the coming catastrophe in a dream.*

"Oh man of Shurruk, son of Ubara-Tutu; tear down your house and build a boat, abandon possessions and look for life. . . .

I loaded into [the boat] all that I had of gold and of living things, my family, my kin, the beast of the field both wild and tame. . . .

For six days and six nights the winds blew, torrent and tempest and flood overwhelmed the world. . . . When the seventh day dawned the storm from the south subsided, the sea grew calm, the flood was stilled; I looked at the face of the world and there was silence, all mankind was turned to clay. . . . I opened a hatch and the light fell on my face. Then I bowed low, I sat down and I wept. The tears streamed down my face, for on every side was the waste of water."

### The Fish Incarnation of Vishnu

*The Hindu god Vishnu, in his first earthly incarnation, took the form of Matsya, the fish, and saved humankind.*

"One day, as the sage Manu was praying at the river Ganges, a small fish asked for his protection. Manu put the fish in an earthen jar, but soon the fish was too big for the jar. So Manu put it into the river, but soon it outgrew the river. So Manu put the fish in the ocean. . . .

The fish told Manu there would be a great deluge. He advised Manu to build a large boat and take . . . the seeds of various kinds of plants, and one of each type of animal. When the deluge came, the fish said, he would take the ark . . . to safety.

Sure enough, when the deluge occurred, the fish was there. Manu tied the boat to the horns of the fish. . . . The fish then pulled the boat through the waters until it reached a mountain peak.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. What does the word **deluge** mean?
- A. winter storm                      C. feast  
B. flood                                      D. celebration
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Each of the following is a similarity between the three stories EXCEPT
- A. the length of time that each of the floods lasted.  
B. a large boat was built in each of the stories.  
C. the messengers who warned of the flood were all gods.  
D. a world-wide flood affected each story.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. What is the most important difference between each of these ancient legends?
- A. The hero of the Hindu story was a fish.  
B. The length of each of the floods is most significant.  
C. The cause of each of the floods is different between the legends.  
D. The arks are described differently between each of the stories.

## ACT Reading

**"Dinner with Attila the Hun" from *Historici Graeci Minores* by Priscus**

*In about A.D. 450, representatives from the western and eastern parts of the Roman Empire met with Attila, the king of the Huns, on a special diplomatic mission. Priscus, a representative of the eastern Roman Empire, wrote an account of having dinner with Attila.*

Attila invited both parties of us to dine with him about three o'clock that afternoon. We waited for the time of the invitation, and then all of us, the envoys from the western Romans as well, presented ourselves in the doorway facing Attila. In accordance with the national custom, the cupbearers gave us a cup for us to make our libations before we took our seats. When that had been done and we had sipped the wine, we went to the chairs where we would sit to have dinner. All the seats were ranged down either side of the room, up against the walls. In the middle Attila was sitting on a couch with a second couch behind him. Behind that a few steps led up to his bed, which for decorative purposes was covered in ornate drapes made of fine linen, like those which Greeks and Romans prepare for marriage ceremonies. I think that the more distinguished guests were on Attila's right, and the second rank on his left, where we were with Berichos, a man of some renown among the Scythians, who was sitting in front of us. Onegesios was to the right of Attila's couch, and opposite him were two of the king's sons on chairs. The eldest son was sitting on Attila's own couch, right on the very edge, with his eyes fixed on the ground in fear of his father. . . . After everyone had been toasted, the cupbearers left, and a table was put in front of Attila and other tables for groups of three or four men each. This enabled each guest to help himself to the things put on the table without leaving his proper seat. Attila's servant entered first with plates full of meat, and those waiting on all the others put bread and cooked food on the tables. A lavish meal, served on silver trenchers, was prepared for us and the other barbarians, but Attila just had some meat on a wooden platter, for this was one aspect of his self-discipline. For instance, gold, or silver, cups were presented to the other diners, but his own goblet was made of wood. His clothes, too, were simple, and no trouble was taken except to have them clean. The sword that hung by his side, the clasps of his barbarian shoes and the bridle of his horse were all free from gold, precious stones or other valuable decorations affected by the other Sythians. When the food in the first plates was finished we all got up, and no one, once on his feet, returned to his seat until he had, in the same order as before, drunk the full cup of wine that he was handed, with a toast for Attila's health. After this honor had been paid him, we sat down again and second plates were put

on each table with other food on them. This also finished, everyone rose once more, drank another toast and resumed his seat.

As twilight came on, torches were lit, and two barbarians entered before Attila to sing some songs they had composed, telling of his victories and his valor in war. The guests paid close attention to them, and some were delighted with the songs, others excited at being reminded of the wars, but others broke down and wept if their bodies were weakened by age and their warrior spirits forced to remain inactive.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. It can be reasonably inferred from the passage that Priscus viewed Attila with

- A. admiration and respect.
- B. disbelief and contempt.
- C. jealousy and distrust.
- D. ridicule and disregard

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. What does the word **libations** mean?

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Each of the following is evidence of Attila's self-discipline EXCEPT

- A. he drank from a wooden cup.
- B. his clothes were simple but clean.
- C. his sword was free from valuable decorations.
- D. his horse and bridle were ornately decorated.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. It can be reasonably inferred that Priscus views himself and other Romans as superior to the Huns because

- A. he uses the term "barbarian" to reference the Huns.
- B. he criticizes Attila's self-discipline.
- C. he is offended by all of the toasting.
- D. he was sitting on Attila's right.



