

The Rainbow of Promise

God's Covenant with Noah

Genesis 9:8-17 NIV

Bible Lesson & Activities for Children



THE **SUNDAY SCHOOL** STORE

Don't Forget!



Rainbows are quite a marvel of nature, but they're far more than a scientific phenomenon or inspiring Judy Garland song. The rainbow is a beautiful reminder that God keeps His promises to us. He promised not to destroy the Earth again, and He won't. He promised a savior, and Jesus came...and will come again! Use this lesson to discuss special reminders that we have in our lives, and how the rainbow is a reminder of God's love and covenant.

Sometimes it seems like the story of the flood is one of God's wrath and judgment. While it can be hard to explain so much destruction, it's important to emphasize that the account of Noah speaks to God's great mercy. He allowed life to continue and appointed Noah to facilitate that. When we discuss this passage about the rainbow, we have a visual reminder of God's promise to never flood the earth again. This is a reminder of God's faithfulness. Just as He kept the covenant with Noah, He kept His promise to send a savior. Noah and his family were saved by the ark. We are saved by the cross, and know that Jesus is the greatest promise fulfilled!

Passage: Genesis 9:8-17

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade

Materials Needed: Objects that serve as reminders or memories; cotton balls; construction paper or cardstock; markers or crayons; decorative supplies; paper plates; pom-poms or stickers; Skittles (optional); Bibles.

More Resources Online

- Watch the [video demonstration of the object lesson](#).
- Watch the [video example for the craft projects](#).
- Watch the [video Bible story "Noah's Ark"](#) from Saddleback Kids Club
- Watch the [video Bible story "Noah and the Flood"](#) from Crossroads Kids
- For more free illustrations, visit [Christian Clip Arts](#) and [Ministry-To-Children](#)

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Greet children and discuss ways that we can remember things...

Hello, Children of God!

How do you remember important things? I guess it sort of depends on what it is you need to remember and why. *Hold up items as you discuss, as examples of what you describe.*

If you're getting ready for a test at school, you might write notes in a notebook. I keep a bunch of these post-it notes handy to write down things I don't want to forget. Then there are things we have that remind us of certain people or special promises we make. For instance, I keep pictures on my refrigerator of important loved ones that I want to pray for regularly. Perhaps you have a photo or an item that makes you think of someone you know and love. You probably know that people wear wedding rings to remember their marriage and vows. It's not likely someone will just forget being married, of course, but the ring is a symbol of that pledge to faithfulness and love. It shows others your commitment, too. Sometimes we see other symbols that remind us of things. A dove is often seen as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. It reminds us of God's presence with us. Of course, a cross reminds us of Jesus and His saving work for us.

Have you ever seen one of these? *Hold up a picture of a rainbow.* It's likely you have at some point, after a rainstorm. This is a rainbow. Rainbows are formed by the way light reflects off of water, which is why you see them after rain. However, rainbows aren't just a scientific phenomenon. They are a reminder to us of God's love and faithfulness. Did you know when the first rainbow appeared? It was right after the ark of Noah landed on dry ground. Remember, God was sad that people were so wicked, so He sent a huge flood to destroy the Earth and start over again. But He saved Noah and his family, along with two of every kind of animal, and they went into the ark to escape the flood. It rained for forty

days and nights, and then it took even longer before the water dried up and it was safe to go out. When everyone at last got to leave the ark and go onto land, God sent a rainbow. He made a promise to Noah and the rainbow was a sign of that promise. God said that He would never again destroy the Earth with a flood. God said He “hung up His bow” in the clouds, meaning He set aside His weapons and wasn’t going to wipe out life again. When we see a rainbow, we can remember that.

And we can remember that God made and kept that promise, and He keeps every promise that He makes. God promised to send a Messiah, a rescuer, and He did! He gave us Jesus. Just as Noah was saved by an ark of wood that kept him from the flood, we are saved by the cross upon which Christ died, giving us new life through His blood. We can rejoice that God keeps all of His promises. He promises to be with us always. He is faithful. He will always love us and always provide what we need.

So the next time you see a rainbow, you can remember this. God keeps His promises. He will protect us and keep us safe. He sent His Son to save us! He loves us and is always with us. God is faithful!

Prayer: (Invite the children to repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for always keeping your promises.

Thank you for being faithful

And for giving us new life.

Help us to remember you.

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

Game & Activities Suggestions (10 minutes)



This passage reminds children of what a rainbow means and why it's important.

Rainbows involve fun colors and water science, but more importantly they are a reminder of God's promises. Start with an activity that uses these themes and gets kids thinking:

- Taste the rainbow! Use Skittles candies for some fun snack activities. For younger students, discuss colors and sample the different Skittle flavors. With older kids, predict how many Skittles of each color will be in the bag, and find out how accurate guesses were.
- Colors tag: Have one student stand as a "color caller" at one end of a playing area, with the others waiting on the other end. Waiting students should each secretly have a color in mind, or be given a color ahead of time. The color caller will call off colors one at a time. When the students hear their color named, they should try to quietly sneak across the playing field to the other side, while the color caller tries to tag them. With large enough groups, students tagged should join the color caller as taggers on the next round.
- Animal noises: have a blindfolded student walk around the room and tap on other children, one at a time. Students will then make an animal noise. The tapper must guess the student making the noise as well as the animal being imitated.
- God's promises paint: Mix different colors of paint to make new colors (for example, yellow and blue to make green). Discuss how God has made everything on Earth beautiful and colorful, and recount things He made in various colors. Use the paint to create a picture.

Explain that today's lesson involves something colorful as well as God's promises!

Main Bible Teaching (15 minutes)



This is a relatively short passage, and can be added onto a longer lesson including information about the flood and ark-building, if desired. To make it interactive, have students decorate rainbows or draw with bright colors as you read. Older students can read out loud, and teachers can read and discuss with younger ones.

Genesis 9:8-11 NIV *Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: (9) "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you (10) and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. (11) I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."*

If this lesson is not already being added onto another lesson about Noah's Ark, provide students with some background reminders about that account. God had grown frustrated with all of the evil on Earth, and decided to wipe out everything with a flood. He started over again with Noah and his family, who built a boat to rescue the few people who were to remain, along with the animals. After 40 days and nights of rain, and more time waiting for the water to dry up, the ark finally hit dry ground, and God gave instructions to Noah and his family. He also gave them a covenant, a special promise. Here God promised to never flood the Earth again. He made that promise to Noah, his sons, and every living creature there.

Ask: What kinds of promises have you made? Who makes promises or commitments to you?

Genesis 9:12-15 NIV And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: (13) I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. (14) Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, (15) I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life.

God promised not to flood the Earth again, and He gave a sign of this covenant. He said that He was laying aside His weapon, setting His "bow" in the cloud. Point out how the arc of the rainbow looks a bit like a bow, with the horizon of the Earth flat like the string. Sometimes the flood story is hard to teach. Why would a good God send so much devastation? God is good, but He is also just. People had sinned and done evil in His eyes, and needed punishment. But God had mercy to save Noah and his family. He rescued them through the ark, just as He rescues us through His Son Jesus!

Ask: When do you see rainbows? What is your favorite color that appears in the sky?

Genesis 9:16-17 NIV Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth." (17) So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth."

God said this would remind Him of the promise never again to destroy flesh with a flood. Of course, God doesn't forget things. He didn't need any sort of visual reminder, but we might! The rainbow can keep us mindful of His presence and promises. When we see one, we can rejoice that God is always faithful to His promises. We know that He will do what He says He will do. The greatest covenant God has made is the promise to send a savior.

Jesus is a beautiful promise kept, and we can be thankful for that each and every day. God is always with us and loves us. He kept His promise given with the rainbow and is faithful to us now and always!

Ask: How has God been faithful to you? How can you remember His promises?

The rainbow is a beautiful visual that we can use to remind children of God's faithfulness. This covenant with Noah is one of several we have in Scripture that prove God cares for us and keeps His promises to us. He will never leave or forsake us. When there are scary things in the world or rumors of disaster, we can assure them that God is with us. The rainbow will follow the storm, just as sunrise follows the night. We have hope for this life and the next, knowing that His presence is with us wherever we go!

Craft Activities (15 minutes)

More than just a scientific marvel or pretty array of colors, the rainbow is a beautiful reminder of how God loves us and keeps His promises to us. These crafts offer fun with rainbows and a special reflection on that promise. A “Paper Rainbow in the Clouds” is a decorative and colorful memory verse tool. A “Plated Rainbow” can hang anywhere to remember the covenant. Let’s get crafty!

Craft one: "Paper Rainbow"

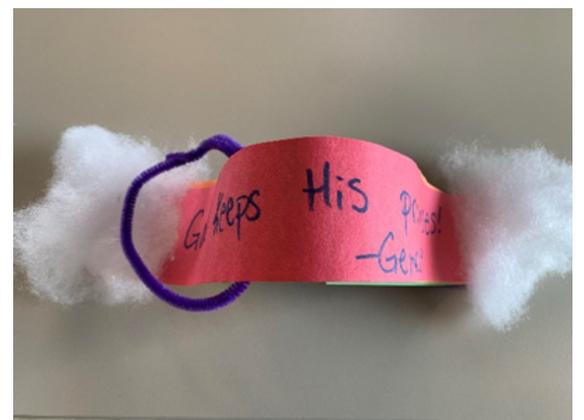
You will need:

- Construction paper or cardstock (multi-colored)
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Glue, tape, or staples
- Cotton balls or cotton
- Pipe cleaner or string



Procedure:

1. Cut several strips from rainbow-colored paper. Make each strip a little longer than the one before it, so there are at least six strips of varying length.
2. Optional: write out captions, verses, or notes about God's promises on the strips.
3. Layer the strips and carefully glue or staple one on top of the next. Bend or fold in the center to layer the "rainbow."
4. Once all strips have been layered, glue cotton to the ends to resemble clouds.
5. Attach a string or pipe cleaner to hang the rainbow, if desired. Look at it to recount God's faithfulness and promises!



Craft Two: "Plated Rainbow"

You will need:

- Paper plates
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Scissors
- Pom poms or beads
- Pipe cleaners
- Cotton or cotton balls
- Glue



Procedure:

1. Cut a rainbow shape out of a paper plate, or cut an ark shape in the center.
2. Use markers and/or crayons to decorate the plate with rainbow colors.
3. Attach additional decorations to the plate (stickers, glitters, etc.).
4. Optional: add cotton balls or cotton for "clouds" on the end of the plate.
5. Add verses or captions. Attach a string or pipe cleaner to hang the "rainbow" on display.



Genesis 9:17 NIV

So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth."





Word Search Puzzle

Noah - Covenant - Offspring - Beast - Sign - Creature

Cloud - Generation - Water - Birds - Earth - Flesh

X	G	X	B	K	L	Y	P	D	L	B	O
B	S	A	X	I	C	C	L	O	U	D	N
U	W	V	G	F	R	X	Z	F	G	P	I
K	U	O	A	P	E	D	W	F	E	U	P
S	R	A	K	S	A	N	S	S	N	Q	G
L	I	I	W	A	T	E	R	P	E	Y	V
B	F	G	C	O	U	B	B	R	R	X	F
M	A	Z	N	C	R	A	E	I	A	Z	L
G	H	C	O	V	E	N	A	N	T	C	E
B	E	E	A	R	T	H	S	G	I	A	S
D	W	F	H	T	L	B	T	A	O	N	H
U	G	G	O	V	X	Y	D	N	N	C	I

Word Search Answers

X G X B K L Y P D L B O
B S A X I C C L O U D N
U W V G F R X Z F G P I
K U O A P E D W F E U P
S R A K S A N S S N Q G
L I I W A T E R P E Y V
B F G C O U B B R R X F
M A Z N C R A E I A Z L
G H C O V E N A N T C E
B E E A R T H S G I A S
D W F H T L B T A O N H
U G G O V X Y D N N C I