

THE RAINBOW OF GOD'S PROMISE

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: GENESIS 6-9



God established a covenant with Noah by His grace

The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

God remembered Noah and brought an end to the flood – God is faithful to fulfill all His promises. When God said to Noah, “But I will establish my covenant with you” (6:18), Noah could take God’s promise to the bank. Similarly, God kept His word to destroy all flesh (6:2). When the judgment of God was complete, God remembered Noah. How precious the word “remember” is! From our perspective, looking back from this side of the cross, we know that our names could have been written there in place of Noah’s. God remembered (pace your own name in the place of Noah). The reason why we can place our name, there is because when God remembered Noah, He remembered Jesus, our Savior and Noah’s Savior.

Noah responded in faith though he could not fully see or understand –The book of Hebrews tells us that Noah is one of the heroes of the faith. This is because Noah believed what God said. Hebrews 11:7 tells us Noah became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. The people around Noah didn’t believe what God was saying when Noah preached to them. Can you imagine how odd Noah must have appeared to those who didn’t believe God – building an ark on dry land! It had never rained before! In those days, the earth was water by streams from below! Faith is not seeing but believing even when we can’t see! Jesus said to Thomas who doubted, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” (John 20:29, ESV).

God made a covenant with Noah and through Noah with all men – God, again by His own initiative, made a covenant or promise with Noah and with all his descendants. Never again would God destroy the world by a flood. The rainbow is the sign of this promise which came in response to Noah offering up a sacrifice, see Genesis 8:20-21.

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Where Is Jesus?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

The rainbow is a sign of another of God's covenants with His people. It reminds us of God's promise that He will not again destroy the earth by flood. This covenant was made in response to Noah's sacrifice of some of the animals after they came out from the ark. God's heart was affected by this sacrifice because it surely reminded Him of His plan to sacrifice His Son Jesus. Noah and his family's salvation from the flood is meant to point us to God's plan to ultimately save His people. Jesus' covenant is a better covenant than all those that God made before Jesus He came.

Covenant was made in response to Noah's sacrifice of the animals on the ark. This sacrifice affected the heart of God because it surely reminded Him of His plan to sacrifice His Son.



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ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

Bible Passage: Psalm 2:10-12

Connecting the passage to Christ:

Revelation 6:16 describes a day at the end of the world when the kings of the earth will call out to the mountains, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." No king on the earth can stand against the King of heaven, Christ. In this messianic psalm, the psalmist is speaking of Christ when he describes one who will rule over the kings of the earth. The psalmist warns the kings of the earth to kiss the Son lest he be angry. Jesus is the Son of God who sits on the throne and He blesses all those who take refuge in Him.

Questions for reflection:

- Who is called the King of kings in scripture? (Jesus is called the King of kings and Lord of lords in 1 Timothy 6:15 and Revelation 17:14. In Revelation 19:16, Jesus is said to have the "King of Kings" and "Lord of Lords" written on His robe.)
- What does it mean to take refuge in Jesus? (Refuge is a place of safety from danger. We can take refuge in Christ and be safe from the wrath of God, which is the greatest danger. This is possible because Jesus died on the cross and took the penalty for our sin. When we seek refuge in Jesus, we are free from the wrath of God, which was poured out on Christ instead of us.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.



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ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?

FAITH IN MY WORDS

Supplies:

- plastic baseball bat
- table

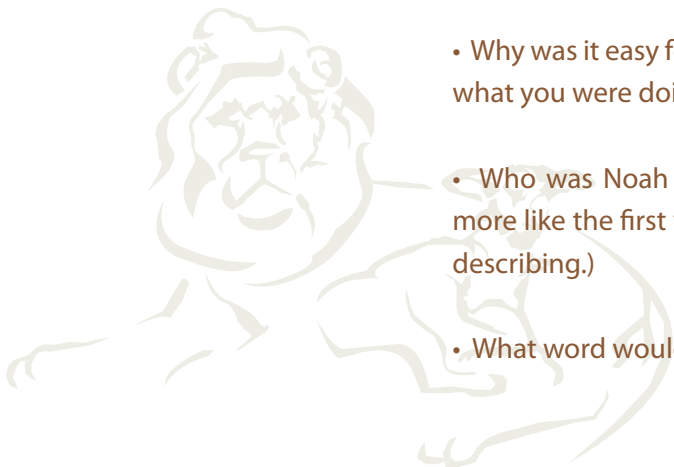
The object of this lesson is to show how Noah believed God even though he didn't understand what actually was going to happen.

Ask a volunteer to come up to the front of the class. Ask them if they trust you. Then have him or her put their hand palm up on a table in front of the class. Tell them, "You will be surprised, it won't hurt at all." Then take the bat like a sword above your head and slowly bring it down to their hand like you are practicing your aim. Continue to tell them not to be nervous, that the bat won't hurt their hand when you slam it.

Take a few practice false starts to try to get them to flinch or move their hand. If they flinch or move their hand, ask for another volunteer to replace them. Once in position, bring the bat crashing down on the table far away from their hand.

Then ask for another volunteer and another, continually doing the same thing, missing their hand by hitting the table far away. Then ask the class the following questions:

- Why was it so difficult for the first person to trust me? (They had difficulty trusting you because they didn't know you were going to hit the table far away from their hand.)
- Why was it easy for the later children to trust me? (They had the advantage to see what you were doing, not hitting the hands.)
- Who was Noah most like, the first person or the later volunteers? (Noah was more like the first volunteer because he had never seen a flood like what God was describing.)
- What word would you use to describe Noah's response to God? (Faith.)



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BY GRACE

Supplies:

Make a cake and decorate it for the class by drawing a simple picture of the ark on it. Bring in paper products to serve the cake. Keep the cake hidden until the proper moment to surprise the class.

Explain to the class that God reached out to Noah. Genesis 6:9 tells us that Noah walked with God, but it wasn't Noah who approached God for those walks. It was God who came to fellowship with Noah. Noah would not have known about the impending flood or known how to build an ark if God had not given him that information. When God gives us something we do not deserve, we say that His gift is one of grace. God poured out His grace on Noah by walking with him, by warning him of the flood and by giving him the instructions to build the ark.

Tell the class that you want to illustrate what it is like to get something you don't expect or deserve, but simply out of grace. Have a volunteer bring out the cake and the supplies. Cut and serve the cake.

Then ask the children these questions:

- Did you do anything to deserve the cake?
- Did you ask me to bring a cake?
- Did you ask me for a piece of the cake today?

Of course the answer to all these questions will be no. Explain that Noah did not ask God what the plan was to destroy the earth or how to go about building an ark, or if God would save him from the impending flood. God, in His mercy and grace, chose Noah, walked with Noah, revealed this information to Noah and saved Noah!

Tell the class that you made the cake to bless them and brought it in for their enjoyment simply out of your love for them. Tell them that if children in the other classes hear of this and ask why they had a cake they should answer, "As a picture of God's grace in saving Noah!"



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MAKE A RAINBOW

Supplies:

- a prism (a crystal from a chandelier will sometimes work, check it at home first)
- a slide projector or large bright flashlight
- a white piece of paper
- a small piece of cardboard

Cut a ¼ inch hole in the cardboard and tape it over the lens of the light source to limit the beam of light coming out. Turn off the lights in the room. Shine the light through the prism onto the paper to reveal a rainbow. Explain to the children that the light looks white to us but is actually made up of six visible colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet).

Isaac Newton (1642 -1747) was the English scientist who discovered that the white light of the sun could be separated by a prism and then back through a second prism to make it white again, thus explaining how rainbows are formed. Rain droplets act as tiny prisms, reflecting and dividing the light of the sun. Since before the flood it had not yet rained, God reserved the rainbow for after the flood as a mark of his promise never again to destroy the earth by flood.

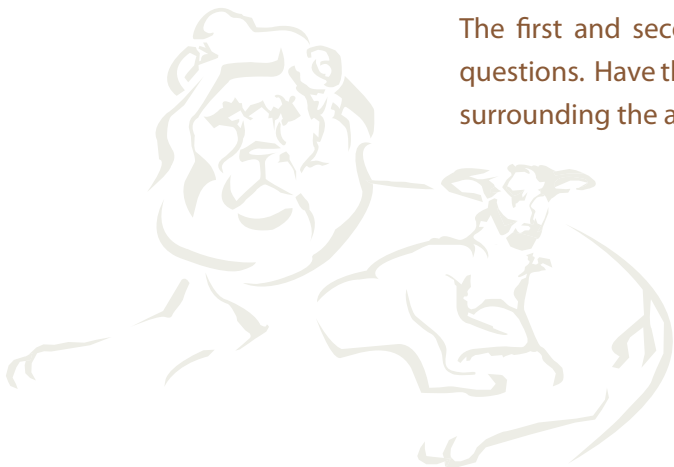
Use this object lesson to talk about God's wonderful creation, God's sovereign control over all things and His promise never to destroy the earth by flood again.

PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.

IN CLASS PROJECT

The first and second grade children can use the preschool coloring sheet and questions. Have the older children draw a picture of a rainbow over the countryside surrounding the ark.



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FOR OLDER GRADES

Supplies:

- paper and pencils

Divide the class into groups of four. Give them 10 minutes for the following assignment. Each member of each group should look at a chapter of Genesis, (Genesis 6, 7, 8, and 9). Have them look for ways God took initiative with Noah and demonstrated His grace to Noah (i.e. gave Noah things Noah did not deserve). Bring the class back together and have the different groups share their ideas to come up with a comprehensive list of ways God reached out to Noah and poured His grace out upon Noah and his family.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Covenant – A covenant is a binding agreement, a promise between two parties which governs their relationship. God made a covenant with Noah and with all his descendants, and even with the animals. God's binding agreement and promise was that never again would He destroy the earth by flood.

