

## Family Sunday School

### Lesson 1 - Rainbow Covenant

#### Introduction:

God is always seeking ways to be with us and with all of the things that take up our days, we can lose sight of God in our lives and at times we can get lost in the world. We mess up, we turn away from God, and yet God continues to love us and claim us.



Throughout Lent this year, we will be looking at promises God has made with us. These covenants stretch from Noah's story in Genesis to the New Covenant created by Jesus in the New Testament.

#### **Start the Fun!**



#### **The Story of Noah**

The Bible is a collection of many different stories that capture the ongoing relationship God has with creation and with us. As we read and hear these stories, we are reminded that we are not always perfect but God continues to find a way forward.

Watch this short video of the story of Noah and the ark.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzYjy6lhRag>

## **Read together**

### **Genesis 9:8-17, NIV** *The Rainbow Promise*

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: “I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you 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. 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.”

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:

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, 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.

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

### **Discuss**

*Ask:* What did God promise Noah after the flood? What sign reminds God and us that we have this promise?

*Discussion points:* God promised to never again flood the whole earth. God said the rainbow will remind us of his covenant. Why a rainbow? In some ancient societies the symbol for peace was the hanging up of the war-bow, meaning no longer would arrows fly in combat. Well, God, in effect hangs up a bow ... a rainbow ... in the sky in token of his determination to never bring such massive destruction upon the world again.

### **Genesis 6:5-6, NIV**

The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth--men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air--for I am grieved that I have made them."

## **Discuss**

*Ask:* Why did God flood the earth in this story?

*Discussion points:* In verse five, God saw that “every inclination of the thoughts of [human] hearts was only evil all the time.” Yet God’s response to this realization is not one of anger or revenge. Rather, God was “sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart” (verse 6). God sorrows over the corruption of the beings that God made with such care and love, and God’s heart, in striking contrast to the evil inclination of the human heart, is grieved by their betrayal. God is pained by the brokenness of creation. God sends the flood, then, not as an act of revenge, but out of grief over the breaking of human relationship with God.

That destruction, of course, is not total. God doesn’t wipe away the creation entirely and then walk away. The flood is in fact the means of re-creation.

God washes the earth clean and both God and the earth begin again.

*Ask:* How does this sound like baptism?

*Discussion points:* With the flood, God cleaned the earth of evil and started again. When we are baptised, we are reminded of our status as God’s people, washed clean of our sins and marked with the cross on our foreheads.

*Ask:* God didn’t destroy the whole human race, even though God was very disappointed in them. God also promised never to flood the whole earth again. What does this tell us about God?

*Discussion points:* God is not driven to punish, but desires to restore. As we continue to learn about God’s covenants with people throughout Lent, we will see over and over again that God wants us to be happy and wants a relationship with us.

## **Pray**

Thank God for water, which we need to live. Thank God for forgiving all of our mistakes and washing us clean from sin. Thank God for having patience with the human race and hanging up the rainbow as a sign of peace with us.

## **Participate**

### **Taste the Rainbow!**

#### *Materials:*

- Fruit Loops cereal,
- cardstock or paper,
- glue,
- cotton balls,
- pencil



#### *Directions:*

Draw 7 arcs on the paper lightly with the pencil to make six curved spaces for the Fruit Loops to go into.

Make sure you know the order of the colors in the spectrum (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet.) There are no indigo Fruit Loops, so we only have six colors.

Glue the Fruit Loops into the appropriate spaces. Leave room at the bottom for clouds.

Pull some cotton balls apart slightly and glue them below the rainbow.

## **Wrap Up**

The story of Noah's Ark reminds us that people's sin has been making God sad for a very long time. We live in sinful times now, but this is not something new. God was with us, hoping we could do better, back in Noah's time, and God is with us now.

## **Take a Moment to Breathe**

### **Rainbow Breath**

Find a comfortable seated position, focusing on sitting up straight and tall.

As you inhale, lift your arms out to your side and bring them above your head so your palms are together and your fingers are pointing to the sky.

Pick a color of the rainbow and as you exhale, imagine you are painting the first arch in your rainbow. Repeat for as many arches and colors as you would like to paint.