God Gives a Rainbow as a Sign of a Special Promise • Lesson 8

**Bible Point**

God is in charge and keeps his promises.

**Bible Verse:**

“If you love me, obey my commandments” (John 14:15).

**Growing Closer to Jesus**

Children will

- learn that the rainbow is a sign of God’s promise,
- realize that God always keeps his promises,
- help Pockets understand it’s important to keep our promises, and
- recognize that God’s promises are for everyone who loves him.

**Teacher Enrichment**

**Bible Basis**

- **God gives a rainbow as a sign of a special promise.**

  **Genesis 9:8-17**

  Put yourself in Noah’s place. You’d just witnessed the biggest rainstorm of all time! All the people on earth perished because of their evil ways—everyone but you and your family. Think about what would have gone through your mind the next time a thundercloud rolled overhead—would you wonder if God was getting ready to wipe you out with another flood? God took care of that fear for Noah when he promised that he would never again destroy the earth with a flood (Genesis 9:11). And that promise is for us, too.

  Noah knew he could count on God to fulfill his promise, because God had already proven himself faithful. And the rainbow God gave was one more sign that he could be trusted. Notice that the rainbow wasn’t only to remind Noah of the covenant, but to remind God himself! (See Genesis 9:16.) Whenever Noah saw a rainbow, he would know that God could see it, too, and would remember the covenant he’d made!

  **Prayer**

  - Read Genesis 17:1-7.
  - How does God’s covenant with Abram compare to his covenant with Noah?
  - What do these two covenants tell us about how we can trust God today to keep his promises?
  - Pray: Lord, help me to trust more fully in your promises and to help the little ones in my class understand that they can trust you, too.

**Before the Lesson**

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use. Refer to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies columns to determine what you’ll need.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned…” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.
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*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.*
Welcome Time

Welcome!

SUPPLIES: “World Name Tags” handout (p. 27), markers, tape or safety pins

- Bend down to make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them how they put last week’s lesson into practice. Ask questions such as “How did God watch over your family this week?” and “When do you feel God’s protection the most?”
- Say: Today we’re going to learn that God is in charge and keeps his promises.
- Hand out the world name tags children made in the first lesson, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if some of the children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable handout.
- Direct the children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.

Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “What promises does God make to us?” or “Why is it important for us to keep our promises?”

Option 1: Rain ’n’ Rainbows

SUPPLIES: newspaper, paper, spray bottle, water, powdered tempera paint, salt, plastic spoons, bowls

Before class, mix one tablespoon of salt and three tablespoons of powdered tempera paint in a bowl. (Do not add water to this mixture!) Prepare bowls of red, yellow, and blue paint/salt mixture.

Cover a table with newspaper. Set out paper, a spray bottle of water, plastic spoons, and the bowls of paint and salt mixture. Invite children to spray water on their papers and then sprinkle the powdered paint over the water to make rainbows.

As children create colorful rainbows, encourage them to name the colors found in rainbows, including red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Allow children to experiment with the colors as they wish. Tell children that only God makes real rainbows, and rainbows help us remember that God’s promises are true. Tell them that today they’ll hear a Bible story about a rainbow and a special promise God made to Noah and to us. Remind children that God is in charge and keeps his promises. Be sure to have children wash their hands before proceeding to the next activity.
**Option 2: Rainbow Tiptoe**

**SUPPLIES:** different-colored crepe paper streamers, tape

Before this activity, tape 8-foot lengths of different-colored crepe paper streamers to the floor in an arc shape. As children arrive, invite them to take a stroll on a rainbow. Let children walk, hop, tiptoe, crawl, or walk backward across the colored stripes. Join the children and play a color game. Say, “If you’re wearing red, hop to the red stripe” or “If you like ice cream, hop to the yellow stripe.” As children play, mention that today they’ll hear a Bible story about a rainbow and a promise God made to Noah. Tell children that God is in charge and keeps his promises.

**Option 3: Promise Boppin’**

**SUPPLIES:** balloon

Before class, blow up and tie off a balloon. If you have more than 10 children in your class, use two balloons.

Have children stand in a circle and promise to help each other bop the balloon in the air and keep it from falling on the ground. As you play, make comments such as “I like the way you’re keeping your promise to help each other” and “It’s important to keep promises.” Mention that today’s Bible story is about a special promise and that God is in charge and keeps his promises.

When everyone has arrived and you’re ready to move on to the Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they’re doing and get ready to clean up.

**Pick Up Our Toys**

**SUPPLIES:** CD player

Lead children in singing “Pick Up Our Toys” (track 2) with the CD to the tune of “Skip to My Lou” as they help clean up the room.

If you want to include the names of all the children in your class, sing the song without the CD and repeat the naming section. If you choose to use the CD, vary the names you use each week.

**Sing**

We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys
And put them all away.

There’s [name] picking up toys.
There’s [name] picking up toys.
There’s [name] picking up toys.
Putting them all away.

(Repeat.)
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Bible Story Time

Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: twigs, CD player

Tell the children you’ll clap your hands to get their attention. Explain that when you clap, children are to stop what they’re doing, raise their hands, and focus on you. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you’ll have time for all the fun activities you’ve planned.

Before class, gather enough twigs for each child to have one.

Have children form a circle sitting on the floor. Set a twig on the floor in front of each child. Instruct children not to touch the twigs yet.

Ask: • What’s a promise? (Something we make to people; when we say we’re going to do something.)

• Why do we keep promises? (Because God wants us to; because we should; because it’s the nice thing to do.)

Say: When we make a promise, we say we are going to do something, and then we do it. We can make promises to others, to ourselves, and even to God. Let’s go around the circle and take turns telling about a promise you made and kept, or a promise someone made to you and kept.

Begin the discussion by telling about a promise someone made to you and kept. When all the children have shared, ask:

• How do you feel when someone keeps a promise to you? (Happy; pleased; special.)

• How do you feel when you keep a promise to someone else? (Good; proud of myself; glad that I made them happy.)

Say: Now I’d like each of you to think of a time when you broke a promise or someone broke a promise to you. Don’t say anything out loud—just think about it. When you’ve thought of a broken promise, pick up your twig and break it in two.

Allow a few moments of silence for children to think of broken promises. When all the children have broken their twigs, ask:

• Can you put your broken twigs back together again? Why or why not? (No; you could tape or glue them, but they wouldn’t be as strong.)

• Can broken promises be put together again? Explain. (No, once a promise is broken, it’s broken; you can do what you said, but you still broke the promise.)

Say: A broken twig can’t be put back together again. In the same way, it’s hard to fix what’s hurt when a promise is broken between people. It’s important to keep our promises because broken promises hurt people. Our Bible verse comes from John 14:15, and it says, “If you love me, obey my commandments.” Have children repeat the verse with you. A commandment is a special rule God asks us to follow. We can show God how much we love him when we follow his special rules and keep our promises to him.

Today we’ll learn about someone whose promises we can always count on—God! We can always trust God because God is in charge and keeps his promises. Our Bible story today is about a special promise God made to Noah and to all of us.
Play “Obey My Commandments” (John 14:15) on track 14 of the CD. Lyrics can be found at the back of this teacher guide. Play the song a second time, and encourage the children to sing along with the CD.

**Bible Song and Prayer Time**

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket or box

Before class, make surprise cards for this activity by cutting construction paper into 2x6-inch slips. Prepare a surprise card for each child plus a few extras for visitors. Fold the cards in half, and then stamp the ark stamp inside one of the surprise cards. Bookmark Genesis 9:8-17 in the Bible you’ll be using.

Have the children sit in a circle. Say: **Now it’s time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today’s Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, I’ll pass out the surprise cards. Don’t look inside your card until the song is over.**

Lead children in singing “Read God’s Book” (track 3) with the CD, to the tune of “The Muffin Man.” As you sing, pass out the folded surprise cards.

**SING**

*Now it’s time to read God’s Book,*

*Read God’s Book, read God’s Book.*

*Now it’s time to read God’s Book.*

*Let’s hear a Bible story.*

(Repeat 3x.)

After the song, say: **Now you may look inside your surprise cards. The person who has the ark stamped inside his or her card will be our Bible person for today.**

Identify the Bible person, and have the rest of the children clap for him or her. Ask the Bible person to bring you the Bible. Help the Bible person open the Bible to the marked place and show the children where your story comes from. Then have the Bible person sit down.

Say: [Name] was our special Bible person today. Each week we’ll have only one special Bible person, but each one of you is a special part of our class! Today we’re all learning that *God is in charge and keeps his promises.*

Let’s say a special prayer now and ask God to help us learn that he keeps his promises. I’ll pass around this basket. When the basket comes to you, put your surprise card in it and say, “God, help me trust your promises.”

Pass around the basket or box. When you’ve collected everyone’s card, set the basket aside and pick up the Bible. Lead children in a prayer similar to this one: **God, thank you for the Bible and all the stories in it. Teach us today that you’re in charge and keep your promises. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.**
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Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible; red, yellow, orange, green, and blue construction paper (or other colors that match the mini beach ball); CD player

Set out sheets of colored construction paper on a table. You’ll need a sheet of either red, green, yellow, orange, or blue for each child.

Have children line up at one end of the room. Place the colored papers in a pile beside them. Hold up the mini beach ball and say: This ball has the colors of the rainbow in it! Let’s make a special story area by following the colors on the beach ball. We’ll use all the colors on the ball except white. Point to the yellow on the ball, and then give the mini beach ball to the first person in line. The first person in line will pick up a yellow sheet of paper, hop to the center of the room, and lay the paper on the floor. Then the person will hop back and hand the mini beach ball to the next person in line. That person will choose a sheet of paper that matches the next color on the beach ball and put it on the floor next to the paper that’s already there. Ready? Go!

Help children follow the mini beach ball colors, and continue until all the paper is on the floor in the center of the room. Then say: Form a standing circle around the color squares. Return the mini beach ball to the Learning Lab as the children form a circle. Hold up the Bible, and say: Our Bible story comes from the book of Genesis in the Bible. Hold up the Bible Big Book: Noah. Our Bible Big Book shows us pictures of our Bible story. Let’s play a review game. I’ll tell you the “color” of the question I’m asking. If you know the answer, stand on a paper that matches that color.

Open the Bible Big Book to page 1, and show children the picture. Ask the following questions and repeat the colors. Then wait for children to stand on those colors.

Ask: • Red question: What made God sad? Stand on the red paper if you know the answer. (The people acted mean; the people didn’t love God.)

• Blue question: Why was Noah God’s friend? (He loved and obeyed God; Noah was a good man.)

Turn to pages 2 and 3.

Ask: • Yellow question: Why did God want Noah to build an ark? (God was going to send a flood; God wanted to save Noah; God loved Noah.)

Turn to pages 4 and 5.

Ask: • Orange question: What did God do once the ark was finished? (Brought the animals to the ark; sent the animals two by two.)

Turn to pages 6 and 7 and ask:

• Green question: What did Noah do to be God’s helper? (Noah took care of the animals; Noah built the ark; Noah obeyed God.)

Say: Good job! Find a square to sit down on. Our Bible story today is the last part of Noah’s story. Listen carefully for a promise God gave Noah that’s also a promise for us. When you hear what God promised Noah, put your hand over your heart.

Turn to page 8 in the Bible Big Book, and listen to the “Noah, Part 4” segment (track 16) on the CD.

At the end of page 8, stop the CD and close the Bible Big Book.

Say: I can see many hands on hearts!
Lesson 8

Ask: • What did God promise Noah? (Never again to destroy the earth with a flood.)
• What sign did God give Noah as a promise? (A rainbow.)

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Say: God made a promise to Noah and to each of us—God promised never to flood the entire world again. For Noah, the sign of God’s promise to him was a rainbow. And we know that God is in charge and keeps his promises! Isn’t that wonderful?

Ask: • How do you think Noah and his family felt about God’s promise? (Happy; glad the flood was over.)
• How do you feel about God’s promises to you? (Glad; loved; protected.)

Say: God’s promises are special, and we can always trust them. The great thing is that God’s promises aren’t just for Noah—they’re for everyone who loves God!

The greatest promise God has ever made to us is to send us Jesus as our forever friend. If we believe in Jesus, we can be friends with him forever, and one day we’ll live with him in heaven. What a great promise!

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Return the Bible Big Book to the Learning Lab, and say: Now let’s play a game to remind us that nothing can stop God from keeping his promises.

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**Do the Bible Story**

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, floor rainbow from Option 2 (optional), colored paper from “Hear and Tell the Bible Story” activity

Have children bring the sheets of construction paper they’re sitting on and gather around the floor rainbow you made if you chose to do Option 2. Have the ark stamp and ink pad close by. Bookmark Deuteronomy 31:8a in the Bible you’ll be using.

Say: The rainbow represents God’s promise to never again flood the whole world.

Ask: • What are some other promises God makes to us? (To watch over us; to love us; to forgive us when we ask.)
• Can you think of a promise God made you that’s already come true? Explain. (God promised to be with me always, so now I’m not afraid of the dark anymore; God promised to take care of me when I was sick, and I got better.)

Say: Those are all great promises. Listen to this promise from the book of Deuteronomy in the Bible: “Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord will personally go ahead of you. He will be with you.” When God makes those great promises, I believe them because God is in charge and keeps his promises. And because God loves me enough to make those promises, I want to make my own promises to God.

Ask: • What kinds of promises can we make to God? (To love him; to obey him; to pray every day; to be kind to others.)
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• **What can we do to help us keep our promises to God?** (Pray; ask God to help us; say thank you to God for his help.)

Say: **We can promise to love God and to serve and obey him always, just as Noah did. We can promise to pray every day, and we can promise to be thankful for all the good things God gives us. When we make a promise to God, we want to think about it carefully. Because just as God keeps his promises to us, God will expect us to keep our promises to him.**

Right now I’d like you to find a partner and talk about what promise you’d like to make to God. When you’ve decided on your promise, tear your sheet of construction paper in the shape of a rainbow, and then stamp it with the ark stamp. You can use your stamped rainbow as a bookmark to remind you of God’s promises to you and of your promises to God.

Allow time for partners to discuss their promises and tear rainbow shapes and stamp them. Then say: **I’d like to hear the promises you made to God. Who would like to share?** Allow time for volunteers to share their promises. If children feel reluctant to share, that’s OK. Explain that some promises are private between a person and God.

Say: **I’m proud of the promises you made to God today. Isn’t it great to know that God is in charge and keeps his promises? Let’s stand up and wave our rainbow bookmarks and give God a big cheer! Hooray!**

After your cheer, say: **Let’s visit with Pockets and see if she knows how important it is to keep promises.**

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### Closing

#### Broken Promise

**SUPPLIES:** none

Bring out Pockets the Kangaroo, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Pockets away and out of sight.

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**Pockets:** *(Excitedly)* Hey, everyone! Guess what I saw! A beautiful colored stripe in the sky! It was so pretty!

**Teacher:** Pockets, that pretty “stripe” is called a rainbow.

**Pockets:** A rainbow? You mean you can tie up rain in a bow? It didn’t look like the bows I make for my hair.

**Teacher:** A rainbow’s something only God can make and put in the sky. It’s a special way to remind us of a promise God made a long time ago. Children, who can tell Pockets about the special promise that God made to Noah? *(Have volunteers tell Pockets about God keeping Noah and his family safe and then promising never to flood the earth again. Encourage children to tell Pockets the Bible Point.)* God always keeps his promises!
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Lesson 8

Promises to Share

**SUPPLIES:** gumdrops, CD player

Have children clean their hands with wet wipes or at a nearby sink and then get into groups of three. Hand each child a red, yellow, and green gumdrop. Say: **Let’s sing a fun song about God’s promise and the rainbow. We’ll sing the song two times without eating our goodies. Then we’ll eat our rainbow gumdrops as we listen to it two more times.**

Lead children in singing “Only God Can Make a Rainbow” (track 17) to the tune of “Did You Ever See a Lassie?”

### SING

- **Only God can make a rainbow,**
- **A rainbow, a rainbow.**
- **Only God can make a rainbow**
- **To shine in the sky.**
- **Red, yellow, green, blue,**
- **God’s promise is true.**
- **Only God can make a rainbow**
- **To shine in the sky.**

(Repeat.)

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**Pockets:** (Sighing) Oh well, now I feel sad. (Begins to snuffle.)

**Teacher:** Sad? Why would a rainbow make you sad?

**Pockets:** (About to cry) I didn’t keep my promise, that’s why. I promised my sister I’d take her to the park, but then I started playing with my jump-rope and I didn’t take her. (Pauses.) I guess that means I broke my promise.

**Teacher:** When you make a promise, it’s important to keep it. God is in charge and keeps his promises and wants us to keep our promises, too.

**Pockets:** I didn’t think it was a big deal. But I see now that it is. My sister is probably really sad that I didn’t take her to the park. (Pauses, and then gets more excited.) I’m going to keep my promise just as God keeps his promises! I’ll take my baby sister to the park today! We can look for rainbows while we play!

**Teacher:** That’s a great idea, Pockets!

**Pockets:** Promises are important! If God keeps his promises, then I’ll keep mine, too! ’Bye, everyone, I’m going to get my sister!

(Repeat.)

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God Gives a Rainbow as a Sign of a Special Promise

Turn off the CD player. Close with a prayer. Pray: Dear God, thank you for always keeping your promises. Help us remember to keep our promises, too. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Remind children to take their colorful rainbow pictures and bookmarks home.
Lesson 8

For Extra Time

For a fun review of this module’s Bible story, invite children to listen to the entire Bible Big Book: Noah story with the CD. Choose two children to hold the Bible Big Book and turn the pages at the chimes. The entire story is on track 18 on the CD.

Lively Learning: Listening Center

Make to Take: Rainbow Bracelets

Gather elastic thread, scissors, and the following colored beads: red, yellow, green, orange, blue, and purple. Direct children to make rainbow bracelets by threading the beads in this color order: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. As children string their beads, explain that the bracelets will help them remember God’s special promise to Noah and all of us. Remind children that God is in charge and keeps his promises. Let children wear their bracelets home.

Treat to Eat: Rainbow Pudding Cups

Before class, prepare one large box of instant vanilla pudding. (If your class is very large, prepare two boxes.) Divide the pudding into small containers, and stir in a drop or two of food coloring to tint the pudding red, yellow, and blue.

Have children clean their hands with wet wipes or at a nearby sink, and then hand each child a plastic spoon and a clear plastic cup. Show children how to gently layer the colored pudding into the cups to make pudding rainbows. As children prepare their snacks, encourage children to tell others that God is in charge and keeps his promises.

Story Picture: The Rainbow Promise

Give each child a photocopy of the “Today I Learned…” handout. Set out glitter glue, crayons, and markers. Have children color their pictures and then add glitter glue to make sparkly rainbows. As children decorate their pictures, encourage them to tell about God’s promises that are important to them.
Today your child learned that God is in charge and keeps his promises. Children learned that the rainbow is a symbol of God’s promise and that God’s promises are for everyone who loves him. They talked about promises they can make to God and keep.

**Verse to Learn**
"If you love me, obey my commandments" (John 14:15).

**Ask Me...**
- What did God promise Noah?
- Why does God keep his promises?
- Why is it important for our family to remember God's promises?

**Family Fun**
- Make rainbow cookies to share. Divide sugar cookie dough into four sections, and let children help knead food coloring into each section. Make a thin log from each color, and layer the logs one on top of the other. Chill the dough well. Let children help slice chilled dough into half-inch slices and place the slices on a greased cookie sheet. Bake for 10 minutes at 325 degrees.

**The Rainbow Promise (Genesis 9:8-17)**