

# God's Covenant

Genesis 8:20-9:17

## MEMORY VERSE

GENESIS 9:16

"The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

As many prisms as you can provide for your class.

Masking tape.

Red, purple, blue, green and yellow construction paper, scissors, and staples.

## ATTENTION GRABBER!

### Prisms

Bring a prism or two to class. Allow the children to experiment with them; seeing how the white light refracts into the colors of the rainbow.

Explain to your class how God made the first rainbow and connected it with a promise for all mankind. Feel free to do additional research on how rainbows give off the different colors and share with the class the amazing wonder of God's creation and promises to us. **God's promises to us last forever.**

## LESSON TIME!

How important are promises? Have you ever broken a promise that you have made to someone else? Has a promise that has been made to you ever been broken? It is very hard when that happens. People will sometimes break their promises, but there is someone who will never break His promises. Do you know who that is?

That's right--God will never break His promises to us. In today's lesson, we are going to learn about a special promise that God made to Noah after the flood. He also gave Noah a special sign so he could remember that promise. It is something that we can still see today and is very beautiful. It is the rainbow. Did you know that every time we look at a rainbow, we can remember that God always fulfills all of His promises? We are going to learn more about that today. **God's promises to us last forever**

### GENESIS 8:20-22

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease."

In verse twenty, we see that Noah built an altar to the Lord and offered burnt sacrifices to the Lord. When the ark came to rest on Ararat and Noah and his family came out of the ark, they came into a new beginning; the world was clean and at rest. What was Noah's response? He worshipped the Lord.

Noah did not build a new house for himself or his family; he built an altar to thank the Lord for gracious protection. He prayed for God's mercy in the times to come. God had just brought Noah and his family through the destruction of the world.

When He brings us through tremendous trials, what is our response? Because God was first in Noah's heart, God was the first to be served. Noah offered "of every clean animal, and of every clean bird"; he offered only those that were clean, and by doing so, he was obeying the law of God. Though he did not have much, for he only had seven of the clean animals, he acknowledged that all he did have was God's and he was willing to freely give to God.

Noah's sacrifice was a pleasing, sweet smell to God. Remember when you smelled something that was very pleasing or sweet? Think about how it made you feel. When the Lord smelled this sweet savor he said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination (or the thought and desire) of man's heart is evil from his youth (from the very time that he begins to act with consciousness)." The Lord was so pleased with Noah's spontaneous expression of thankfulness that He promised never to curse the ground again as he had done before or to destroy mankind in a worldwide catastrophe of water, even though man's sin would continue to provoke and justify God's wrath. **God's promises to us last forever.**

God assures Noah that his daily needs would be met by the unbroken succession of "seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and winter and summer, and day and night..." Even though man in His sin deserved to be completely destroyed, God in His mercy and grace saved man from complete destruction. Man would sin again because it is part of his nature, but God would continue to extend His grace and love to man.

#### GENESIS 9:1-4

So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.

“And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that moves on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand.

“Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.

“But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.”

In verse one we are told "God blessed Noah and his sons..." This is the first time that we read of God blessing anyone since He had blessed man in Eden before he fell in sin. The basis of this blessing was the burnt offerings (a picture of Jesus); the purpose of the blessing was to show that the same Divine favor that was given to Adam and Eve would now be given to the new couple that would continue the human race.

God gave Noah the same command that He gave Adam in Genesis 1:28: "Be fruitful and multiply." This was a renewal of God's Word to Adam. In verses 2 - 4, we see that the animals that originally were subject to man now would live in "dread" of man. The harmony which had existed between man and animal in the

beginning was now broken. Before the flood, man ate fruits and herbs, but now God allowed man to eat the flesh of animals.

### GENESIS 9:5-7

"Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.

“Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.

“And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply in it.”

Man's life is sacred to God; he was created in the image of God. Man's life may not be taken away without God's permission by either man or by animal. Before the flood, there did not seem to be any type of government to enforce the penalties for taking of another human life. After the flood, we see capital punishment as the penalty of murder ordained by God Himself. By God's order, man now shares in the establishing and upholding of justice on the earth.

There are consequences for our actions. If we do something wrong, there will be a penalty for it. It is important to do what is right before the Lord.

### GENESIS 9:8-17

Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying:

"And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you,

“and with every living creature that is with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth.

“Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

And God said: "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

“I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.

“It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud;

“and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

“The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.”

And God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth."

Here we see God's covenant with Noah. It reaffirms the conditions of the life of fallen man as announced by the covenant God made with Adam. And, since the threat of divine judgment in the form of another flood had been removed, it institutes the principle of human government to curb the outbreak of sin. **God's promises to us last forever**

## The Promise Game

Place a piece of tape on the floor as a finish line and have volunteers bid or promise they can cross the line in so many hops, steps, or any other mode of that is unpredictable. Have them start their attempt with the phrase, "I promise I will hop over that line in \_\_\_ hops. Sometimes they will make it; sometimes they will not.

After allowing everyone that wants to participate to have a try, explain that many people have good intentions, but **God's promises to us last forever.**

The elements of the covenant that God made with Noah are: 1) Man is made responsible to protect the sanctity of human life by orderly rule, even to the end of capital punishment. 2) No additional curse is put on the ground; man need not fear another flood that would destroy the earth. 3) Man may not eat the flesh of animals that still has blood in it; blood is sacred. 4) Mankind was to multiply and fill the earth. The passage indicates that this was a covenant of God with Noah, not of Noah with God. God was the giver; man, the receiver.

In verses twelve through sixteen, we see the sign of the covenant. In giving the rainbow, God verified the promise that He had made. The rainbow not only assured man that a flood would never again destroy the earth, but it was also the memorial of the new relationship that God had entered into with His creation.



"I set My rainbow in the cloud." When God gathers clouds over the earth, the bow is seen in the cloud, not for man only, but for God who will look at the bow to remember His everlasting covenant. An everlasting covenant is a covenant for perpetual generations, one that extends to all ages, even to the end of the world. **God's promises to us last forever.**

The rainbow arcs are like a battle bow hung against the clouds. The Hebrew word for rainbow is also the word for a battle bow. The bow, a weapon of warfare, becomes a symbol of peace between God and man. When God's anger had passed with the Flood, He pointed to His bow in the clouds as the sign of His faithfulness. **God's promises to us last forever.**

The rainbow comes in the combination of sunshine and rain, just as grace is the unmerited favor of God appearing on the dark background of man's sin. As the rainbow appears from the sun shining on the drops of rain in a rain-cloud, so grace is manifested by God's love shining through the blood that Jesus shed for our redemption. God places the rainbow where everyone can see it and enjoy it; He extends His grace to all who would willingly receive it. "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men..." (Titus 2:11).

The next time we see a rainbow in the sky, let's remember to thank the Lord for His promises and how faithful He is in keeping them. **God's promises to us last forever**

## Rainbow in the Sky

Have your students take five 2" strips of colored construction paper in various colors; you will need red, purple, blue, green and yellow in that order. Make the red piece 12" inches long, the purple, 10", the blue 8" the green 6" and the yellow 4". Join the ends together, arching the longer pieces, and staple the ends together.

Explain to your class that God gave us the rainbow to remind us of His promise. The rainbows they made can remind them that **God's promises to us last forever**

## **PRAYER**

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for God's faithfulness in the fulfillment of His promises. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them an opportunity to do so.