

date: **9/10/17****Bible Passage: Genesis 6—9**
(Noah)

God Is a Covenant Keeper (Part 1)

REMEMBER VERSE

**Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
Psalm 90:2**

Equip

Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage

The word *covenant* as used in the Bible refers to a promise, agreement, or contract. There are four major covenants in Scripture: Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and the new covenant. These are sometimes referred to as the redemptive covenants because, in these covenants, God defines His relationship with mankind and progressively reveals more about the structure and scope of His plan of redemption. The Noahic covenant introduces the idea that God is entering into a contractual relationship with mankind. It somewhat previews the four major redemptive covenants to come.

In the Noahic covenant, God establishes a covenant relationship with mankind in the context of sin and His judgment on it. God had created the earth and blessed it, but human rebellion had jeopardized that blessing to the point that God nearly wiped out the entire planet. Here we see God promising that even though man would continue to sin, He would never destroy them completely.

And here we see the purpose of God in establishing covenants with man. God's holy nature requires punishment for sin. Man's fallen nature ensures that he will continually fall into sin—therefore, man would always be in danger of the wrath of God falling upon him. So God establishes covenants with man, promising him initially that He would not destroy the earth in the same way again—and then, through a series of covenants known as the redemptive covenants, promising to provide the ultimate way of salvation from that ever-present sin.

Equip

Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage

This portion of The Big God Story invokes the terror and awe of a sovereign and all-powerful God. However, it also invokes gratitude and love for a God who kept (and continues to keep) a covenant He made with sinful people—a God who offers us the chance for redemption even when we don't deserve it!

God desires relationship with us. He loves people (who hurt Him), entrusted Noah with the responsibility of repopulating the earth, and made a lasting covenant which He remembers forever.

How does it make you feel to know you serve a God who is this gracious, powerful, and loving? As you lead kids through this awesome portion of The Big God Story, pray they will understand how deep and wide God's love is. Pray that they hear, deep in their hearts, that God's covenant with Noah also applies to them. Pray they feel thankful to be a part of The Big God Story.

SMALL GROUP

SECTION

EXPLORE// 10 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.

Floating Origami Boat

God told Noah to build an ark. Children will follow instructions to create origami boats.

SUPPLIES

- [Origami Boat instructions](#) (see Resources)
- Paper (1 sheet per child)
- Markers or colored pencils

PREPARE AHEAD

Print the Origami Boat instructions and follow them to make a sample origami boat.

RELATE

In today's lesson we'll hear about a man named Noah. God gave Noah specific instructions for building a boat big enough to hold Noah's family and at least two of every animal. Let's follow the instructions to make our own origami boats.

Give each child a sheet of paper and point out the markers or colored pencils. Encourage the kids to decorate their papers however they'd like. After a few minutes, show children the sample boat you made. Then take a fresh piece of paper and demonstrate each step as the kids follow your lead. Pause between each step to help kids as needed.

LARGE GROUP
SECTION**DISCOVER//** 30 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible Verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.

Traditions and Remember Verse**SUPPLIES**

- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)
- [Remember Verse image](#) (see Resources)

RELATE

Give the children mementos (such as rocks, marbles, or blocks) for accomplishments such as memorizing the Remember Verse or bringing their Bibles. Have them put the objects into a clear container or add them to a structure, and celebrate when it's complete.

This week's Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. Psalm 90:2

Connect

Encourage the members of your community to get to know one another through engaging questions, energizing games, and creative activities.

Question

When was the last time you saw a rainbow? Where did you see it?

The Big God Story

Bible Passage: Genesis 6—9

**Storytelling Technique: Volunteers Illustrating the Narrative
God Is a Covenant Keeper**

SUPPLIES

- Optional: [Storytelling video](#) (see Resources)
- [Timeline image](#) (see Resources)
- [Timeline animation](#) (see Resources)

- [Blueprints image](#) (see Resources)
- Bibles
- Butcher paper (5'–6')
- Tape
- Markers

SET UP

Tape the butcher paper to the wall at the front of the room where every child can see it. Put the markers nearby.

RELATE

Last week we heard about the beginning of the best story ever—The Big God Story. In the beginning, only God existed, and He created everything in the whole universe! What other things have beginnings? Interact with responses. The first people, Adam and Eve, lived in perfect relationship with God. Sadly, they disobeyed Him, and their sin separated them from God. But God made a plan to restore this broken relationship. He would make a covenant—an extra-special promise. And God always keeps His covenants. God is a Covenant Keeper. Before we hear what happened, let's pray. Lead children in Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

Hundreds of years after Adam and Eve, their descendants—children, grandchildren, and so on—lived on the earth. The Bible says that during this time, people became very, very evil. Encourage children to turn to Genesis 6:5–6, and ask a volunteer to read these two verses. **When God saw how wicked the people had become, He felt very sad!**

Let's look at verse 7 to see what God did. Read verse 7. **God couldn't bear to see the people He'd created destroying themselves through their evil lives, so He decided to destroy every living thing with one important exception: a man named Noah, his family and two of every animal. The Bible says Noah was "a righteous man ... and he walked faithfully with God" (verse 9). A righteous person lives a life that pleases God. Who would like to read verses 13 and 14 to find out what God said to Noah?** Have a volunteer read while everyone follows along.

God told Noah to build an ark, which is a very big boat. He had a plan to save Noah and to make a covenant with him. **What's a covenant?** Allow responses. **A covenant is an extra-special promise, and when God makes a promise, He never, ever breaks it. God is a Covenant Keeper.**

Imagine you're Noah and God has asked you to build an ark. **First, you need to draw your plans. What will the ark look like? How big will it be? Will it have windows or doors?** Ask three volunteers to come up front. Point out the butcher paper and markers, and ask one child to draw the ark. Tell the other two children that at different points during the narrative you'll prompt them to draw other objects. For now, have them draw the sky, sun, trees, etc., surrounding the ark.

If you had a hammer, nails, and wood, would you be ready to build a huge ark? Invite responses. **Probably not! Fortunately, God didn't leave Noah to figure out how to build the ark on his own. God gave Noah detailed building plans. Tech: Cue Blueprints image.** Tell about a time you assembled something. **God also told Noah to bring into the ark two of some kinds of animals and seven of other kinds of animals.** As the first child draws the ark, have the other two kids draw animals walking up to it.

God told Noah He would send a flood that would destroy all living things, but He wanted Noah and his family to enter the ark first. As the first child draws the ark, have the other two children draw people

walking up to it. Then encourage all three kids to finish their drawings. Have everyone applaud them as they go back to their seats.

When everything was ready, God sent the flood. Genesis 7:11 says, “On that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened.” But Noah and his family stayed safe inside the ark. Once the rain started, it didn’t stop for 40 days and 40 nights! Rain poured and poured until the water rose so high that it covered the mountains! And even after the rain stopped, the water still covered the earth for months! During this time, Noah and his family and all the animals stayed on the ark. But God never forgot them. Invite kids to turn to Genesis 8:1 and ask a volunteer to read the verse.

Almost a year after the flood started, the ark bumped up against a mountain and rested on it. God told Noah, his family, and all the animals to leave the ark. The first thing Noah did was worship God, the Covenant Keeper. From heaven, God saw Noah and was pleased with him. He said, “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans ... [and] destroy all living creatures” (verse 21). This was God’s covenant with Noah! God keeps His covenant promises. And God promised to never again destroy all life on earth through a flood.

To “seal” the covenant, God gave Noah a sign. What was it? Allow responses. **Yes! A rainbow! Let’s read Genesis 9:13 together.** Pause for kids to find the verse and then read it in unison.

God’s covenant with Noah is also a covenant with us! When we see a rainbow, we can remember that God is a Covenant Keeper. He always keeps His promises. And God kept His promise to send His Son Jesus to save us from our sins. Because of Jesus, we get to live with God forever.

What a loving God! He always keeps His promises, He wants to be in relationship with us, and He invites us to be part of the big story He’s still writing even today. Share a personal story of a time God showed you His love and faithfulness.

SMALL GROUP SECTION

RESPOND// 15 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through creative activities and games.

Reflect: God Is a Covenant Keeper

Questions for Younger Kids

- **After he left the ark, how did Noah respond to God?** Genesis 8:20
- **What was the sign of the covenant that God gave Noah?** Genesis 9:12–13
- **With whom did God make His covenant?** Genesis 9:16
- **How do you think you will respond the next time you see a rainbow?**

Questions for Older Kids

- **Why did God cause the flood?** Genesis 6:11–12
- **Why did God save Noah and his family?** Genesis 6:9
- **What is a covenant?**
- **Why are covenants important in the Bible?**
- **How does God feel when people—His very creation—disobey Him?** Genesis 6:5–6 **How does that make you feel?**
- **After he left the ark, how did Noah respond to God?** Genesis 8:20
- **How do you want to respond to God today?**

BLESS// 5 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- Bible

RELATE

As you bless your children, tell them they have the opportunity to also be a blessing to others. Encourage them to freely share with others the joy and love they have received from God. Encourage parents to come early to read the blessing over their child. Optional: Write the childrens' response portion "Holy and awesome is His name" on a whiteboard to make it easier for them to remember.

Encourage the children to hold their hands in front of them, palms up. This posture symbolizes a willingness of heart to respond to God's Holy Spirit and receive what God has for them. Invite them to remain in this posture as you bless them.

Open a Bible and read Numbers 23:19:

God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

Explain to your kids that for the final portion of today's blessing, you will read a statement and they will respond by saying, "Holy and awesome is His name" (from Psalm 111:9).

Leader: **God spoke the world into being and breathed life into man and woman.**

Children: Holy and awesome is His name.

Leader: **God placed a rainbow in the sky as a sign of His covenant with Noah and with all living creatures, including you and me.**

Children: Holy and awesome is His name.

Leader: **God fulfilled His promise to mankind. He sent His own Son Jesus to earth to die so we could be in relationship with Him.**

Children: Holy and awesome is His name.

Leader: **Nothing can separate us from God's love, and He invites us to be a part of His story—today!**

Children: Holy and awesome is His name.

May you know and experience God as Covenant Keeper this week. May you see God's faithfulness in your life.