

Session 4

Rainbow promise

Noah has trusted and obeyed God, and God has rewarded this trust and obedience. Noah and his family are safe, and your 5 to 8s will understand that it is important for Noah to thank God. Remind them that we must thank him too.

To plan your session... Choose a selection of *Opening, Into the Bible* and *Living the life* activities to make your session fun and memorable.

Options to open your session...

Thanks

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to thank God for things he has provided

You will need: eight or more different coloured items

- 1 Place your items around the room.
- 2 Encourage the children to move around the room, looking at the items and thinking of things in that colour that God has provided for us. For example: green trees and peas; red flowers and houses; blue sky; a favourite jumper.
- 3 Move around the room as a group, stopping at each station to thank God for things that are that colour. Encourage the children to share ideas of their own.

Creating sounds

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to think about why Noah would want to thank God

You will need: percussion instruments, sheets of card (optional)

- 1 Try creating the sounds of rain, thunder and so on, using the instruments, sheets of card or the children's own actions, such as tapping fingers on palms, slapping side of legs, tapping toes.
- 2 Discuss how they feel when it rains all day. Remind the children that Noah was in the ark with his family and animals while it rained for 40 days.
- 3 Ask: How do you feel when rain stops? What do you think Noah would have wanted to do?

Aim

To thank God for providing for those who trust and obey him

Bible passage

Genesis 8:20 – 9:17

Ready to use activity

Obeying game

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to think about what it means to obey

- 1 Ask the children what they think it means to obey someone. Encourage them to come up with ideas, then guide them towards the idea that obeying is about doing what someone says.
- 2 Play a game of Simon Says, where the children have to obey the instructions the leader gives. The leader should sometimes obey their own commands, and other times not. If the children don't obey the commands, they should sit down.
- 3 Take it in turns for different people to be the leader.



Into the Bible - options based on the Bible passage...

Ready to use
activity

Bible story with props

Activity time: 15–20 minutes

Aim: to thank God for providing for those who trust and obey him

You will need: four large stones, chalk, red, orange or yellow paper

1 Setting the scene

Tell the story so far: 'God was saddened by the bad things people were doing on earth. But Noah was different; he loved God. By the time God sent a flood to destroy everything bad on earth, Noah and his family would be safe in their huge boat.'

Write 'God told Noah what to do' on the first stone or on a sheet of paper. Ask a child to hold it up. Read it together, then ask the child to look after it.

Ask what happened next. Noah and his family went into the boat (ark), taking with them two of every kind of animal. God shut the door behind them. It rained for 40 days and nights until the whole earth was flooded, but everyone in the ark was safe.

Write 'God kept Noah safe' on a second stone or sheet of paper and ask another child to hold it up. Say the sentence together, then ask the child to look after it.

2 Imagine

Ask: What might it have been like in the ark? Would it have been comfortable? What sounds would you have heard? What might have made you frightened?

3 Listen and see

Ask the children to imagine the next part of the story: the rain stopped, but when Noah looked out he saw nothing but water. Noah had no idea where land would appear so he sent out a raven, a big bird with strong wings. It never came back. Then Noah sent out a dove. It came back, but the second time it went out, it came back with a leaf in its beak. It had found a tree! A week later, the dove flew off and didn't come back at all. The flood had gone down. The ark settled on dry ground.

Write 'God gave them a safe place to rest' on the third stone or sheet of paper and ask another child to hold it up to read. Then ask the child to look after it.

Everyone left the ark. Noah thanked and praised God. God gave a promise to Noah. He would never again flood the earth like this, and there would be the seasons and day and night. As a sign of his promise, God put a rainbow in the sky.

Write 'God made a promise' on the fourth stone or sheet of paper and ask another child to hold it up to say together. Then ask the child to look after it.

4 Build

Tell the children that when Noah said 'thanks' to God, he did it in a special way. He built a pile of stones (an altar), and cooked some meat on it. The smoke and smell from the meat was his 'thank you' prayer to God. Ask a child to collect the stones or sheets of paper and arrange them in a group (an altar). (If you have more stones, encourage each child to add one.) Think of the things Noah thanked God for. Say that we can thank him for these things too.

5 Pray

Ask each child to draw and cut out a flame shape while they think about what they want to say to God. They can write or draw on their flame, or they can just talk to God. Put the flames on the 'altar' to show that God is listening to their prayers.

Tip for Leaders: The most important activity is an *Into the Bible* activity. If you meet for 20 minutes or less you will probably only need this.

Bible story with building

Activity time: 15–20 minutes

Aim: to thank God for providing for those who trust and obey him

You will need: chairs and boxes, or play people and building toys such as plastic bricks

1 Story introduction

Ask the children what the world was like when God first made it (*perfect, beautiful*). Encourage them to say what people did to mess it up.

Read Genesis 6:5–10. Say that people went on doing things their way and hurting each other. God’s beautiful world had been well and truly spoiled, and God had to do something drastic about it. Ask the children if they know what God decided to do (*send a flood to wipe out everything*). Say that the Bible says Noah loved God and obeyed him, so God promised to keep him and his family safe. Read Genesis 6:14, 17–22. Ask them what God told Noah to do and whether he did it.

2 Build the ark

Together, build the chairs and boxes into an ark. Make a long thin boat shape and get the children to sit inside it as you continue the story. If you don’t have much room, you could use building bricks and put play people inside the ark. See if the children know what God told Noah to take into the ark. They may wish to act out some of these parts, or add some of the toys.

Say that Noah and his family went into the ark the day it started raining. The rain caused a flood that wiped out everyone and everything. But God kept Noah and his family safe because Noah loved God and obeyed him. The flood waters stayed around for ages! It took over a year for the ground to get dry again. When it did, Noah and his family and all the animals and birds came out of the ark. They were all a year older than when they’d gone in!

Encourage the children to come out of your ‘ark’ or to take the play people out. Ask them what they think was the first thing that Noah did when he came out of the ark. Give the children time to come up with lots of suggestions, then read Genesis 8:20.

3 Build an altar

Invite the children to dismantle your ‘ark’ and turn it into an altar. Explain that in Noah’s time, people offered God sacrifices on altars. Noah had taken some animals into the ark especially for this so he used them in his offering to say thank you to God for keeping his family safe. Invite the children to sit around the ‘altar’ as you read Genesis 9:8–17. Encourage them to listen hard to find out what God’s next promise to Noah was and what the sign of that promise was. If your group finds it hard to sit still and listen, see if they can build silently and listen to you reading at the same time.

4 Drawing prayer

Ask the children each to think of something they would like to say thank you to God for. If you are using boxes and chairs, give out felt-tip pens and encourage them to draw and write their prayer on the boxes. If you are using toys, give out paper to write and draw on. When they have drawn their prayers, encourage them to say what they have drawn and to thank God for it.

More on this theme

If you want to do a short series with your group, other sessions that work well with this one are:

Session 1 Bad fruit, Genesis 2,3

Session 2 Our choice, Genesis 4:1–16

Session 3 Flood warning, Genesis 6:1 – 8:19

Living the life - options to help live God's way...

Bubble prayer

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to remember and praise God that he provides for those who trust and obey him

You will need: pots of bubble mixture

- 1 Have a few minutes so everyone can enjoy blowing bubbles. Who can make the biggest, the longest lasting or the bubble that floats the furthest? Be careful; bubble liquid makes the floor slippery.
- 2 Ask the children to stop and look carefully at their bubbles. Can they see any colours? Someone may discover that they show rainbow colours. If not, point it out. Bubbles can remind us of the promise God made to Noah.
- 3 Ask the children to think of things they can praise God for: he provides for us; we can trust him to keep his promises; for lovely colours.
- 4 Blow bubbles together again, allowing everyone to talk to God in their own way.

Experiment and pray

Activity time: 10–20 minutes

Aim: to thank God for his promises and that we can trust and obey him

You will need: torches, prisms or glasses of water, pens in rainbow colours, string, spinner from page 33

- 1 Say again that a rainbow reminds us of God's promise. You are going to explore rainbows together, and so remember God's promise.
- 2 Show how shining a torch through a prism or glass of water makes a rainbow.
- 3 Follow the instructions on page 33 and make the spinner, colouring it as indicated. Show how the colours seem to disappear when the spinner is twisting fast.
- 4 Challenge the children to make their own spinners, or explore making rainbows through the prisms.
- 5 Finish by thanking God for beautiful rainbows and that we can always trust him.

Ready to use activity

Splash!

Activity time: 10–15 minutes

Aim: to thank God that we can trust and obey him

You will need: copies of the *Splash!* sheet from page 34, thread (optional)

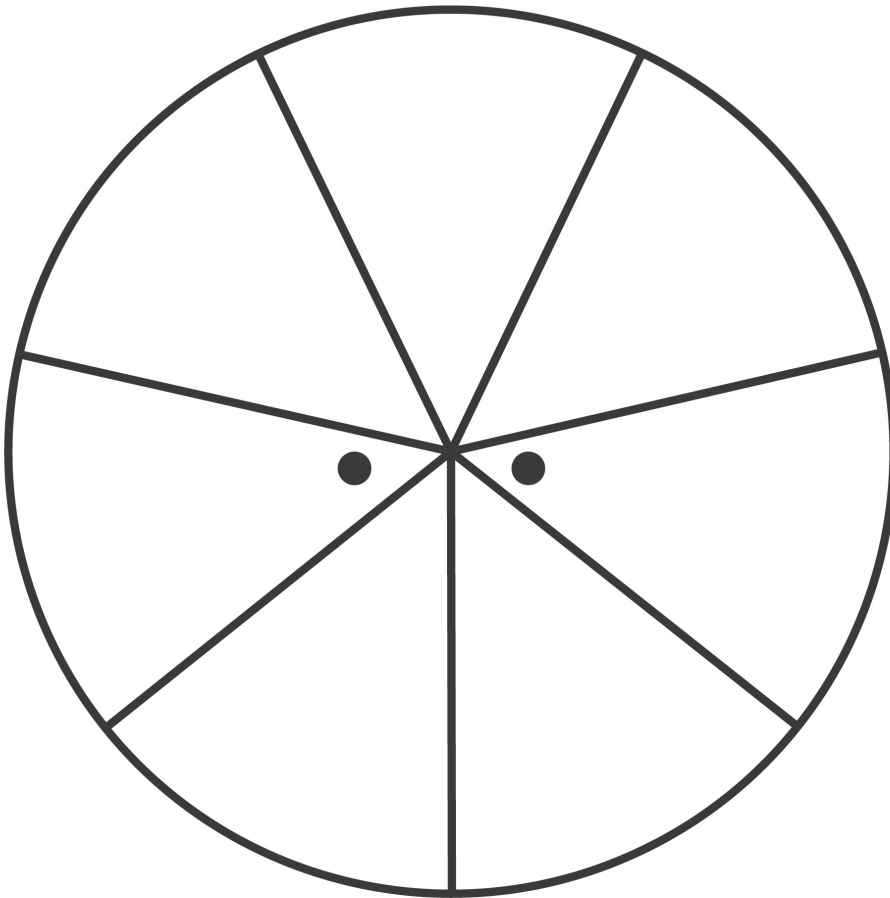
- 1 Give each child a copy of the *Splash!* sheet from page 34 and look at it together. Read the words on the rainbows. Discuss what 'easy times' (on the sun) might be, and what 'hard times' (on the rain cloud) might mean. Pray together, asking for God's help to remember his promises and to trust and obey him at all times.
- 2 Help the children to make the mobiles. If you do not have any thread, help the children to stick the cloud and the sun on to the very ends of the rainbow.
- 3 Hold the finished rainbows as everyone says together: 'Thank you, God, that we can trust you.' Suggest that the children display their rainbows at home to remind them to keep thanking God.

Extra ideas for the session, and beyond...

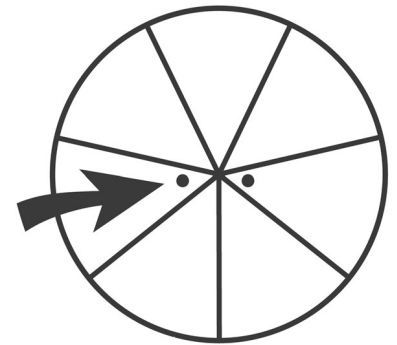
Collect items for the children to build their own mini ark and altar. You could use recycling items (cardboard boxes and plastic containers), or toy construction materials. Use their models as a focus as you tell the story. You could also get the children to write their own prayers of thanks to God on them.

Have a rainbow quiz about the story: each team has a rainbow outline and colours in one band of the rainbow each time they get a question right.

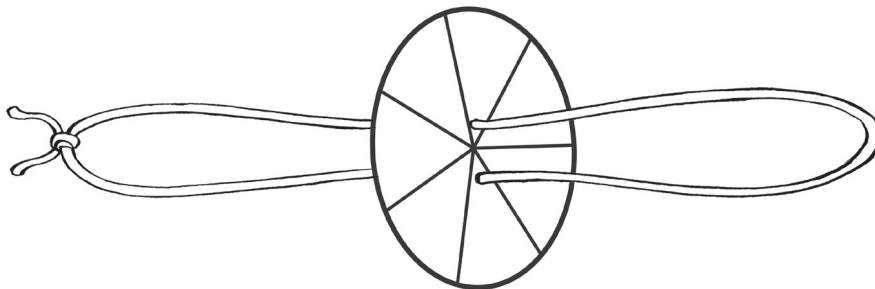
Give the children the wordsearch from page 35.



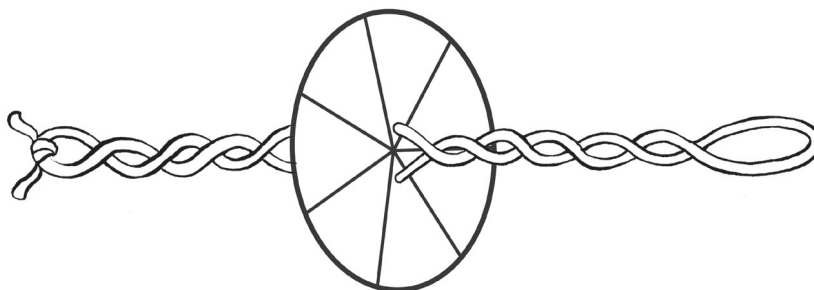
- 1 Glue the disc on to thin card and cut it out. Colour in each section in this order: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet.



- 2 Make two holes where shown.



- 3 Thread about 70 cm of string through one hole and back through the other. Tie the ends together. Push the disc to the centre of the loop of string.



- 4 Hold the ends of the loop and swing the disc around several times until the string is twisted. Pull and release the ends gently to make the disc spin. Watch how the colours seem to disappear.

Make your
rainbow mobile.

I can always trust God...
I can always trust God...

...in
easy
times

I can always trust God...

...in
easy
times

...in
hard
times

Hang
your rainbow mobile
where you will see it
every day.

I can remember God's promises...
...in
hard times

f	l	o	o	d	a	l	p	w	p
m	a	n	i	m	a	l	s	a	r
o	d	r	y	g	g	f	t	t	o
u	n	a	q	n	o	a	h	e	m
n	j	i	y	h	d	a	y	r	i
t	a	n	s	l	p	r	e	r	s
a	l	k	n	i	g	h	t	a	e
i	t	h	a	n	k	s	d	v	n
n	a	f	a	e	j	i	l	e	z
k	r	a	i	n	b	o	w	n	f

Can you find the following words in the wordsearch?

altar

animals

day

dry

flood

god

mountain

night

noah

promise

rain

raven

rainbow

thanks

water