

# Noah

Genesis 6:9-9:17



# Preparation

# Noah

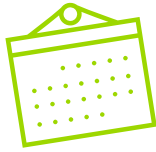
## 1. INTRODUCTION TO THIS SUNDAY

This is the fifth in a block of six Sundays about the beginning of the world. This block, we are reading one psalm and six stories from the book of Genesis: about the creation of heaven and earth and all that lives in them, about the first people, starting off in the Garden of Eden and then having to make a living outside of it, about Noah and the flood, and about the tower of Babylon.

This Sunday focuses on parts of Genesis 6:9-9:17: Noah, his family and lots of animals are saved from the flood. After the flood, God gives a sign of his promise of faithfulness to humanity: the rainbow.

With the **4-8 year-olds**, we'll focus on God's promise, shown by the sign of the rainbow.

With the **8-12 year-olds**, we'll focus on Noah, his family and the animals waiting for a sign that the earth is dry again.



## 2. CONTEXT OF THE BIBLE PASSAGE

After Cain and Abel's story, there is a list of Adam's descendants. This list ends in Noah and his family. From Genesis 6 on, there is a long story about them.

The people living on earth at that time were doing evil. They were no longer doing what God wanted them to do. Only Noah was different. Genesis 6:9-10 says, "Noah had no faults and was the only good man of his time. He lived in fellowship with God." God decides to end life on earth. Only Noah and his family get to live.

After the story about Noah and the flood, there is another story about Noah. In that story, Noah is drunk. We can also read about Noah's descendants there. After that, there is the story of the tower of Babylon. That is our next story in the Bible Basics series.

In the New Testament, Noah is listed as one of Jesus' ancestors (Matthew 24:36-37). And a number of times, it mentions how the Son of Man will come unexpectedly, just like the flood did (for example in Matthew 24:36-37).

The stories from Genesis 1-11 are like the stories told by Israel's neighboring peoples. The most famous story is the Epic of Gilgamesh from Mesopotamia. In this collection of stories, there is also a tale of a major flood. In it, the gods let the water rise because people are making so much noise



and the gods want to sleep. In this story, too, someone survives because he makes a large boat. But there is a major difference: in the Bible book of Genesis, God isn't causing a flood because people are too noisy, but because they're not living according to his will.

## 3. EXPLANATION OF THE BIBLE PASSAGE

God regrets making people and animals, because everything they do is evil. So God wants to remove all people from the earth, except Noah, who is living in fellowship with God. So God tells Noah to build a boat: the ark. The Hebrew word for it (*tebah*) is used for two objects in the Bible: the enormous wooden "box" Noah builds and the wicker basket which is used to save Moses. It's not the same word that is used for the ark of the covenant.

In addition to Noah and his wife and their three sons with their wives, the boat should also be large enough to house lots of animals: one male and one female of every species (Genesis 6:20). Genesis 7:2 says that of each clean species of animal, there should be seven pairs on the boat, and of all the unclean animals, only one.

In forty days, the earth is flooded, leaving everything covered with water for 150 days. After that, the water begins to retreat. Noah then first sends out a raven, but it returns unsuccessfully. Then he sends out a dove, which also returns. After seven days, he sends out another dove, which returns with an olive branch. The fourth time, the dove does not return. Then Noah knows that he, his family and all the animals can safely leave the ark.

The first thing Noah then does, is build an altar and make a sacrifice to God. God then promises to humanity that he will never again send another flood that destroys the whole earth. And he promises the same to the animals, too (Genesis 9:10). As a sign of his promise, a rainbow appears. Every time there is a rainbow, God will remember his promise.

In this story, God makes a covenant with all people and animals. In the Old Testament, God makes several covenants. For example when he promises many descendants and a country to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-19), and when he gives Moses two stone tablets with the ten commandments in the desert (Exodus 19:1-9 and 20:1-17), and when he promises David that he will always have descendants and that his kingdom will last forever (2 Samuel 7:11-16).



# Preparation

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## 4. FROM THE BIBLE

### 4-8 years

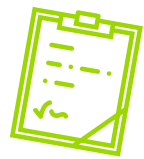
The younger children will focus on Genesis 9:16-17.

*“When the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between me and all living beings on earth. That is the sign of the promise which I am making to all living beings.”*

### 8-12 years

With the older children, we will focus on Genesis 8:11.

*The dove returned to him in the evening with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. So Noah knew that the water had gone down.*



## 5. WHAT WILL YOU NEED?

### 4-12 years

#### During the church service

- colored sweets (like Skittles or Smarties)
- a round, flat plate with a slightly raised edge
- warm water

### 4-8 years

#### All the Colors of the Rainbow

- balloons in the colors of the rainbow

Or:

- cards in the colors of the rainbow  
(several cards for each color)

#### Under the Rainbow

- the handout
- colored pencil

#### Wear That Rainbow!

For each child

- a white T-shirt
- an apron for painting in (or garbage bag or old shirt)
- a sponge

And also:

- child-friendly textile paints in the colors red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple
- old newspapers
- water

#### Rainbow Game

- three ropes, all equally long

### 8-12 years

#### It's Huge

- from the Bible: Genesis 6:14-16
- a tape measure

#### Bible passage

- a bible

#### Dry in the Water?

- a sheet of paper
- a glass
- a bucket or washtub filled with water

#### Who Waits Least?

For each child:

- seven green strips of paper

And also:

- three sheets of paper, one with an A on it, one with a B and once with a C
- sellotape

## Building blocks of the Sunday

# Noah

### During the Church Service



#### 6. CHILDREN'S MOMENT IN THE SERVICE

##### So Many Beautiful Colors!

You can use colored sweets to make your own beautiful rainbow.

*What do you need?*

- colored sweets (like Skittles or Smarties)
- a round, flat plate with a slightly raised edge
- warm water



##### Tips

- Give the children a bag of sweets to take home with them, so they can do this experiment at home. Put the sweets in a line along the edge of the plate. Make sure their colors alternate. Now carefully pour a bit of hot water onto the plate, so that all the sweets are now in the water. What happens next?
- If you've got a beamer, you can film and show what happens, so that everyone in church can clearly see what is happening.

### During the Children's Service



#### 7. TO START OFF

##### 4-8 years

##### All the Colors of the Rainbow

Do either one of these assignments and make a beautiful rainbow together.



##### Tips

- Set a time limit for how long the children can take to make their rainbow.

##### Rainbow 1

*What do you need?*

- balloons in the colors of the rainbow

Inflate the balloons and give a balloon to each of the children. Have them form a living rainbow. You could first do this standing up, then lying down. Can the children make a rainbow together?



##### Tip

If the children don't know the order of the colors? Have them check the illustration that goes with the Bible Story.

##### Rainbow 2

*What do you need?*

- cards in the colors of the rainbow (several cards for each color)

Beforehand, hide the rainbow-colored cards. Have the children find the cards, and sort them out by color. Can they make a rainbow with the cards?



##### Tip

If there aren't a lot of children, use only one card for each color.

##### 8-12 years

##### It's Huge!

God tells Noah to build a boat. How big should that boat be?

*What do you need?*

- from the Bible: Genesis 6:14-16
- a tape measure

Read the children Genesis 6:14-16. Then have them measure 15 feet. After this, have them walk that distance thirty times: that's how long the boat was! If you have a lot of time, you can do the same with the breadth and height of the boat.

## Building blocks of the Sunday

# Noah

### 8. PRAYER AT THE START OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE



Tip

Sit down in a circle for this prayer. You could light a candle.

Faithful God,  
Today, we'll hear a special story.  
It's about Noah and the animals on the boat.  
After the big flood, a rainbow appears with beautiful colors.  
The rainbow reminds us that you remember us.  
Thank you that you are good to us,  
and that you take care of the world.  
Amen.

### 9. BIBLE STORY

#### 4-8 years

Genesis 8:15-9:17

Tell the story to the children. While you talk or after reading the story, look at the picture together. Ask the children to look carefully and say what they see. You could also use the older children's fact file for more information.



#### What happened previously

God sees how people take wrong decisions and hurt each other. He decides to start over again with Noah and his family. Because Noah is God's friend. God tells Noah to build a boat. In that boat, Noah, his family and lots of animals will be safe from the flood. Together, they float on the water for many months ...

Finally! The boat's door can be opened. Noah gets out. So does his wife. His sons Shem, Ham and Japheth open all the cages. And off go the animals. They fly, run, crawl and jump out of the boat. And they disappear among the trees.

More than a year ago, Noah and his wife went aboard, along with all the animals. When the door was closed, it started raining. Very hard. For very long. After a while, the boat started to float. In the end, even the mountains were hidden beneath the water. The whole world was flooded.

And then the water finally stopped. Slowly, the water started to go down. It took so long! Noah became quite impatient. But now, at last, the earth is dry again. And green. Food is growing. The birds can nest in the trees again. The foxes can make holes again. The hares can run again. And Noah finally feels grass underneath his feet again, and he smells the first flowers. He could dance, he's so happy!

Noah builds an altar and makes a sacrifice. This way, he tells God, I am happy that you have taken such good care of me and my family. When it was raining, you looked after us.

And then, Noah hears God's voice. "Noah, this is a special day," God says. "It's a new beginning. I promise I will always take care of you and your family. You will have many children. All over the world, there will be people. I'll make sure that every year there will be a time to sow, and a time to gather in the harvest, to collect the food from the land.

For months, Noah lived on a boat. Now, he would love to eat some fresh bread. Tomorrow, I'll sow some wheat, he thinks. And I'll plant grape seeds. Then in the end, we'll have something nice to eat.

"People are special", God continues. "They are like me. I want you to take good care of each other. Don't hurt each other. Don't kill each other. I want you to love each other." "But perhaps things will go wrong again", Noah says to God. "Perhaps people will do wrong things again. Things you don't like."

"I know", God says. "But you don't have to be afraid.



# Building blocks of the Sunday

# Noah

There will never be a flood like this again. I promise. To you and to all the tame and wild animals. To the birds and all the animals that were on the boat.

And I'll give you a special sign so that you'll be sure. I'll put an arch in the sky. A rainbow, with all the colors I created. When there is a lot of rain and you see the rainbow, you'll know I am thinking about you. That I'm thinking about my promise to you: there will never be a flood like this again. I will take care of you and all the animals. Always."

## 8-12 years

Below, you'll find the Bible passage. It's from these parts of Noah's story:

- Genesis 6:9-22: Noah is a good man. Noah has to build a boat.
- Genesis 7:6-12: There is a flood.
- **Genesis 8:1-14: God remembers Noah, Noah sends out a raven and a dove.**
- Genesis 9:8-17: God makes a promise to the people, God gives a sign of his promise.

If it's too much to read all of it, leave out some sections and summarize them so that the storyline can still be understood. The section "Noah sends out a raven and a dove" (Genesis 8:6-14) is important; it's the cornerstone for the rest of this Sunday's program. You could just stick to Genesis 8:1-14.

## Noah

This is the story of Noah. He had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Noah had no faults and was the only good man of his time. He lived in fellowship with God, but everyone else was evil in God's sight, and violence had spread everywhere. God looked at the world and saw that it was evil, for the people were all living evil lives. God said to Noah, "I have decided to put an end to all people. I will destroy them completely, because the world is full of their violent deeds. Build a boat for yourself out of good timber; make rooms in it and cover it with tar inside and out. Make it 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. Make a roof for the boat and leave a space of 18 inches between the roof and the sides. Build it with three decks and put a door in the side. I am going to send a flood on the earth to destroy every living being. Everything on the earth will die, but I will make a covenant with you. Go into the boat with your wife, your sons, and their wives. Take into the boat with you a male and a female of every kind of animal and of every kind of bird, in order to keep them alive. Take along all kinds of food for you and for them." Noah did everything that God commanded.

## The Flood

Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came on the earth. He and his wife, and his sons and their wives,

went into the boat to escape the flood. A male and a female of every kind of animal and bird, whether ritually clean or unclean, went into the boat with Noah, as God had commanded. Seven days later the flood came. When Noah was six hundred years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month all the outlets of the vast body of water beneath the earth burst open, all the floodgates of the sky were opened, and rain fell on the earth for forty days and nights.

## The End of the Flood

God had not forgotten Noah and all the animals with him in the boat; he caused a wind to blow, and the water started going down. The outlets of the water beneath the earth and the floodgates of the sky were closed. The rain stopped, and the water gradually went down for 150 days. On the seventeenth day of the seventh month the boat came to rest on a mountain in the Ararat range. The water kept going down, and on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains appeared. After forty days Noah opened a window and sent out a raven. It did not come back, but kept flying around until the water was completely gone. Meanwhile, Noah sent out a dove to see if the water had gone down, but since the water still covered all the land, the dove did not find a place to light. It flew back to the boat, and Noah reached out and took it in. He waited another seven days and sent out the dove again. It returned to him in the evening with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. So Noah knew that the water had gone down. Then he waited another seven days and sent out the dove once more; this time it did not come back. When Noah was 601 years old, on the first day of the first month, the water was gone. Noah removed the covering of the boat, looked around, and saw that the ground was getting dry. By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry.

## God's Covenant With Noah

God said to Noah and his sons, "I am now making my covenant with you and with your descendants, and with all living beings—all birds and all animals—everything that came out of the boat with you. With these words I make my covenant with you: I promise that never again will all living beings be destroyed by a flood; never again will a flood destroy the earth. As a sign of this everlasting covenant which I am making with you and with all living beings, I am putting my bow in the clouds. It will be the sign of my covenant with the world. Whenever I cover the sky with clouds and the rainbow appears, I will remember my promise to you and to all the animals that a flood will never again destroy all living beings. When the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between me and all living beings on earth. That is the sign of the promise which I am making to all living beings."

# Noah

### 10. FACT FILE



#### Noah and His Family

The name Noah means: rest.

Noah has three sons. He names them Shem, Ham and Japheth. The name Shem means: “name” or “important”. Shem is an ancestor of Abraham’s. The name Ham means: “heat”. The name “Japheth” means: “great” or “many”. The reason for that name is that his descendants will live in a large, spread-out area. We don’t know what Noah’s wife or daughters-in-law were called.

#### Peace Dove

A dove with a green branch in its beak is a symbol of peace. And it comes from this story. Before, Noah sent out a raven and a dove, but they could not find a dry spot on the earth. Then he sends out another dove, and it returns with an olive leaf in its beak. Then Noah knows that there are branches above the water. The earth is ready for new life!

### 11. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Below, there are two kinds of questions you can discuss: “knowledge questions” and “thinking questions”. You can look up the answers to the knowledge questions, for example in the story. But the thinking questions can keep your group thinking. There are no wrong answers in those!

#### 4-8 years

- Have you ever been on a boat? What kind of boat? Did you enjoy it?
- Who joins Noah on his boat?
- When the earth is dry again and Noah gets out of the boat, he thanks God. God promises something to Noah and all the animals. What is the promise God makes?
- Have you ever seen a rainbow?
- What does God think about when he sees a rainbow? What do you think of the promise God has made?

#### 8-12 years

- How long does Noah have to wait until he can leave the boat? (Tip: look in the Bible passage how long the rain lasts and how long it takes for the water to go down.)
- What do you think they did all those months on the boat?
- Have you ever had to wait for something for a very long time? Why do you think waiting is so hard?
- How did Noah know that the earth was dry again?
- If you could meet Noah, what would you ask him?

### 12. DOING



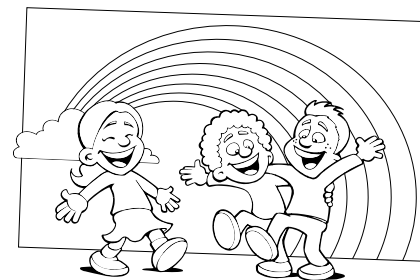
#### 4-8 years

##### Under the Rainbow

The rainbow connects God to each other. Have the children color the picture. Under the rainbow, they can then draw the people and animals God’s promise is for.

*What do you need?*

- the handout
- colored pencils



##### Wear That Rainbow!

With your own T-shirt in the colors of the rainbow, the children can take the rainbow along wherever they go.

*What do you need?*

- For each child:
- a white T-shirt
  - an apron for painting in (or garbage bag or old shirt)
  - a sponge

And also:

- child-friendly textile paints in the colors red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple
- old newspapers
- water

Have the children wear a painting apron. Put a newspaper in each T-shirt so that the paint doesn’t seep through to the other side. Divide each T-shirt into six strips. Using a sponge, the children stamp each strip one color. Stamping uses less paint, so the T-shirt dries faster. This way, the children are making their own rainbow T-shirts.



#### Tips

- If you have little time, make a rainbow handkerchief instead of a T-shirt.
- You could also use finger-paint, but your T-shirt will not be washable. Or you could use textile markers.

# Building blocks of the Sunday

## Noah

### Rainbow Game

Together, play this colorful game!

*What do you need?*

- three ropes, all equally long

Place the three ropes on the ground, parallel to each other. Leave at least 1.5 meters (5 ft) between the ropes. You now have four compartments.

Each compartment is given one color of the rainbow.

Compartment 1 (left, up to the first rope) is red. Compartment 2 (the space between the first and the second rope) is yellow. Compartment 3 (between rope 2 and 3) is green.

Compartment 4 (the final compartment) is blue.

Shout the word “rainbow” and a color. So for example, “Rainbow blue!” As quickly as possible, the children now run to the blue compartment.

If a child is in the wrong compartment, he or she is out. The child who gets to the compartment last, is also out. Which child stays in the game longest?



### Tip for young children

Make the game easier by placing an object, balloon or sheet of paper in the right color in each compartment.

### 8-12 years

#### Dry in the Water?

The earth had been wet for a long time because of all of the water. Fortunately, after a long time, the earth dried up. Noah could finally get out of the boat. He couldn't do so before, because everything you put into water gets wet. Or does it?

*What do you need?*

- a sheet of paper
  - a glass
  - a bucket or washtub filled with water
- 
- Make a ball out of the paper.
  - Push the ball to the bottom of the glass.
  - Hold the glass upside down and push it under water.
  - Pull the glass out of the water and take the paper out of the glass.
  - Try out how the paper feels!

### Who Waits Least?

In this quiz, if you wait least, you win most green “branches” and you win the game.

The children don't have to know the story well, they don't have to have read all chapters of the story. They could also guess the answers.

*What do you need?*

For each child:

- seven green strips of paper

And also:

- three sheets of paper, one with an A on it, one with a B and once with a C
  - sellotape
  - the quiz questions on the next page
- 
- Hang three sheets of paper in the room. Make sure there's some space in between.
  - Give all of the children seven green strips of paper. Tell them these are green leaves or branches, like the olive leaf the dove brings to Noah when the earth is dry again.
  - Ask the first quiz question and give the children the three possible answers.
  - The children choose one of the answers, and stand near the sheet with that answer's letter on it.
  - Any children who've chosen the wrong answer have to wait a turn and skip a question. They also hand back one of the green strips.
  - Ask all questions.
  - The children who had to wait least, are the winners. They answered most questions, and have most green strips left.



### Tip

If you have time, cut the strips into a branch or leaf shape.



# Building blocks of the Sunday

# Noah

## Quiz questions:

- 1 How long was Noah's boat? (Genesis 6:15)**
  - 50 meters (100 feet)
  - 100 meters (250 feet)
  - 150 meters (450 feet)
- 2 How many floors were there on Noah's boat? (Genesis 6:16)**
  - none
  - 2 floors
  - 3 floors
- 3 How old was Noah when the big flood took place? (Genesis 7:6)**
  - 500 years
  - 600 years
  - 700 years
- 4 How many people were on the boat? (Genesis 7:13)**
  - 7 people
  - 8 people
  - 10 people
- 5 How many days did it rain? (Genesis 7:12)**
  - 25 days and nights
  - 35 days and nights
  - 40 days and nights
- 6 How many feet above the tops of the mountains was the water? (Genesis 7:20)**
  - 7 meters (25 feet)
  - 11 meters (40 feet)
  - 14 meters (50 feet)
- 7 All in all, how long was the earth covered in water? (Genesis 7:24)**
  - 150 days
  - 175 days
  - 200 days
- 8 How many times did Noah send out a bird to see whether the earth was dry? (Genesis 8:7-12)**
  - 2 times
  - 4 times
  - 7 times

## Answers:

The right answers are underlined.

On the handout, the children can discover how they can calculate whether they have the right answers.

## 13. BLESSING

In the Bible, there is a blessing for all people. It is a wish that we often hear at the end of a church service. And we say this blessing to each other:



**“May the Lord bless you and take care of you; May the Lord be kind and gracious to you; May the Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.”**

## Numbers 6:24-26



### Tips

- Stand in a circle and hold hands.
- Let three children say one sentence each, or say the entire blessing together.

## COPYRIGHT

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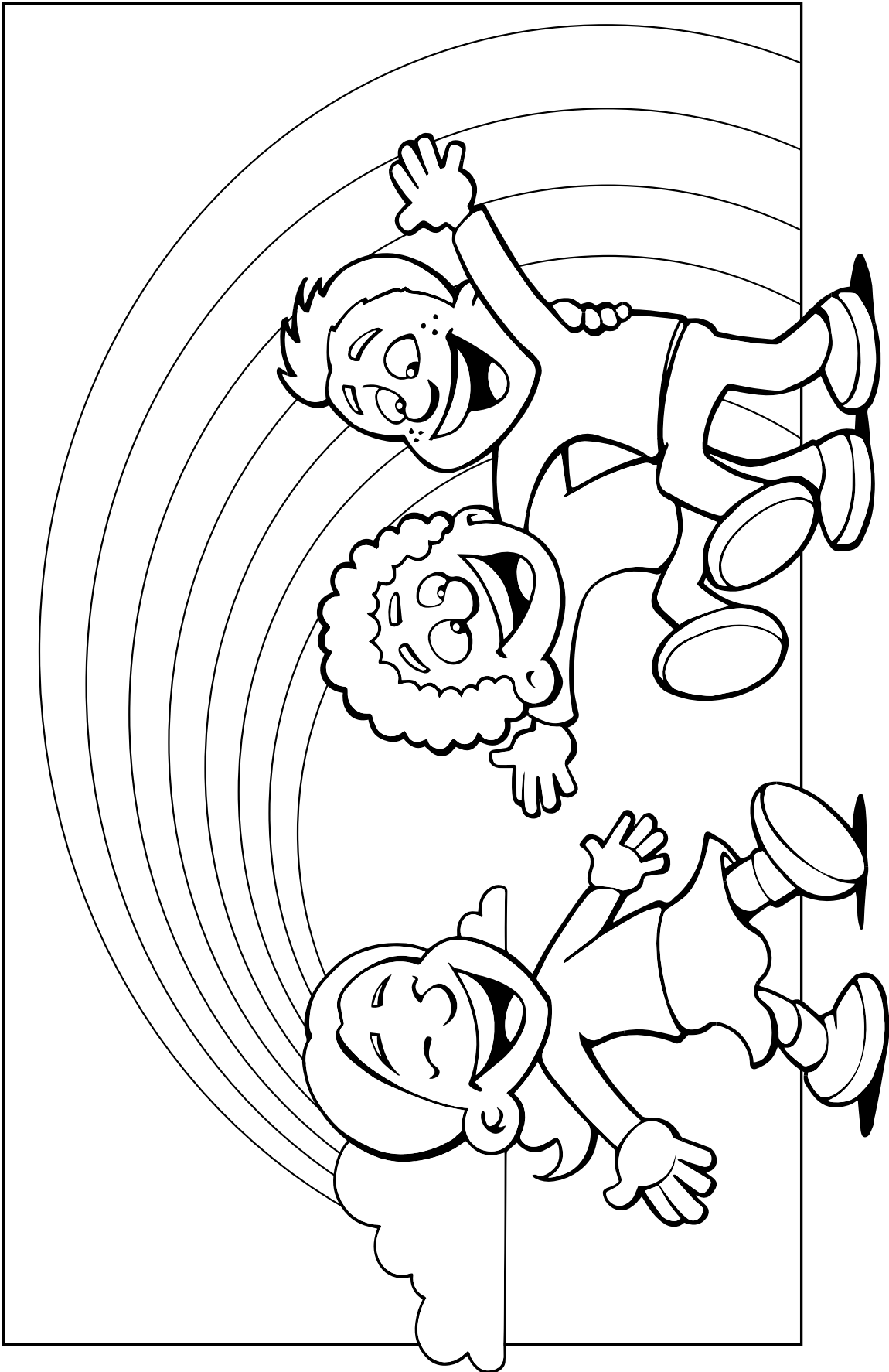


God says, “When the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between me and all living beings on earth. That is the sign of the promise which I am making to all living beings.”

Genesis 9:16-17

Handout (4-8 years)

# Noah



# Handout (8-12 years)

## Noah

The dove returned to him in the evening with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. So Noah knew that the water had gone down.

### Genesis 8:11

#### NOAH AND HIS FAMILY

The name Noah means: rest. Noah has three sons. He names them Shem, Ham and Japheth. The name Shem means: "name" or "important". Shem is an ancestor of Abraham's. The name Ham means: "heat". The name "Japheth" means: "great" or "many". The reason for that name is that his descendants will live in a large, spread-out area. We don't know what Noah's wife or daughters-in-law were called.



#### PEACE DOVE

A dove with a green branch in its beak is a symbol of peace. And it comes from this story. Noah has sent out a raven and a dove before, but they cannot find a dry spot on the earth. Then he sends out another dove, and it returns with an olive leaf in its beak. Then Noah knows that there are branches above the water. The earth is ready for new life!



#### DRY IN THE WATER?

The earth had been wet for a long time because of all of the water. Fortunately, after a long time, the earth dried up. Noah could finally get out of the boat. He couldn't do so before, because everything you put into water gets wet. Or does it?



#### *What do you need?*

- a sheet of paper
- a glass
- a bucket or washtub filled with water
  
- Make a ball out of the paper.
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# Handout (8-12 years)

## Noah

### WHO WAITS LEAST?

In this quiz, if you wait least, you win most green “branches” and you win the game



You don't have to know the story well, you don't have to have read all chapters of the story. You could also guess the answers. And with each question, you'll find the place in the Bible where you can find the answer.

*This is how you can check whether you've got all the answers right:*

If you add up all the right answers, you get a number with three digits. Add up those three digits. Then add up the two digits you now get. If you've answered all the questions correctly, the answer to this sum is the same as the number of questions in the quiz.

### Quiz questions:

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