

# Topic Title: Christianity – People of God

Year 3 Summer 2



## Background for Teachers:

Taken from *Understanding Christianity*.

- This unit focuses on stories from the book of Genesis, concentrating on Noah and Abraham.
- These biblical characters and stories are important in other religions too. This unit puts a Christian emphasis on the interpretation of the stories because they are being taught in the context of Christianity.
- The 'Big Story' of the Bible sees many of God's actions as showing people how to live and have a good relationship with him. Through these stories in Genesis, Christians see a model of God having a relationship with people. They can use them to gain insights about how God intends people to live, which can guide Christians today who want a close relationship with God.
- There is an emphasis on promises and a covenant between God and his people in the Old Testament. God makes covenants with his people on a number of occasions, besides those with Noah and Abraham. The covenants show people correct beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that are appropriate for being in a relationship with God, but they also show what they can expect from God.
- For Christians, Abraham is a hero of faith. He trusts in and obeys God, even though God asks him to perform outrageously difficult actions, surrounded by tribes and people who did not hold the same beliefs. God too is shown to be faithful to Abraham and his descendants.
- The Salvation Army is just one example of ways in which Christians today shape their lives to follow God and be people of God.

## Previously On ... (Links to Prior Learning):

Show an image of Noah's Ark. What do the children already know about the story? About the link between the story and the idea of a promise? How does the story of Noah's Ark influence the way Christians live today?

## Enquiry Question:

What is it like to follow God?

## Disciplinary Focus:

Theology

## Big Questions:

- Why do Christians still read the story of Noah's Ark today?
- What qualities did Noah have that made God choose him?
- Why does God give people jobs to do and rules to follow at the end of some Bible stories?
- What was God's covenant with Noah?
- What do Christians learn about God from the story of Noah?
- What was it like for Noah and his family to follow God?
- Why did Abraham follow God's command to leave Haran?
- How does the story of Abraham and Sarah emphasise the idea that God keeps his promise?
- How do Salvation Army members trust God's promises?
- How are the promises made at a wedding ceremony like a covenant?

LEARNING OBJECTIVE		WHOLE CLASS INTRODUCTION / FOCUS	DIFFERENTIATED ACTIVITIES	PLENARY
Lesson 1	<b>LO:</b> to retell the story of Noah.	<p><b>Starter:</b> Look through some Bibles and Bible storybooks to find the Old and New Testaments. Introduce the idea of there being different books in the Bible – it is a collection of books. Introduce the division of book, chapter, verse. Choose some well-known stories (see Resources for some suggestions) and see if the children recognise any of them. Explain that the stories in the Old Testament happened many years before Jesus was born. They often focus on the friendship between the main characters and God. The New Testament introduced Jesus and his followers.</p> <p><b>Input:</b> Present the children with a situation: their Mum or Dad has told them to help build a yacht. The adult has instructions showing how to do this. The children must leave school and begin building immediately because their family needs to sail away on the yacht as soon as it is finished and will never return to their normal lives. Are the children happy to go and build the yacht? Would they like to sail away? What would they miss from their normal lives? Do they think this seems a sensible plan? How surprised are they by the adults behaviour?</p> <p>Tell the story of Noah from Genesis 6: 5-9:17. Use the children to help you to act out the retelling in large-scale, dramatic fashion. Everyone in the class should have a part. Why do the children think Christian and Jewish people still read it today? These will be initial thoughts to consider and come back to.</p>	<p><b>Task:</b> Children to list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The qualities Noah had that made God choose him.</li> <li>• The actions Noah carries out in obedience to God's commands.</li> </ul> <p>The children could record these using Resource Sheet 1 – the outline of a man underneath the outline of a rainbow.</p> <p>Further challenge: Noah doesn't actually speak (until 9:25). Why do the children think this is the case? What trust must Noah have had in God to continue with his actions? The children could respond to this as a GPC.</p>	<p><b>Plenary:</b> Remind the children how God gave Adam and Eve jobs to do in the creation story. Look at how God gives humans rules after the flood subsides. This shows that people have responsibility given by God – part of being the People of God is trying to live by God's commands.</p>

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Lesson 2	<p><b>LO:</b> to make clear links between promises in the story of Noah and the idea of covenant.</p>	<p><b>Starter:</b> Recap learning from last week - what rules does God give in the Noah story?</p> <p><b>Input:</b> Ask the children to define a 'pact' – what is a pact? Have they ever made one? Explain that when God gives rules in the story, he makes a covenant – a pact. God is not just giving humans rules to obey, but he also has a promise to keep. What was God's covenant with Noah?</p> <p>Hold a 'Quescussion' – the children are only able to ask questions about God in the story, not make any statements, at this stage. Show question stems on the board to scaffold higher-level questioning – who, what, when, where, why, how. Record some of the deeper, higher-level questions asked to return to later.</p> <p>Following the 'Quescussion', show the sentence starter, 'What I would like to say about God in the story is ...' and open the discussion up. The children might choose to introduce a new idea or respond to one of the questions. Remind them that the story says God sent the flood to bring good into the world and wipe out evil – and that after the flood, he promises to stick with people.</p>	<p><b>Task:</b> Children to write words and phrases that they would use to describe God inside a rainbow and choose at least three of these to justify, making a link to the story. <i>I think God ... because in the story of Noah ...</i></p> <p><b>Further Challenge:</b> What might it have been like for Noah and his family to follow God?</p>	<p><b>Plenary:</b> Why do Christian (and Jewish) people still read and remember this narrative? Talk about how even though people 'mess up', God keeps on forgiving.</p>

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Lesson 3	<p><b>LO:</b> to make clear links between the story of Abraham and the concept of faith.</p>	<p><b>Starter:</b> What words would the children use to describe Noah's relationship with God?</p> <p><b>Input:</b> Explain to the children that having learnt about Noah and his friendship with God, we are now going to learn about Abraham (Noah's descendant) and his relationship with God.</p> <p>Tell the children Genesis 12:1 – in child-friendly language. What was Abraham asked to leave behind? Where was he told to go? Think, pair, share – should Abraham do this? Why or why not? This could be explored in the form of a conscience alley. Follow this with the rest of the story until Genesis 12:9. Why do the children think Abraham followed God's command to leave Haran? Put this in the context of Abraham as a person of God. Abraham was following God's commands but also because of the promise God made – the covenant.</p>	<p><b>Task:</b> Children to work in pairs to create dictionary definitions for 'faith'. How can they tell from the story that Abraham had faith? What easier tasks could God have given Abraham to show that he had faith?</p> <p><b>Further Challenge:</b> Use Resource Sheet 3 – the story of how God promised a son to Abraham and Sarah. Children to read the story and fill in the speech bubbles to show the thoughts and reactions of the characters at different points. How does this story emphasise the idea that God keeps his promises?</p>	<p><b>Plenary:</b> Tell the end of the story. Explain that God keeps his promise and Sarah has Isaac. What might this show a believer about having faith and trusting in God's promises? For Abraham and Sarah, what is it like to follow God? This could be recorded as a GPC.</p>

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Lesson 4	<p><b>LO:</b> to understand how some Christians are inspired to have faith like Abraham and follow God.</p>	<p><b>Starter:</b> Create two lists based on prior learning – promises God makes to people in the Old Testament and actions he asks of People of God – see Resource Sheet 4.</p> <p><b>Input:</b> Introduce the objective and explain that some Christians are inspired to have faith like Abraham and follow God; for example, members of the Salvation Army. Introduce William Booth and briefly tell the story of how he founded the Christian Mission and then the Salvation Army – see Resources for support.</p> <p>Explain that showing God’s love is incredibly important to the Salvation Army because this is something that Jesus focused on in his teachings. Look at the Salvation Army website – pictures of their work and worship – and discuss what the children can see. How are the members showing love for other people or God? How are they trusting God’s promises?</p>	<p><b>Task:</b> Children to work in groups to research and find out a little more about the work of the Salvation Army, in the United Kingdom and internationally. They could either create a short oral presentation or PowerPoint presentation to share.</p> <p><b>Further Challenge:</b> Children to begin to think about the dedication of the Army members in their service and about why they carry out these tasks even though they require so much dedication.</p>	<p><b>Plenary:</b> First groups to share their presentations with the rest of the class.</p>

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Lesson 5	<p><b>LO:</b> to make links between promises in the story of Noah and promises that Christians make at a wedding ceremony.</p>	<p><b>Starter:</b> Show a list of people: for example, Brownies, doctors, policemen, parents at christenings ... what types of promises do they make? What do the children know about baptism and promises? What other people can they think of and what types of promises do they make?</p> <p><b>Input:</b> Watch a video showing a Christian wedding, or look at photographs. Use these to start a discussion on how promises are made at a wedding (recapping how pacts and promises link to the story of Noah) and how the Christian ceremony initiates a partnership between two people and God.</p> <p>Read through text of a simplified version of a wedding ceremony (see Resource Sheet 2) as a class. What promises are made at the ceremony? Made by whom?</p>	<p><b>Task:</b> Give children a list of promises made at a wedding ceremony and the people making them (including the congregation as witnesses and supporters of the couple). This list could have been created as a class during the whole-class introduction. Children to annotate or highlight the text with these promises. You might throw in some red herrings of promises that people might like to make but don't in a wedding ceremony (e.g. <i>'I will always buy you birthday presents'</i>).</p> <p><b>Further Challenge:</b> How might making these promises to each other and to God help a Christian in their married life? Children could respond to this as a GPC.</p>	<p><b>Plenary:</b> How are the promises made at a wedding ceremony like a covenant? Discuss how both parties make promises. Children could respond to this as a GPC.</p>