

Answer Key: The Seven Deadly Sins: Review and Understanding Activity

Genesis 3:1–6

The woman and man eat the fruit because they are *envious* of God's wisdom. They are *greedy*, because they want more despite the fact that God has already provided them with everything they need.

Genesis 4:1–8

Cain is *envious* of his brother Abel. Cain is also *wrathful* when he kills Abel. Also, *sloth* prevents Cain from listening to God's instructions in verses 6–7.

Genesis 11:1–9

The people of Babel are filled with *pride* because they think that a great city with a tall tower will make a name for its inhabitants.

Noah's Ark

Learning Objective: To explore the meaning of Noah's ark with your young child

Activity: Read the story of Noah and the ark in Genesis 7 through Genesis 9 out loud together. (It may be helpful to use a child-friendly Bible with illustrations for very young children.)

The story of Noah's ark is not the easiest story to share with a young child because of the mass destruction that happens as a consequence of the flood. An important point to emphasize in the telling of this story is that God is only allowing the completion of what humanity started. God is not the ultimate cause of the flood. Humanity's destructive sin is the cause of the flood. Like a loving parent, God patiently watches while we learn from our wrongdoing. In the process, God provides protection and care for anyone who will accept it. This understanding is essential to preserve the truth that God cares for humanity and

all of creation. God does not bring evil and destruction to creation; humanity does so when we stray from God's will. God's providential care is the main point of Noah's ark. This story is more about second chances and hope than it is about sin and death.

Noah's Ark: Review and Understanding Activities

(These activities are geared to younger children.)

Ask the following questions of your young child. Answers are provided. If your child has more questions, this is an excellent opportunity to continue faith sharing.

1. How many days and nights did it rain?

Answer: Forty days and nights.

2. How did Noah figure out that the water levels were dropping?

Answer: He sent out a dove three times until the dove did not return. The dove had found shelter on dry land.

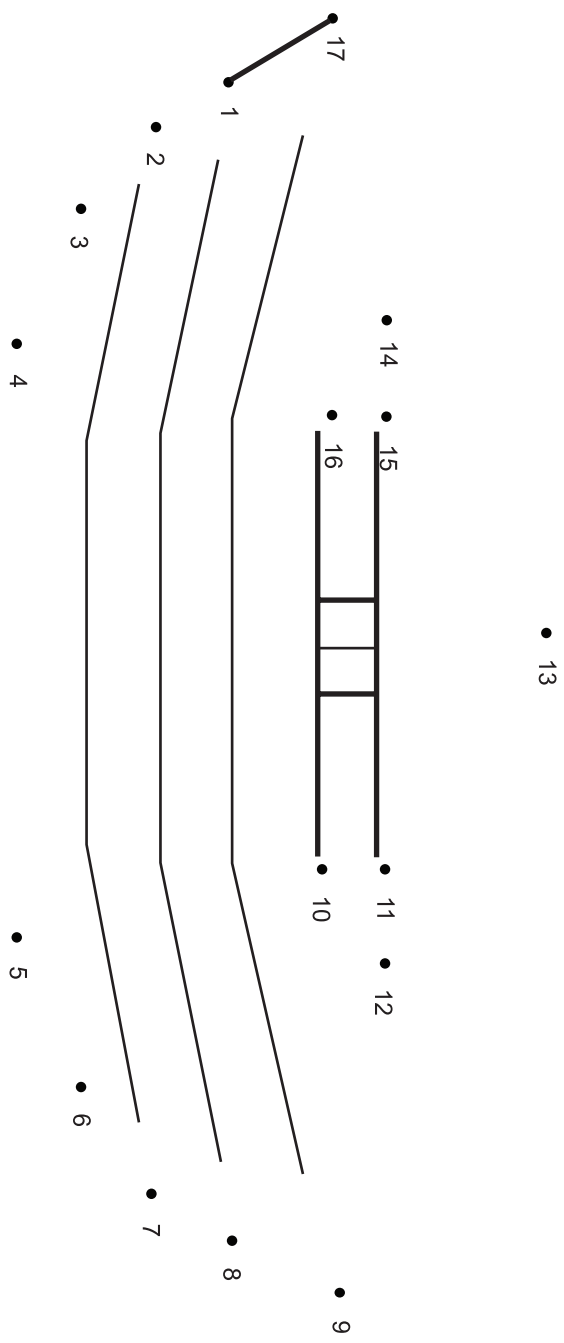
3. Why did God tell Noah to bring the animals on the ark?

Answer: God loves and cares for all creatures. Human beings cannot survive on earth without the other creatures God created to live with us.

4. What does the rainbow at the end of the story mean?

Answer: It's a sign that God will never again allow the world to be destroyed by a flood. When we see a rainbow today, it reminds us of God's loving care for us.

5. In the picture on the following page, connect the dots and add the sea. Then draw Noah, his family and the animals on the ark.



Creating a Covenant

Learning Objective: To create and honor a covenant as a way of understanding the meaning of the word *covenant* as it is used in the Bible

Activity: Read about God's covenant with Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 17:1–22.

A covenant is essentially an agreement between two people or two groups of people. A covenant can be an agreement between two basically equal people, such as two partners in a business; or a covenant can be between two unequal people, such as a boss and an employee. In the unequal situation, the boss usually is the one who initiates the covenant by searching for an employee. Another unequal covenant is the agreement parents have with children. Parents initiate the relationship by giving birth to the child, and parents generally are more in control of the terms of the agreement than the child is (at least parents like to think they are!).

The covenant God establishes with the people of God in the Bible is more like the second, unequal kind mentioned in the previous paragraph. We are clearly not God's equal, and those of us who realize that tend to be much happier in life than those of us who think we are God. God is the one in the Bible who initiated the covenant relationship by calling out to the people, first in a general way through Noah, then more specifically through Abraham and Sarah, and finally on a continual basis through their descendants.

All covenants have terms or expectations; for example, if an employee agrees to complete a job as outlined by an employer, then the employer will agree to pay the employee. Those are the general expectations of their covenant. In the Bible, God agrees to make a nation out of Abraham and Sarah's descendants—one that will be a blessing to all peoples. In response to God's goodness, the people agree to be faithful to God and follow God's commandments.

A Covenant: Review and Understanding Activities

1. Who initiates the covenant described in Genesis 17:1–22?
2. What are the terms or expectations of the covenant?
3. Abraham and Sarah go through a name change during this covenant. God was telling them that they are like new people now that they've come to know and love God. Discuss some ways we change names in our society.
4. How would it feel to go through a name change?
5. Use the form on p. 27 to create a covenant with your child that will help your child modify a particular behavioral pattern that may be disruptive to your family. You will also need to adjust your behavior as a way to help your child honor the covenant. You're in this together. Note: You may want to copy the form to use again in the future. A word or two of caution: Don't sign the covenant until both parties agree to all the terms or expectations. Be sure to enforce consequences, but do it in a spirit of forgiveness when either party breaks the covenant. God is merciful and parents should be as well.

Parent-Child Covenant

Child's responsibility: I agree to... _____

Parent's responsibility: I agree to... _____

Consequences for breaking the covenant:

Child

Parent

Rewards for honoring the covenant:

Child

Parent

Child's signature

Parent's signature

_____ Date

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Sarah, Abraham and Isaac

Learning Objective: To understand Abraham and Sarah as models for total faith

Activity: Read about the history of Abraham and Sarah, two of the seven patriarchs and matriarchs of our faith in Genesis 15 through Genesis 22.

(This activity is recommended for an older child because of its breadth and subject matter.)

From the very beginning of time, being close to God has been a challenge. Faith does not make life easy; it makes life meaningful. Abraham's first experience of God was the challenge to leave his homeland and trust that he and his family would find a good place to live. Abraham and Sarah faced many challenges, but none would be as difficult as the challenge to offer their own son Isaac as a sacrifice to God. They believed that Isaac was the son of God's promise—the promise that they would have descendants numbering like the stars. Through every challenge, God had been with them, so when God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham knew that God would see him through this challenge.

The first eleven chapters of Genesis were about God's creation and how humanity brought sin into the world. However, in Genesis 12 the saga of Abraham and Sarah and their response to God's invitation to participate in the process of redeeming the world from sin begins. Abraham and Sarah are the first historical persons in the Bible to recognize the one true God. This is why they are called the *father* (patriarch) and *mother* (matriarch) of our faith. (See the Family Tree on p. 30.)