

Growing Point

Garden lessons in the Bible

Week 7: Grounding the Ark – New Beginnings & Promises

When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.

- Genesis 9: 16 NRSV

Once Noah built the ark and got two of every animal on board, it started to rain. It rained for 40 days and 40 nights, and during this time the rain flooded the entire earth. The water was cleansing the earth and offering it a new beginning. When the rain finally stopped, the sun shined, bathing the earth in light.

Eventually, the sun evaporated enough water so that there was a mountain top that was close to the water surface, but it was still under water. Noah's Ark got stuck on this mountain top so it no longer floated freely. Noah knew that soon they would be able to get off the Ark again because the light would continue to evaporate the water and re-expose the soil so that plants could grow and land dwelling living things could once again inhabit the earth.

Noah sent out a dove to see if plants were growing yet. If no plants were growing, Noah knew the earth was not ready yet to support life. But if the dove brought back a growing thing, Noah knew the creatures could safely leave the Ark. Once the land was no longer under water, the light made the plants grow. The dove brought back an olive branch and Noah knew the time had come to leave the Ark.

Next, the light displayed a rainbow in the sky. This rainbow reminds us that God is Light. The Light divides into its components to make a rainbow. The Light makes plants grow. And the Light is always with us and ready to evaporate the cleansing waters and offer us a new beginning whenever we need it.

Soul Water

Nurturing your soul through prayer

Week 7: Grounding the Ark – New Beginnings & Promises

Dear God of Light,

As you promised, you are always with me.

I see you in rainbows.

I see you in all growing things.

I see you in the plants in my garden that are all the colors of the rainbow – tomatoes, pumpkins, wax beans, zucchini, eggplants and more.

Thank you for your light and

Thank you for all the beautiful colors in my garden that make my heart smile.

Amen

Ideas

- Keep this prayer on your dinner table and say together before you eat this week.
- Use this prayer in conjunction with bedtime prayers.
- If you have a garden at home, share this prayer before you work in your garden together.
- Write your own prayers about promises and new beginnings.

Earth Explorations

Nurturing Connections to the Soil

Week 7: Grounding the Ark – New Beginnings & Promises

Rainbows and Prisms

Regular light, or white light, actually contains all colors of light. Each color of light vibrates at a different frequency. To understand vibrating at different frequencies, have two people hold a rope, one at each end. Now experiment with moving your hand back and forth or up and down at different speeds. What happens to the rope? Did you notice that the faster you shake your hand the more up and down curves there are on the rope? Different colors of light are like shaking your hand at different speeds. Each speed (or frequency) creates its own pattern that we see as a different color.

When light goes through glass instead of going through air, it is a bit like walking through water instead of on land. If you use the same amount of energy you will walk more slowly in the water than on land. And the deeper the water you walk in, the slower you will go. Think about several people starting out in a line, with each standing in progressively deeper water. If they all walk for the same length of time, they will actually travel different distances. Something similar happens when light goes through glass. The glass affects each color of light a little differently, so they each come out the other side in a slightly different place, thus creating a rainbow.

For fun activities about rainbows and prisms:

http://www.opticalres.com/kidoptx_f.html

<http://www.creativekidsathome.com/science/light.html>

<http://eo.ucar.edu/rainbows>

<http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngexplorer/0604/quickflicks>

Photosynthesis

Plants are amazing things. They have the incredible ability to convert light from the sun into food that they can use to live and grow. Photo means light and synthesis means put together. A plant puts water and carbon dioxide together. It uses light as its helper. It also uses chlorophyll as a helper. When these things are put together they make sugar and oxygen.

Chlorophyll is what makes plants look green, just like red blood cells in our blood make our blood look red. And just like the red blood cells help our body to transfer the oxygen from the air into our bodies' cells, chlorophyll helps the plant convert sunlight into their food.

Photosynthesis Resources

www.biology4kids.com/files/plants_photosynthesis.html

<http://library.thinkquest.org/3715/photo3.html>

magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngexplorer/0204/quickflicks/

Seeds for Thought

Additional Resources to Nurture Soil & Soul

Week 7: Grounding the Ark – New Beginnings & Promises

Questions to Ponder

- Have you ever felt like you needed a chance to start over? When? Did you feel God with you?
- If you could only pick two animals to go on a boat with you, what would you pick? Why?
- Have you ever felt frustrated or confused? Did it make you feel like you were floating in an ocean with no land in sight? How could focusing on God's light help you feel better?
- An olive branch was Noah's indicator that it was safe to leave the Ark. Do you think the olive branch was a good indicator? What if the dove had brought back a green bean? Do you think life is possible without plants?
- The floods that we have had recently have for the most part gone away now. Have you seen any areas that had been under water that are now land again? Has God's light helped things to grow there again yet?
- What is your favorite color? What plants in the garden are your favorite color?
- What promises do you think God has made to you?