

A Forever Promise

The new heaven and new earth
Revelation 1:17-18; 21:1-7

Character Trait: Peace

(Estimated Lesson Time: 90 minutes)

Objectives:

- Children will recall John's vision of God's new creation.
- Children will discuss ways they can accept the gift of peace that Jesus provides.
- Children will share ways they can choose to practice and encourage peace in their personal relationships.

Supplies:

- *A Forever Promise* loaded onto a tablet or phone in the *Bible App for Kids*
- Paper *(one piece for each child)*
- Coloring supplies
- Pens and/or pencils

Welcome Activity:

(5 minutes)

Welcome the children.

SAY: Raise your hand if you have ever felt sad. Raise your hand if you have ever been sick or in pain. Raise your hand if you have ever felt hurt inside your heart. *(Tell the children to put their hands down.)*

Today, we will learn about a very special promise that God has made to everyone who loves and follows Him. This promise will put an end to all the pain, hurt, and suffering we experience today.

Review:

(5 minutes)

Guide the children in a brief review of the previous lesson by asking the following:

- **Did everyone like Paul's teachings?** *(No. Some people were very upset.)*
- **Why was Paul put on a boat headed to Rome?** *(Paul was a Roman citizen, and he asked that his trial be in Rome.)*
- **When the storm came, the captain thought everyone would die. But what did an angel tell Paul?** *(Everyone would survive, and he would get to Rome.)*
- **Where did Paul write letters to teach the new churches all over the world?** *(Paul wrote these letters while chained inside a house. He was under arrest.)*

Today's Bible Story:

(10-15 minutes)

Show *A Forever Promise* from the *Bible App for Kids* or share the story aloud:

- John was a disciple of Jesus.
- One day, Jesus came to him in a vision, shining like the sun.
- "Don't be afraid," said Jesus. "I died. Now I live forever!"
- Then John saw a new heaven and a new earth, God's promised new creation.
- The first heaven and the first earth were gone and the sea with them!
- Next, John saw God's Holy City, the new Jerusalem.
- It was coming down from heaven.
- It was beautiful, like a bride on her wedding day ready to meet her husband!
- Then John heard a loud voice coming from the throne of God saying, "From now on, God will make His home among His people, and they will all live together."
- "In this new heaven and new earth, there won't be any tears because no one will be in pain, and no one will die. Those things are gone, forever!"
- Then the voice from the throne said, "I am the Beginning and the End. If you are thirsty, come to Me, and I will give you the water of life."
- "My new world is for My children, those who are faithful to Me. I'm making all things new. It's true. You can count on it."

Discussion:

(15 minutes)

Encourage the children to think more about the story by asking the following:

- **Who was John?** *(He was a disciple of Jesus.)*
- **How did Jesus come to John?** *(In a vision)*
- **What did John see in the vision?** *(A new heaven and earth and a new Jerusalem)*
- **What did God say about His people in the vision?** *(God said that He would make His home with them, and they would live with Him.)*
- **What did God say would be gone forever in the new heaven and earth?** *(God said there would be no more tears, pain, or death.)*
- **Who did God promise this new heaven and earth to?** *(To His children, those who are faithful to Him)*

SAY: God shared this vision and message with John, one of Jesus' disciples. But this message and promise is for all of God's people, including all of us today. No matter what our lives are like here on earth, when we put our trust in Jesus we can look forward to a future, filled with hope and no more hurting, with God, forever!

God's Bigger Story:

(5 minutes)

SAY: The end of God's Big Story is really a beginning—a new beginning with Jesus in a brand, new heaven and earth made by God. When we turn away from our sin and trust in Jesus, this future promise and new beginning becomes true for us, too.

Memory Verse:

(10 minutes)

"To all *(extend hands out in a broad sweeping gesture)* **who are thirsty** *(pretend to drink)*
I will give freely *(extend your hands forward, palms up)*
from the springs of the water *(make a wave motion with your hands)*
of life *(make a circular motion over your heart)***."**

Revelation 21:6b (NLT)

Activity:

(15 minutes)

Select one child to start the game. Then, that child is to make three, short statements about themselves: two statements that are true and one that is a lie. The remaining children in the group raise their hands to guess which statement is not true. The child who guesses correctly gets to go next. Play as time permits.

SAY: During the game, it was difficult to figure out which statements were true and which statements were false. But thankfully, God never lies (Numbers 23:19, Titus 1:2). We can trust what He says and know that He will always keep His promises (Deuteronomy 7:9, 2 Timothy 2:13).

Response Activity:

(10 minutes)

SAY: God gave John a vision of what the new heaven, the new earth, and the new Jerusalem would look like in the future. It was beautiful! What do you think these places will look like?

Provide each child with a piece of paper. Demonstrate how to fold it into quarters, then unfold it so that there are four, equal sections. Tell the children to draw four, different pictures, one inside each section on their paper: 1) The new heaven, 2) the new earth, 3) the new city of Jerusalem and 4) a picture of what they will look like when they are there.

For younger children...
This activity can be made easier for younger children by having the paper prefolded *(or lines drawn to divide the paper)* into four sections and/or prelabeled with "new heaven," "new earth," "new Jerusalem," and "you in the future with God."

For older children...
Make this activity more challenging for older children by having them journal briefly about how this promise makes them feel on the back of their project.

Character Trait: Peace

(10 minutes)

SAY: Peace is quiet, rest, and security. True peace comes only from Jesus Christ. We can feel real peace when we choose to trust in God and His promises.

Encourage the children to think more about peace by asking the following:

- **What is the opposite of peace?** *(Answers will vary but should include unrest, disturbance, and disharmony.)*
- **How can God's promise of the coming new heaven and earth help us experience peace in our lives today?** *(Answers will vary but should include that God's promise provides us with something to look forward to with certainty when we may suffer or hurt in our present lives.)*
- **Peace is something we can experience, but it is also a gift that Jesus offers each one of us. What are some ways that we can accept the gift of peace that Jesus provides?** *(Answers will vary but may include talking to Him through prayer, choosing to remember and act on His teachings, and focusing on God's love and many promises.)*

Connect with Others:

(5 minutes)

SAY: Our peace with God should overflow and enable us to live at peace with others, too. What are some ways that you can choose to practice and encourage peace in your personal relationships with family and friends? *(Call on a few volunteers to share aloud; then provide an opportunity for those who did not share to do so with those around them.)*

Closing:

(2 minutes)

SAY: God knows that we live in a world that is broken and hurting because of sin. He understands our suffering (Psalm 56:8, Hebrews 4:15). But through Jesus, God has provided a way for our hearts to be healed and hope for a future with Him in a brand, new heaven and earth where pain, death, and suffering will never exist!

Prayer:

(2 minutes)

SAY:

Dear God,
Thank You for the promise of eternal life with You in the new heaven and earth to come. Thank You for the peace Jesus provides in our lives today. As Your children, help us to live peacefully with others in all that we say and do.
Amen.

Notes