Use Week of:

God's Covenant with Abraham

1

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9

MAIN POINT: God promised to bless Abraham.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE: Romans 4:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.

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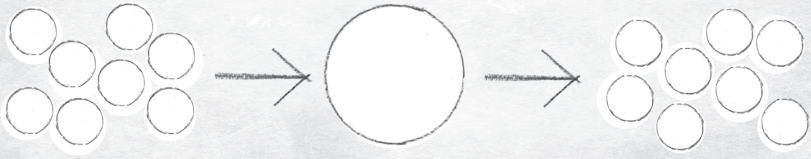

Leader BIBLE STUDY

God is a covenant-making God. After the great flood, God made a covenant with Noah and his family and all the living creatures. God promised to never again flood the entire earth. He put a rainbow in the sky to confirm His covenant. (See Gen. 9:8-17.) God's covenant with Noah was unconditional; it did not depend on Noah in any way.

Years passed, and Noah's family grew. His son Shem had a family. Shem's seventh-great grandson was named Abram. (See Gen. 11:10-26.) Abram traveled toward the land of Canaan with his wife, Sarai; his father, Terah; and his nephew, Lot. But they stopped in Haran and settled there.

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When Abram was 75 years old, God spoke to him. God called Abram to leave behind his family and his lands to go to a place God would show him. God made a covenant with Abram, promising to bless all the world through one of his descendants. (Gen 12:1-3) By faith, Abram obeyed.

God's covenant with Abram was unconditional. In Abram's time, when a covenant was made between two people, the animals would be split and both parties would walk through them as to say, "If I do not hold up my end of the covenant, may I be like these dead animals." (See Gen. 15.) This time, only the smoking fire pot and flaming torch passed through the animals, symbolizing that God alone would be responsible for upholding the covenant.

When Abram was 99 years old, he was still childless. How would God keep His promise to make Abram's offspring as numerous as the stars if Abram didn't have any children? But God was serious about the covenant; He always keeps His promises. God even changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means "Father of a Multitude."

God promised to bless all the earth through Abraham. At just the right time, Jesus was born into Abraham's family. (Gal. 4:4-5) Jesus fulfilled God's promise to Abraham. (See Gal. 3:8.) Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Through Him, all the nations of the earth are blessed.

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God's Covenant with Abraham

Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9

Abram and his wife Sarai lived long ago. They lived near their relatives and friends. One day, something very unusual happened to Abram. God spoke to him! **God chose Abram out of all the people in the world and made a covenant—a very special promise—with him.**

God told Abram to move to a place he had never been. God said Abram would have many descendants. That meant Abram **would have many children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren.** So many people would be born into **Abram's family** that they **would become a whole nation of people. They would have land to live on, and everyone would know who Abram was.**

Abram obeyed God. He did not know how God was going to give him a big family, but Abram trusted God to keep His promise.

Another time, God spoke to Abram again. God promised to give Abram a great reward. Abram asked God, "Who will get that reward when I die? I have no children. Whatever I have will belong to one of my servants."

God took Abram outside. "Look at the sky and count the stars, if you can," said God. "That is how many descendants you will have someday." Abram was getting to be an old man! His wife was getting old too. How could she have a baby? But Abram believed it would happen because God said it would.

God promised to give Abram the land, too. **God made a special ceremony to show Abram that He would keep His covenant.** First, God told Abram to bring some animals: a cow, a goat, a ram, a turtledove, and a pigeon.

Abram followed God's instructions.

When the sun had set and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch appeared and passed between the animals. **God showed that keeping the covenant was His job, not Abram's job.**

When Abram was 99 years old, God talked to him again. "I am changing your name to Abraham. You will be the father of many children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren," God said. "They will become many nations, and some of them will be kings. I will give them the land where you are living, and I will be their God. My promises will last forever."

Christ Connection: God told Abraham to leave his home and go to another land. God promised to bless all the people in the world through Abraham. God sent Jesus from His home in heaven to come to earth as part of Abraham's family. Jesus blesses all the people on earth because He saves people from their sins.



WANT TO DISCOVER GOD'S WORD? GET *MORE!*

Invite preschoolers to check out this week's devotionals to discover that God promised to make Abraham's name great and make him a blessing. Jesus came to earth as a man through Abraham's family. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out *www.lifeway.com/devotionals.*

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: God's Covenant with Abraham
BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9
MAIN POINT: God promised to bless Abraham.
KEY PASSAGE: Romans 4:3
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.

Welcome time

- "My God Is Real" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert printable
- favorite toys

Play the unit theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- "Count the Stars" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Guide preschoolers to count the number of stars on the page. Younger preschoolers, may count only the large stars.

SAY • Have you ever tried to count the stars in the sky? There are way too many to count! In our Bible story today, God told a man that he would have as many people in his family as there are stars in the sky. That is a lot of people, but this man did not even have one child. How could it be?



Life-sized board game

- construction paper, various colors
- paper strips
- scissors (optional)
- cup

Lay different colors of construction paper in a path on the floor. Designate a start and finish. Cut or tear strips of paper to match each color along the path. Place the strips in a cup.

Form a line at the start of the path. Explain to children

that they will be the game pieces. Lead children to take turns drawing slips of paper. As a child selects a slip of paper, she must advance to that color square that comes next on the path. Continue play until each child reaches the finish.

SAY • The colors you drew from the cup showed you where to go. In our Bible story today, God told a man to leave his home and go to another land that God would show him. Let's find out who that man was.

Name necklaces

- construction paper
- markers or crayons
- hole punch
- yarn

Supply each preschooler with a half sheet of construction paper. Ask preschoolers if they have ever wanted a new name. Encourage preschoolers to share what they would like their new name to be. Enlist an adult leader to write each preschooler's "new name" on her sheet of paper. Guide preschoolers to decorate their name signs with markers or crayons. Once completed, use a hole punch and yarn so preschoolers may wear their new names around their necks. Consider using preschoolers' new names for the remainder of the session.

SAY • In today's Bible story, God gave a man a very great promise. God even gave the man a new name to show how serious He was about keeping His promise to the man. Let's find out who the man was and what God promised him.

Transition to Bible study

- countdown video (optional)

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Call each child by name to invite them to large group.

Large Group LEADER

SESSION TITLE: God's Covenant with Abraham
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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.

Introduce the Bible story

Ask preschoolers if they know what a promise is. Invite them to share a time they made a promise or someone made a promise to them.

SAY • In our Bible story, we will hear about a special promise God made to a man named Abram. This kind of promise is so important we have a big name for it: a *covenant*. Can you say *covenant*?

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Bible
- "God's Covenant with Abraham" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Open your Bible to Genesis 12.

SAY • The Bible is the most special book there is because it is the only book with God's words. Every story we read in the Bible is true. Today's true story comes from the first book of the Bible, Genesis.

Show the Bible story video "God's Covenant with Abraham" or tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided. Use the bolded version for younger preschoolers.

Talk about the Bible story

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

SAY • God chose Abraham out of all the people in the world and made a covenant or promise with him.

God promised to bless Abraham. God promised to give Abraham a huge family. Jesus would be a part of Abraham's family.

Point to the giant timeline or big story circle as you ask the following review questions:

1. Was there something special about Abraham that made God choose to bless Him? (*no*)
2. What did God promise to give Abraham? (*many descendants and land*)
3. Did Abraham know how God would give him a big family? (*no*)
4. Whose job was it to keep the covenant or promise? Abraham's or God's? (*God's*)

Big picture question

SAY • Our big picture question is, ***What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.*** Abraham was not the only person God blessed through His covenant with Abraham. God sent Jesus to come to earth as part of Abraham's family. Jesus blesses all the people on earth because He saves people from their sin.

- Big Picture Question Poster

Key passage

Open your Bible to Romans 4:3. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing the key passage song together.

- Key Passage Poster
- "Abraham" song

SAY • **God promised to bless Abraham.** Abraham believed God's promise. Even though Abraham was old and did not have any children, he trusted God. He believed God would do what He said He would do.

Transition to small groups

Small Group ACTIVITIES

SESSION TITLE: God's Covenant with Abraham
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Pack for a trip

- "World Map" printable (optional)
- small pieces of luggage or travel bags
- assorted items

Provide several small pieces of luggage or travel bags and an assortment of items you might pack on a trip. Guide preschoolers to play out packing for a trip by arranging the items in the luggage and bags. Consider showing the "World Map" printable to older preschoolers and talk about how missionaries travel around the world to different places, telling people the good news of Jesus.

SAY • God told Abraham to leave his home and go to another land. **God promised to bless Abraham** and all the people in the world through Abraham. Sometimes God asks people today to leave their homes and go to other lands to bless people there. These people are called *missionaries*. They bless people by telling them the good news of how Jesus saves people from their sin.



Walk through animals

- toy animals
- masking tape

Let out toy animals on either side of a masking tape line on the floor. Leave room for preschoolers to walk on the line without touching any animals. Form a line at one end of the masking tape. Explain to preschoolers that they must travel through the line of animals one at a time doing the

action you call out. Possible actions include: walk with baby steps, walk with giant steps, jump, hop, or crawl. When a child has walked through the animals, he should return to the back of the line.

SAY • **God promised to bless Abraham.** During the time Abraham lived, if people made a covenant, or promise, with each other, they would have a special ceremony. That was their way of saying they would keep their part of the promise. In today's Bible story, God passed through the animals as a torch and smoking pot. God was saying that keeping the covenant was His job, not Abraham's job.

Paint star scenes

- black construction paper, 1 per child
- new pencil, 1 per child
- white paint
- foam plate
- wipes for cleanup
- smocks

Provide each child with a smock, black sheet of construction paper, and a new pencil. Demonstrate how to dip the eraser end of the pencil into white paint and then press the eraser on the paper to create a circular star. Encourage preschoolers to create star patterns on their paper.

SAY • **God promised to bless Abraham.** He said Abraham would have as many family members as there were stars in the sky. God promised that all people would be blessed through Abraham's family. God sent Jesus to come to earth as part of Abraham's family. Jesus blesses all the people on earth because Jesus saves those who trust in Him from their sin.

Play a matching game

- "Matching Game" printable
- heavyweight paper
- scissors

Print and prepare two copies of the "Matching Game" printable on heavyweight paper. Arrange the cards facedown in a grid. Guide preschoolers to flip two cards over at a time. If a child makes a match, he keeps the cards. For

younger preschoolers, play with the cards faceup. Use the images on the cards to remind preschoolers of the Bible story as they play the game.

SAY • God told Abraham to leave his home and go to another land. **God promised to bless Abraham** and all the people in the world through him. God sent Jesus from His home in heaven to come to earth as part of Abraham's family. Jesus blesses all the people on earth because Jesus saves people who trust in Him.

Sing a song

Lead preschoolers in singing. Sing this song to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star":

"Abram, can you count the stars?"
"I can't count them. They're too far."
"I will make your family
As many as the stars you see!
I will keep My promises,
You will have as many sons as this!"

SAY • **God promised to bless Abraham.** God would give Abraham as many family members as the stars in the sky. Abraham's family members would have a land to live in. Everyone would know who Abraham was. Jesus would come to earth as part of Abraham's family. Jesus rescues people from their sin. Jesus is the greatest blessing of all!

Snack

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert printable
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Serve animal crackers for snack. Remind preschoolers about the special ceremony God made to show Abraham He would keep His covenant. God sent a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch to pass between the animals. God showed that keeping the covenant was His job, not Abraham's job.

Transition

- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- books and puzzles
- crayons
- *Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschool*

When a child finishes his snack, guide him to throw away any trash. He may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page and invite preschoolers to draw a picture of their family. Remind children that **God promised to bless Abraham.** God said Abraham would have many children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Jesus would come from Abraham's family. Jesus blesses all the people on earth because He saves people from their sin.

SAY • God, thank You for Jesus! Thank You for sending Jesus from His home in heaven to come to earth as part of Abraham's family. Thank You for making a way to rescue sinners like us. Help us to follow You in all that we do.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

Journal Page

God the Covenant-Maker

Key Passage: Romans 4:3

Big Picture Question: What did God promise?
God promised to bless His people.

Session 1: God's Covenant with Abraham
Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9
God promised to bless Abraham..

Session 2: God Tested Abraham
Genesis 22:1-19
Abraham trusted God.

Session 3: The Promise Reaffirmed
Genesis 25:19-26; 26:1-6; 28:10-22
God reminded Abraham's family about His promises.



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"Abraham believed God."

Romans 4:3



Abraham believed God.

Romans 4:3



Abraham believed God.

Romans 4:3



"Abraham believed God."

Romans 4:3



God promised to bless Abraham.





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Count the Stars

INSTRUCTIONS: Count the stars. How many big stars do you see? How many small stars do you see?



DOWNLOAD THE TGP FAMILY APP

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 4:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

- What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.

BIBLE STORY:
GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

- God made a covenant, or promise, with Abraham.
- Abraham was an old man with no children, but God said he would have a big family.
- God showed Abraham keeping the promise was His job, not Abraham's.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- Tell about a time someone made a promise to you or you made a promise to someone else. Was the promise kept?
- Do you think it was hard for Abraham to believe God would really give him a big family? Why?

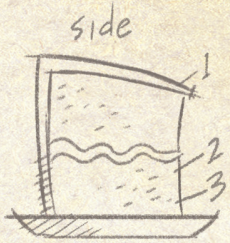
FAMILY ACTIVITY:

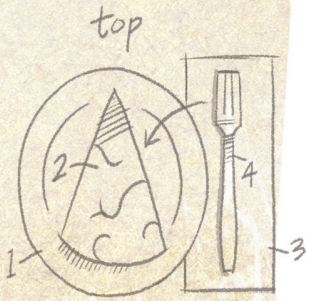
- Look at the sky on a clear night. Try to count the stars. Discuss how God always keeps His promises.

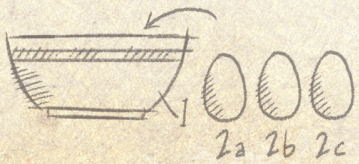


What did God promise?





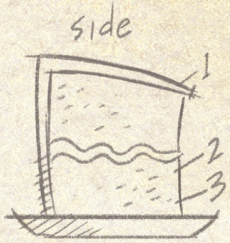


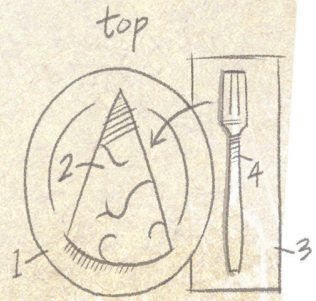


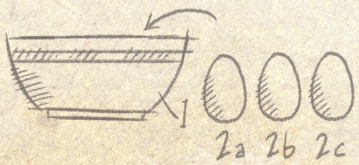
What did God promise?

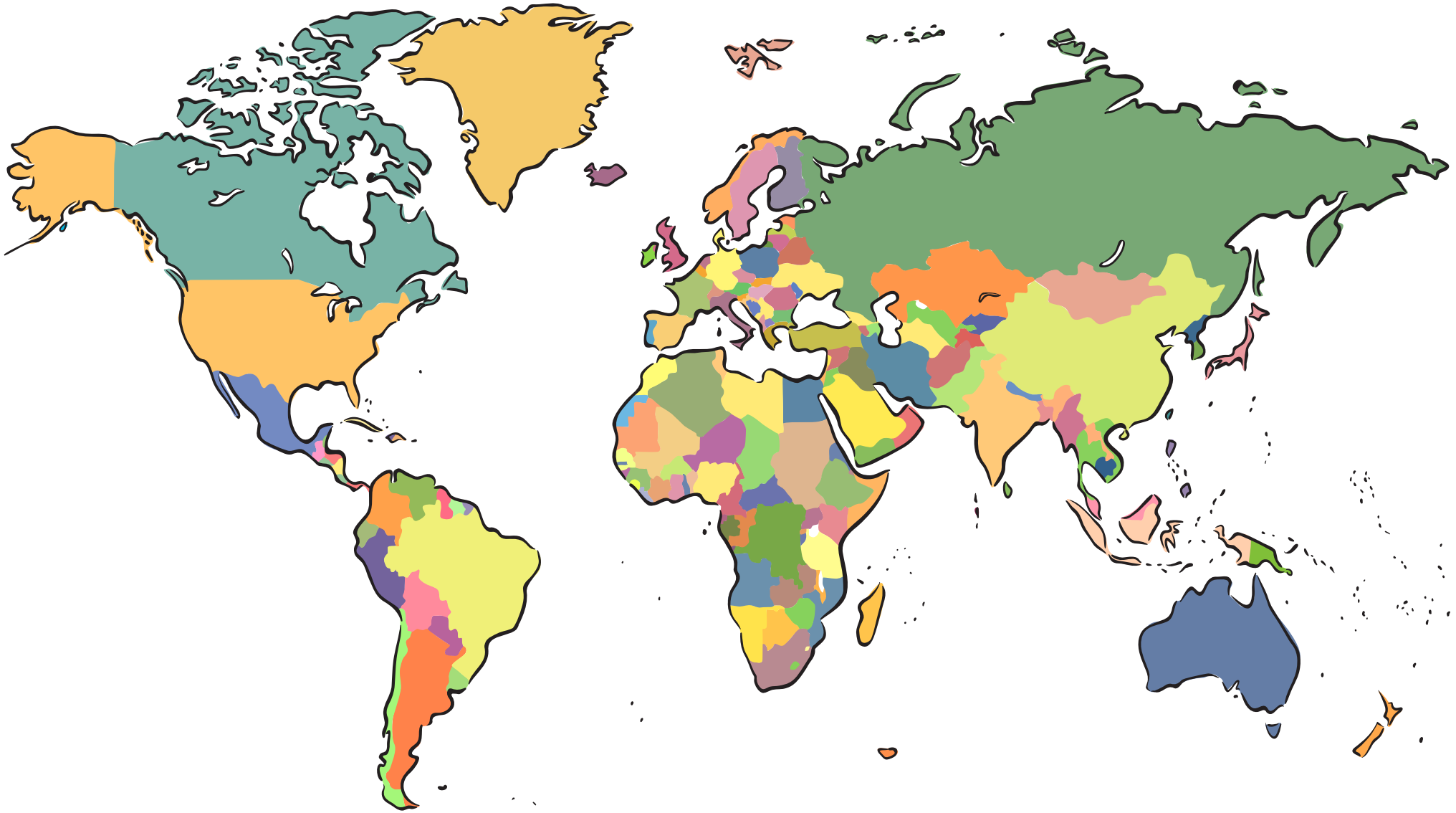
God promised
to bless
His people.











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God the Covenant-Maker

Instructions: Make two copies on heavyweight paper. Cut along dotted lines.