

God Reminded His People of His Covenant

BIBLE PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 5:1–6:25; 8:1–11:1,26-28

MAIN POINT: God reminded His people of His covenant with them.

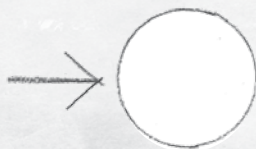
KEY PASSAGE: Leviticus 11:45

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who can keep God's law? No one can keep God's law perfectly except Jesus.

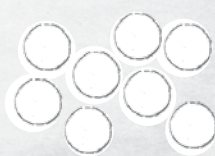
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SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES
(25–30 MINUTES)
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Leader BIBLE STUDY

After God, through Moses, brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He met with them in the wilderness and established a covenant, or agreement, with the people of Israel: “Now if you will listen to Me and carefully keep My covenant, you will be My own possession out of all the peoples ... and you will be My kingdom of priests and My holy nation” (Ex. 19:5-6).

God promised five things in the Mosaic covenant: 1) Israel will be God's own possession (Ex. 19:5); 2) Israel will be God's kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:6); 3) Israel will be a holy nation (Ex. 19:6); 4) God will defend Israel from her

enemies (Ex. 23:22); and 5) God will be gracious, merciful, and forgiving to Israel (Ex. 34:6-7).

God's conditions for the covenant were clear: "You must carefully follow every command I am giving you" (Deut. 8:1). "Be careful that you don't forget the Lord your God by failing to keep His command" (Deut. 8:11). "If you ever forget the Lord your God ... you will perish" (Deut. 8:19).

In the opening chapters of Deuteronomy, the Israelites were at the edge of the promised land. Moses reminded them of all the things God had done. He reminded them of the Lord's commands and implored them to worship only God. Through faith, trust, and love, the Israelites would receive the blessings of mercy, grace, and forgiveness. Moses' message was clear: Remember!

Scripture reveals that Israel did not keep the covenant. (See Ezek. 16:59; Hos. 6:7.) But God was merciful to His people. His new covenant focuses not on obedience, but on the heart. (See Jer. 31:31-34.)

Our obedience cannot earn us God's favor, and our disobedience does not separate us from Him. We receive His blessings by holding out empty hands of faith.



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The BIBLE STORY

God Reminded His People of His Covenant

Deuteronomy 5:1–6:25; 8:1–11:1,26-28

“Israel, listen to me!” Moses said. Moses had called all of the Israelites together. They were in the wilderness, on their way to the land God promised to give them. **God had an important message for the Israelites, and He spoke through Moses. “Here are the rules and laws I am telling you today. Learn them and obey them,”** Moses said.

Moses reminded the people that God had made a covenant, or agreement, with the Israelites at Mount Sinai (SIGH nigh). God said, “If you listen carefully to Me and keep My covenant, you will be My people.”

God gave them the Ten Commandments: 1) Do not have other gods besides Me; 2) Do not make an idol for yourself; 3) Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God; 4) Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy; 5) Honor your father and your mother; 6) Do not murder; 7) Keep your marriage promises; 8) Do not steal; 9) Do not lie; 10) Do not want what belongs to someone else.

“God wants you to obey all of His commands,” Moses said. **“God wants me to teach you all of His rules and laws, and He wants you to obey them exactly as He commanded. If you do, things will go well in the land He promised to give you, and you will live there for a long time.**

“Israel, listen to me! The Lord our God, the Lord is One. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

“Teach these commands to your children. Talk about them all the time—when you are home, when you walking along the road, when you go to bed at night, and when you

get up in the morning.”

Moses told the people about the wonderful things God would do. “God promised to bring you into the land of Canaan. He promised to give this land to your fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God will keep His promises!

“When you get to the promised land, don’t forget the Lord. Remember what He has done for you. The Lord rescued you from slavery in Egypt. Worship Him, and worship only Him.”

Moses told the people that it was almost time for them to enter the promised land. He warned them that tall, strong people lived in the land. “But God will go ahead of you,” Moses said. “He will drive them out.”

Then Moses made a very important point. “God is not doing this because you are righteous,” he said. “God is keeping the promise He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In fact, you are stubborn people.”

Finally, Moses said, “Love the Lord your God. If you obey His commands, you will be blessed. If you do not obey, you will be punished.”

Christ Connection: God kept His promise to give land to the families of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As the Israelites stood at the edge of the promised land, God reminded them of His covenant. He commanded them to be holy and to obey Him, but He knew they would not. God was working out His plan to send Jesus to rescue people from sin and bless the whole earth.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD’S WORD?
GET
BIBLE EXPRESS!**

Invite kids to check out this week’s devotionals to discover that God required His people to keep all of the law. (Deut. 6:24) God sent Jesus to keep the law and die the death that we deserve. Jesus brings us back to God. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: God Reminded His People of His Covenant

BIBLE PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 5:1–6:25; 8:1–11:1,26-28

MAIN POINT: God reminded His people of His covenant with them.

KEY PASSAGE: Leviticus 11:45

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who can keep God's law? No one can keep God's law perfectly except Jesus.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, invite them to share their favorite memory of a birthday or holiday.

SAY • Memories are important. God gives us the gift of memory so we can grow and develop. God gave us the Bible to help us remember what He has said and done. We can trust Him with the future.

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Repeat These Things” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers
- Bibles

Invite kids to complete “Repeat These Things” on the activity page. Help kids find Deuteronomy 6:7 in the Bible. Kids should circle the verse scenarios in the picture:

- someone sitting in a house
- an adult and child walking along the road
- someone lying down
- someone getting up

SAY • In today's Bible story, **God reminded His people of His covenant with them.** God told the Israelites to talk about His commandments when they were at home, walking along the road, going to bed, and

getting up in the morning. In other words ... all the time! That's a lot of talking about God! We should talk about Him so we don't forget!

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: The name game

Gather the kids in a circle. Instruct each kid to develop a movement or sign relating to her personality, name, interests, or so forth. Invite kids to share their signs.

The first kid will say her name and do her sign. The next kid will say, "This is [*first kid's name*] and she likes to move like this!" Then he will share his name and sign. Continue around the circle with each kid repeating all previous signs.

SAY • Did you have a hard time remembering the signs?

Remembering can be hard, especially when there is a lot to remember or when something happened long ago. In our Bible story today, **God reminded His people of His covenant with them.**

OPTION 2: Hop on a pattern

Tape 6 to 10 pieces of construction paper on the ground in a hopscotch grid. The first child will create a hopping pattern by jumping with her left foot, right foot, or both feet onto whichever colors she wants.

The next player should try to repeat the pattern. If he remembers correctly, he may then establish a new pattern.

SAY • Today we will hear how **God reminded His people of His covenant with them.** God said, "If you listen carefully to Me and keep My covenant, you will be My people."



Tip: Challenge younger kids to repeat only four or five previous signs.

- construction paper
- tape

Tip: To prevent tearing, laminate the paper.

Transition to large group

Large Group LEADER

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Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire
- bucket or box
- books and toys

[Large Group Leader enters carrying a bucket or box of books and toys.]

LEADER • Oh hello, everyone! It is good to see you today.

I've just been picking up my stuff. My dad says if I finish cleaning up the tree house, then we can go for ice cream this afternoon! I've got my sights set on a double scoop of peanut butter chocolate chip and bubble gum ice cream. Doesn't that sound delicious?

[Set down the box.] You know, what my dad said kind of reminds me of something I learned about the Israelites this week. Right before they entered the promised land, Moses brought them all together and reminded them of the covenant God made with them. God said if they listened and obeyed, then they would experience His blessings. One of those blessings was to live a long time in the promised land, which is way better than a double scoop of ice cream, if you ask me!

Giant timeline (1 minute)

LEADER • Today's Bible story took place not long after last week's story, when Moses reminded the people that **the Lord alone is God; there is no other besides Him.** [*Point to the timeline map.*] Moses had another reminder of the people of Israel. The words Moses spoke were a message from God, so even though Moses did the talking, it was God who reminded the people of His covenant. [*Point to today's Bible story on the timeline map.*]

• Giant Timeline

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Our big picture question for today is the same as the last couple of weeks. Does anyone remember the question? ***Who can keep God's law?*** How about the question *and* the answer? That's right—***Who can keep God's law? No one can keep God's law perfectly except Jesus.***

In our Bible story today, God reminded the Israelites of His law. God did not do this so the people would feel burdened. He did this to remind them that His rules are good and that if we love Him, we will listen carefully so we can obey.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Deuteronomy 5. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video “God Reminded His People of His Covenant.”

LEADER • God used Moses to remind His people of His covenant with them. A *covenant* is a promise or an agreement. God said, “If you will listen to Me and carefully keep My covenant, you will be My own

• Bibles
• “God Reminded His People of His Covenant” video
• Big Picture Question Poster
• Bible Story Picture Poster

possession out of all the peoples.” [See Ex. 19:5.]

God made it clear that the Israelites needed to obey Him. He said, “You must carefully follow every command I am giving you.” [See Deut. 8:1.] He warned that if the Israelites ever forgot the Lord, they would be punished.

Ask the following review questions.

1. Where were the people headed at the beginning of the story? (*to the promised land, Deut. 1:8*)
2. What did God want the Israelites to do with His commandments? (*obey them, Deut. 6:1*)
3. How often were the people supposed to talk about God’s commandments? (*all the time, Deut. 6:4-7*)
4. What did God promise to do? (*bring them into the land of Canaan, Deut. 6:10*)
5. Did God keep His promise because the people were righteous? (*No. In fact, they were a very stubborn people; Deut. 9:6*)
6. What would happen if the people obeyed God’s commands? (*They would be blessed, Deut. 11:26-28*)
7. What would happen if they did not obey? (*They would be punished, Deut. 11:26-28*)
8. ***Who can keep God’s law? No one can keep God’s law perfectly except Jesus.***

LEADER • Do you think the Israelites always kept God’s commands? No. But God was merciful to His people. He planned to make a new covenant with His people through His Son, Jesus. The new covenant through Jesus does not depend on our obedience. God offers salvation as a free gift to those who trust in Jesus as Lord.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

Tip: Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Leviticus 11:45. Cover the poster and allow volunteers who have memorized the key passage to recite it from memory. Then lead kids to sing “You Must Be Holy.”

- Key Passage Poster
- “You Must Be Holy” song

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

Show the “Unit 6, Session 5” discussion starter video.

LEADER • When you need to remember something important, what do you do?

Point out that we need to be reminded of things because we simply forget! The same goes for God’s promises. Lead kids to discuss why memorizing Scripture is so important and ways they can work on memorizing Bible verses or passages.

- “Unit 6, Session 5” discussion starter video

Sing (4 minutes)

LEADER • One way we can memorize things is by repetition—by repeating things, like we do in our key passage song. Sing along if you know the words. Sing together “Holy God (Holy, Holy, Holy).”

- “Holy God (Holy, Holy, Holy)” song

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.

LEADER • Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus, who kept Your law perfectly. Thank You for keeping Your promises and forgiving us when we sin. We don't deserve Your love, but You give it to us anyway. Help us to trust You and obey Your commands. We praise You for being so faithful to us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Dismiss to small groups

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:19.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Small Group LEADER

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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

• Key Passage Poster

Form two teams based on various characteristics. (Examples: kids born on even dates versus kids born on odd dates, boys versus girls, brunettes versus everyone else, and so on)

Instruct the teams to gather as quickly as possible, stand in a circle, say the verse as fast as they can, and then sit down. The first team to sit wins! Switch up the categories for teams and play again.

SAY • Moses gathered the people to remind them of God's covenant. Like our key passage says, God is holy and He wanted His people to be holy too. If the people obeyed God's laws, God would bless them. If they did not obey, God would punish them. Jesus brings us to God because He obeyed God perfectly and He took the punishment for sin that we deserve.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

• Bibles, 1 per kid

• Main Point Poster

Assign the following Scriptures for individuals to look up and read aloud: Exodus 19:5; Exodus 19:6; Exodus 23:22; Exodus 34:6-7. Before each reading, tell the kids to note what exactly God was promising as part of the covenant.

• Exodus 19:5—Israel will be God's own possession.

- Exodus 19:6—Israel will be a kingdom of priests.
- Exodus 19:6—Israel will be a holy nation.
- Exodus 23:22—God will fight against Israel’s enemies.
- Exodus 34:6-7—God will be gracious, merciful, and forgiving to Israel.

Read Exodus 19:5-6 and Exodus 23:22 again. Before reading, tell the kids to pay attention to the beginning of the verses.

SAY • A *conditional* statement is an “If / then” statement.

It’s like when your mom says, “*If* you put away your clean clothes, *then* you can play outside.” The second part relies on the first part.

Some of the promises God made to the Israelites were conditional. That means that God said *if* the people listened to Him and obeyed Him, *then* He would do certain things.

Do you think God expected the people to always listen, always obey, and never sin? No. God said He is “a compassionate and gracious God” (Ex. 34:6). God said He would forgive “wrongdoing, rebellion, and sin” (Ex. 34:7).

God wanted the Israelites to trust Him. He wanted them to love His law and worship Him with their heart, soul, mind, and strength. God still wants that today! In the Old Testament, God wanted the people to trust that He would send a Savior in the future. God kept His promise and today, He wants us to trust in that Savior—His Son, Jesus.

When we trust in Jesus by faith, God accepts us. Our salvation is not conditional. If God had said, “*If* you are good and always obey, *then* I will give you

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

eternal life,” who could be saved?

Everyone has sinned. We cannot earn God’s favor. We can only hold out our hands and receive God’s free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.



LOW PREP

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: If it rains tomorrow ...

Announce a statement that gives kids a choice to make.

Instruct kids to move to one side of the room for the first option or the other side for the second option. Samples:

- If it rains tomorrow, you will go outside and play in the rain OR you will stay inside and stay dry.
- If you had a million dollars, you would spend it all OR you would save some for when you are old.
- If you could fly, you would fly every day OR you would fly once in a while.
- If school were closed tomorrow, you would do homework OR you would play all day.
- If you could meet the president of the United States, you would give him a high-five OR you would shake his hand.

SAY • The kinds of statements I just spoke are called “conditional statements.” *If* one thing happens, *then* another will follow.

The covenant God made with Abraham was *unconditional*. It didn’t depend on Abraham. God made the promises. God did not require anything of Abraham for God to keep this covenant.

The covenant God made with His people through Moses was *conditional*. God required the Israelites to listen to Him and keep His commands in order to receive some particular blessings.

Before they entered the promised land, **God reminded His people of His covenant with them** so they would trust Him and put their faith in Him.

OPTION 2: What's the word?

Play a paper-and-pencil guessing game. Choose a key word from the Ten Commandments and draw a blank for each letter in the word. Invite kids to take turns guessing letters in the word. Write in the correct letters. (Suggested key words: *idol, name, Sabbath, father, steal, mother, holy, lie, promises*, and so forth.)

- large piece of paper
- marker or pencil

SAY • God reminded His people of His covenant

with them when Moses reviewed the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were not meant to be a burden to the people. They were meant to show the people how they could love the God who already loved them. God's rules are good and are meant to help us, but we cannot earn God's favor by obeying them. God accepts those who put their faith in His Son, Jesus.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and lead kids to write out the key passage or another verse they want to memorize this week. Challenge them to memorize the verse with a friend.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "A Crossword to Remember" on the activity page. Kids should use the clues and the words in the word box to solve the puzzle.

(Answers—Down: 1, *wilderness*; 2, *Canaan*; 3, *commandments*; 4, *Moses*; 6, *Joshua*. Across: 5, *covenant*; 7, *Mount Sinai*; 8, *Israelites*; 9, *Egypt*)

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "A Crossword to Remember" activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.

Journal Page

God Is Holy

Key Passage: Leviticus 11:45

Big Picture Question: Who can keep God's law?
No one can keep God's law perfectly except Jesus.

Session 1: The Ten Commandments: Love Others
Exodus 20:12-17

God gave us rules to help us know how to love Him and others.

Session 2: The Tabernacle Was Built
Exodus 35:4-40:38

God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them.

Session 3: God Gave Rules for Sacrifice
Leviticus 1-27

Because God is holy, God requires a sacrifice for sin.

Session 4: Worship Only God
Deuteronomy 1; 3:23-4:40

The Lord alone is God; there is no other besides Him.

Session 6: God Reminded His People of His Covenant

*Deuteronomy 5:1-6:25;
8:1- 11:1,26-28*

God reminded His people of His covenant with them.





**I am Yahweh,
who brought you up
from the land of Egypt
to be your God, so you
must be holy because
I am holy.**

Leviticus 11:45





**I am the LORD that
bringeth you up out
of the land of Egypt,
to be your God: ye shall
therefore be holy, for
I am holy.**

Leviticus 11:45





**“I am the LORD who
brought you up out of
the land of Egypt to
be your God. You shall
therefore be holy,
for I am holy.”**

Leviticus 11:45





**I am the LORD, who
brought you up out
of Egypt to be your
God; therefore be holy,
because I am holy.**

Leviticus 11:45



**God reminded
His people of His
covenant with
them.**





Journal Page

Memorizing Scripture helps us remember who God is and what He has done. Write out the key passage or another verse you want to memorize this week.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- What did God want His people to remember?
- Tell about a Bible story you heard recently. What do you remember?
- Choose a verse or passage of Scripture for your family to memorize this week.

FOLD



God Reminded His People of His Covenant

Deuteronomy 5:1-6:25; 8:1-11:1,26-28

MAIN POINT: GOD REMINDED HIS PEOPLE OF HIS COVENANT WITH THEM.

God had an important message for the Israelites, and He spoke through Moses. “Here are the rules and laws I am telling you today. Learn them and obey them,” Moses said.

Moses reminded the people that God had made a covenant, or agreement, with the Israelites at Mount Sinai. God said, “If you listen carefully to Me and keep My covenant, you will be My people.”

God gave them the Ten Commandments.

“God wants you to obey all of His commands,” Moses said. “God wants me to teach you all of His rules and laws, and He wants you to obey them exactly as He commanded. If you do, things will go well in the land He promised to give you, and you will live there for a long time.

“Israel, listen to me! The Lord our God, the Lord is One. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

“When you get to the promised land, don’t forget the Lord. Remember what He has done for you. The Lord rescued you from slavery in Egypt. Worship Him, and worship only Him.”

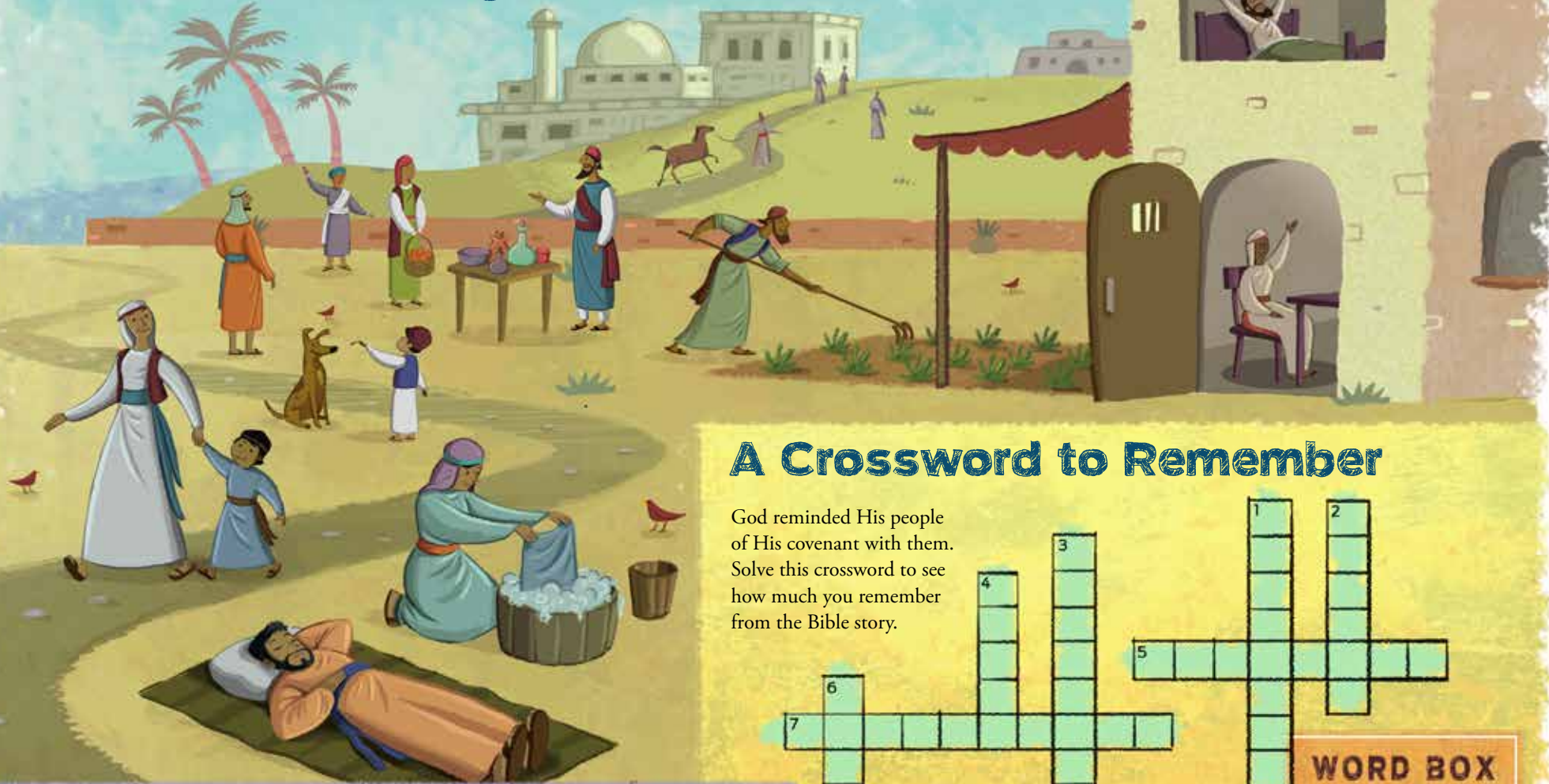
Then Moses made a very important point. “God is not doing this because you are righteous,” he said. “God is keeping the promise He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Finally, Moses said, “Love the Lord your God. If you obey His commands, you will be blessed. If you do not obey, you will be punished.”

Christ Connection: God kept His promise to give land to the families of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As the Israelites stood at the edge of the promised land, God reminded them of His covenant. He commanded them to be holy and to obey Him, but He knew they would not. God was working out His plan to send Jesus to rescue people from sin and bless the whole earth.

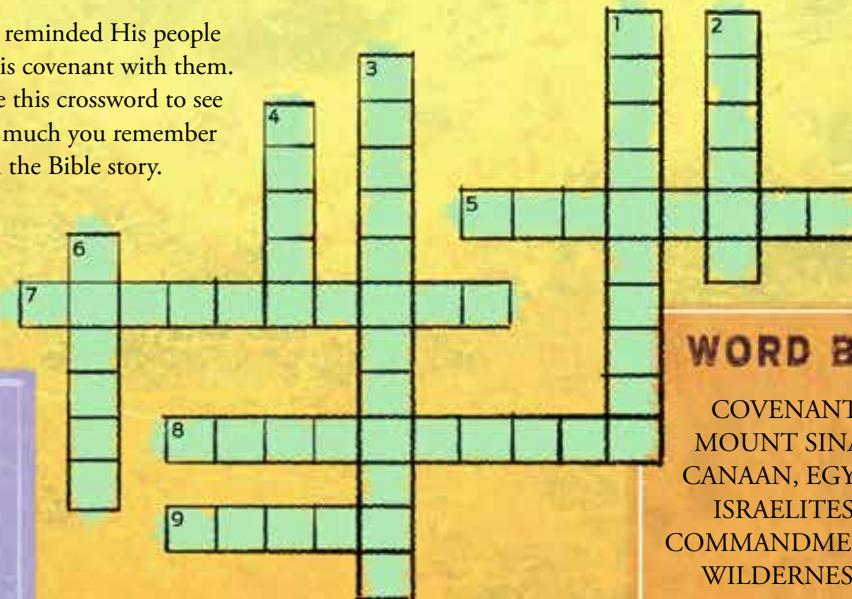
Repeat These Things

Read Deuteronomy 6:7 in your Bible. Can you find in this scene the four scenarios described in the verse? Circle each one.



A Crossword to Remember

God reminded His people of His covenant with them. Solve this crossword to see how much you remember from the Bible story.



WORD BOX

COVENANT,
MOUNT SINAI,
CANAAN, EGYPT,
ISRAELITES,
COMMANDMENTS,
WILDERNESS,
MOSES, JOSHUA

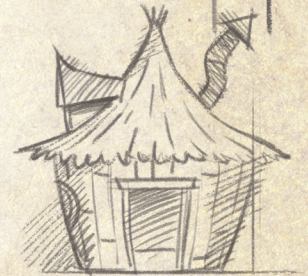
DOWN

1. where the Israelites wandered for 40 years
2. the promised land
3. rules and laws God gave to show us how to love God and others
4. the man who led God's people out of Egypt
6. the one who would lead God's people into the promised land

ACROSS


5. an agreement
7. where God gave Moses the Ten Commandments
8. God's people, a stubborn people
9. where the Israelites were slaves

Who can keep God's law?





Who can keep God's law?



No one can keep
God's law perfectly
except Jesus.

