



Date: _____
Series: Pass The Promise
Summer Year 1, Lesson 12

God Makes a Covenant with Abram

Take Home Point: *God “signed” his agreement; we can believe it! *Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: Genesis 15

Key Verse: Colossians 1:20: God was also pleased to bring everything on earth and in heaven back to himself through Christ. He did this by making peace through Christ’s blood sacrificed on the cross.

We will help kids know:

- God says to us in covenant language, “I am your God, you are my people.”
- God “signed” his agreement with Abram using the blood of animals. With us, he signs his love using the blood of Jesus.

We will help kids feel:

- Awed by God’s desire to be our friend.
- Confident to trust in God’s saving plan.

We will help kids do:

- Play a game in which they can identify with keeping or not keeping promises.
- Think of what would be the best promise God could give them.
- Make a reminder of what God promised them.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
<p>Small Group Warm-Up</p> 	3	<p>God makes promises to us and keeps them. Kids play a card game called "I Pr-o-o-omise."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deck of playing cards for each group
<p>Large Group</p> 	<p>4</p> <p>8-10</p> <p>11-12</p> <p>13</p>	<p>Overview</p> <p>Puppet Presentation: "Gordy's Big Contract"</p> <p>Dramatic Storytelling: "God Signs His Covenant"</p> <p>Puppet Presentation: "Gordy's Big Contract" Conclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gordy • football with a cross drawn on it with masking tape • contract that appears to be a small piece of paper. However, as the paper unfolds, many secret clauses to the contract are revealed. • torch (tikki lamp) • smoking fire pot (burning incense)
<p>Small Group Application</p> 	4-7	<p>Just like God signed his promise to Abraham through the blood of animals, God signed his promise to us with the blood of Jesus. He is our God and we are his people. The children will make a cross as a reminder of this promise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tissue paper • scissors • red marker

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

The following game is also known as “I Doubt It.” We are calling it, “I Pr-o-o-o-mise.” Younger children cannot hold many cards in their hands so reduce the size of the deck according to the age of the children and the size of the group. For example, if there are eight second-graders, remove the face cards and play with 36 cards. Each child will begin with four or five cards.

“I Pr-o-o-o-mise”

Deal the deck of cards out to all players. The dealer begins the game by laying any one card from his hand face down in the center. As he lays down the card he claims it is a “two” by saying, “*One two (card); I pr-o-o-o-mise!*” The player to the left of the dealer puts down a card and claims it is a “three” by saying, “*One three (card); I pr-o-o-o-mise!*”

It is up to the rest of the players to decide if a card laid down really is that card. If no one wants to challenge, the game continues with the next player claiming to have the next higher number and so on. If, however, someone doubts the card laid down really was what it was supposed to be, he says, “Doubt it!” The card is then turned over to reveal its value. If the card was what it was named, the player who made the challenge must add all the cards from the center pile to his hand. If the card was not what it was promised, the player who laid down that card takes all the cards.

After each round, the player to the left of the doubted player lays down a card, claims it is a two, and begins the game again. The first person to discard all of his cards is the winner.

After playing the game, begin conversation with the following questions.

Can you give an example of someone who gave a promise and did not keep it?

If God could promise you anything, what would you want him to promise? *(This question is asked more as a thought provoker. It will be discussed again during the small group application.)*

In large group we will again meet Abram, someone to whom God made a promise. God kept his promise to Abram. God makes a promise to us and he keeps it, too. Today we will learn that *God “signed” his agreement: we can believe it!

Large Group: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible Event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Overview

Puppet Presentation: “Gordy’s Big Contract”

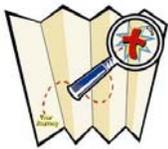
Gordy tricks Mr. King into signing a contract agreeing to be friends.

Dramatic Story Telling: “God Signs His Covenant”

The Bible event from Genesis 15 is explained. It tells how God made a covenant with Abraham. This covenant foreshadows the New Covenant sealed with the blood of Jesus.

Puppet Presentation: “Gordy’s Big Contract” Conclusion

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids refer to Genesis 15 and discuss.

Abram started to doubt that God would give him children. What did God promise in Genesis 15:5? *(He told Abram his descendants would be as many as the stars.)*

What else did God promise Abram in verse seven? *(He would give Abram the land.)*

Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

Why did God command Abram to bring animals to him, cut them in half, laying the halves opposite of each other and then pass between the animal pieces as a smoking oven and a flaming torch? *(This was the way people back then made covenants. God wanted Abram to know for certain that he would keep his promises.)*

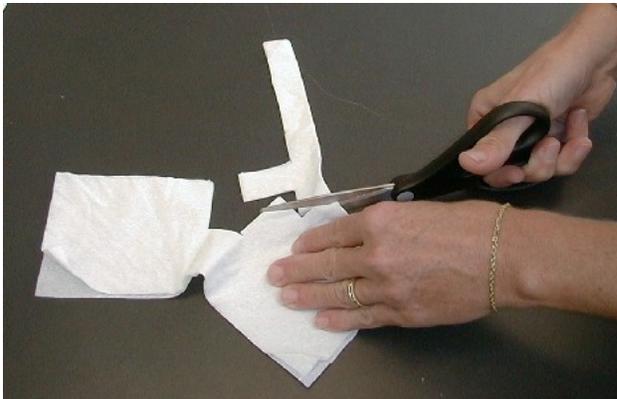
Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

What is God's promise to us? *(God gives us many promises so accept many answers. However, be sure the promise of eternal life is mentioned.)*

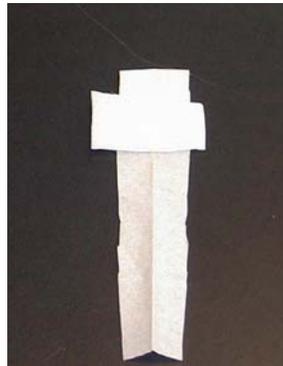
How is the covenant sealed with blood and sacrifice like God's covenant with us? *(God kept his promise to us by sending Jesus as our Savior. Jesus' sacrifice, his death on the cross, is the New Covenant God gives us that we are his children and will receive the promise land of heaven.)*

Application Activity:

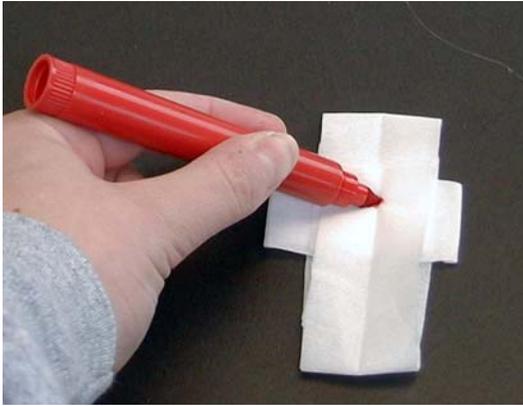
Give the children tissue paper and scissors to cut a cross.



Then have them fold the cross as shown below.



Have the children press a red marker onto the center of the folded cross. The marker should be held in this spot for a few seconds. (Be careful the marker does not bleed through onto clothing or carpet.)



When the tissue paper is unfolded, the cross will now have a red spot in the center and on all four sides.



What do these red dots remind you of? (*Jesus' blood. The red at the top might represent his blood from the crown of thorns; the red on the arms and bottom of the cross, the blood shed when his hands and feet were pierced; and the red in the middle might symbolize his blood from his whipping.*)

Read Colossians 1:20:

“God was also pleased to bring everything on earth and in heaven back to himself through Christ. He did this by making peace through Christ’s blood sacrificed on the cross.”

This time God did not sign his promise with the blood of animals. God signed his promise to us with the blood of Jesus. If this is how

God signed his love for us, God is saying just what he said to Abram, “I am your God. You will be my people.”

This is a reminder that **God signed his agreement; we can believe it!* God wants to be our God and wants us to be his children. He made that possible by sending his Son, Jesus.

If God could promise you anything, what would you want him to promise? *(Encourage a wide discussion of answers. Bring it back to the best gift God has to offer: his Son, Jesus, and everlasting life through him.)*

Each of you ask yourself, “If God has signed his agreement, do I believe it?”

Talk to the children in confidence about their faith in Jesus. Ask them if they trust Jesus as their Savior. Have they received the agreement God gave them? Receiving this is done by simply trusting in his promise and saying, “Yes, I need a Savior.”

Closing Prayer:

Let the kids pray in their own words about receiving Jesus as their Savior. Encourage them to thank God for what he has done to sign his agreement through Jesus. You can pray like this:

Dear God, thank you that by the blood of Jesus you have signed your agreement to us; we can believe it. If there is anyone here today that isn't quite sure if he believes Jesus gave his life for him, would you help that person simply believe your agreement. You really did give Jesus so we could be your close friends forever. Hear each one of us as we pray silently now, telling you we trust what you've promised us.

Lord, there are some other things we want to pray about. We'll speak those out loud at this time.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Safety and Security: Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.

Large Group Presentation

“Gordy’s Big Contract”

Puppet Presentation

Take Home Point: **God “signed” his agreement; we can believe it!*

A special prop is needed for this script. It is a contract that appears to be a small piece of paper. However, the paper unfolds in an accordion-style so many secret clauses to the contract are revealed.

Mr. King: **Good morning, kids!** *(Shows the kids the “Pass the Promise” football.)*
We continue our series “Pass the Promise” as we see how God passes his promise to send a Savior to us through Abram’s descendants. He wanted to make sure Abram knew he would pass his promise to him!

Gordy: Hi, Mr. King!

Mr. King: **Hi, Gordy.**

Gordy: Hey, did you see what we were doing? We were playing cards in Kingdom Quest. Cool, huh?

Mr. King: **Well, you’re not just playing cards. You are finding out about promises—promises that are kept and some that are broken.**

Gordy: Oh, I *always* keep my promises.

Mr. King: **Good, Gordy. I try to keep mine, too.**

Gordy: You do?

Mr. King: **Sure.**

Gordy: Do you promise to be my friend?

Mr. King: **Of course I do, Gordy.**

Gordy: No, I mean *really* promise.

Mr. King: **Sure.**

Gordy: Will you shake on it?

Mr. King: Of course. Sometimes people shake hands to show they will really keep their agreement. Put it there, pal. *(Shakes Gordy's hand.)*

Gordy: Mr. King, if you really mean it, would you sign this little piece of paper? *(Pulls contract out.)*

Mr. King: What is it?

Gordy: A contract.

Mr. King: Oh sure, a contract. What does your contract say?

Gordy: "I, Mr. King, will be Gordy's friend. I promise. Signed, Mr. King."

Mr. King: Okay, I will sign that. *(Signs the contract.)* Now do you believe me?

Gordy: Sure. Let me have the contract back now.

Kids, Mr. King signed it right here, didn't he? So that means he has promised to do whatever this contract says. *(Releases accordion fold in the paper to reveal a list of other things committed to by Mr. King.)*

Mr. King: *(While reading the contract.)* Wait a minute, Gordy. It says here that I will give *you* all the candy that we normally give to first-time guests.

Gordy: Well, you signed it.

Mr. King: Yes, but...

Gordy: You promised!

Mr. King: But I didn't...

Gordy: You can't break a contract.

Mr. King: Gordy, you know I was tricked, so I don't have to give you the candy bars.

Gordy: Yes, Mr. King.

Mr. King: But since I am your friend, I will give you one anyway.

Gordy: Well thanks, Mr. King. You're a great friend!

Mr. King: Gordy, there is something very important to understand. It's important to keep a promise.

Gordy: Yeah, there are other things you promised on this contract. You promised to let me drive your car and...

Mr. King: Gordy, not promises you get tricked into. What is most important is keeping your promise that you will be a friend. Today we are finding out that God made that type of a promise.

Gordy: That he would be our friend?

Mr. King: Yes. God promised Abram he would be Abram's God. God promised to give him a special land, a special son, and a special blessing. Here is the special blessing. Through Abram, God would pass the promise of giving a Savior to the world.

Gordy: You mean one of his descendants would be Jesus?

Mr. King: That's right. And God knew thousands of years ahead of time. God wanted Abram to know he would give him these things so he did more than just make a promise. He made a covenant.

Gordy: What's a covenant?

Mr. King: It's an agreement like a contract. God made a covenant with Abram that he would give Abram a son and many descendants. It was so important that he signed it in blood.

Gordy: What? No way! I mean, that's gross, but it sounds kind of cool, too. What did he do? Did he write something with blood? Yuck, but cool!

Mr. King: Listen to the Bible event and see if you can find out how he did it.

“God Signs His Covenant”

Dramatic Story telling

***Caution: This story telling is Biblically true but graphic. It is included because it is relevant to the foreshadowing of Jesus’ horrific crucifixion. We tried to tone it down yet make it captivating to the average third grade boy. Use your own discretion in adapting for your children.*

Mr. King: It was customary in the days of Abram for people to make agreements with one another. To do this, they did not sign contracts on paper. Instead, they made covenants. A covenant is a very serious promise.

Let’s say there were two neighbors who wanted to make an agreement to help each other. They agreed they would not come over and steal the other’s cattle or sheep. They agreed that if one neighbor were attacked by a band of thieves, the other would defend him. They agreed to help each other when the other person needed help. They didn’t sign a paper that said, “I promise.” Instead they made a covenant. The way they said it was that they would “cut a covenant.”

Now this is where it got gross. The two neighbors would meet together and have with them several animals like sheep, cows, or goats. They would then cut the animal in half right down the middle. Half of the animal would be laid to one side and the other half would be laid to the other side. They would do this to several animals and make a path down the middle of the animal halves.

After cutting the animals in half and making a path, each person would walk down the path between the animal halves. Then they would turn, look back over the animals, and say, “May it be done to you or to me just like it was done to these animals if either of us should break this covenant.”

That’s pretty serious, but that’s how they made agreements in Abram’s day. Guess what God did. He used the same way to sign his agreement with Abram.

Use a Bible storybook or easy-reading Bible to tell the story of Genesis 15. Point out that God had promised to Abram a land, a people, and a blessing. The blessing was the promise of the coming Messiah, Jesus. One good example is from “*The Book of God for Children*,” by Walter Wangerin Jr.

As you tell the story, use the props of a torch (tikki lamp) and a smoking fire pot (burning incense). Dim the lights to demonstrate how God made a promise by passing through the path of the halved animals. Then conclude with:

Mr. King: Only God passed through the path of halved animals. Abram did not walk through the path also because this agreement was made from God to Abram. Abram had nothing to do with it. All he could do was believe that God was telling the truth. God promised Abram he would have a special land, he would bear a son, and his descendants would be a great nation. Abram was also promised that through his descendants, the entire world would be blessed with the Messiah.

“Gordy’s Big Contract”

Puppet Presentation Conclusion

Mr. King: Gordy, what do you think about how God made a covenant with Abram?

Gordy: You were right about it being gross with that blood and all. Wasn’t there an easier way? Couldn’t he just have signed a contract and said, “Abram will have a son and lots of descendants?”

Mr. King: People back then didn’t sign contracts with paper and pens. They made covenants like this. A covenant was very much just like a contract. And it really helped everyone see how important it was when God made a promise.

Gordy: If God made a promise to me, he wouldn’t have to sign it in blood.

Mr. King: But he did!

Gordy: What?

Mr. King: Yes. God gave his Son, Jesus, for you. He said he would forgive your sins and be your friend forever. And to make that happen, Jesus died on the cross for you. He bled on the cross. **God signed his agreement and we can believe it!* It was the blood of Jesus that made the new covenant.

Gordy: So God made a new covenant with me, kind of like he did with Abram?

Mr. King: That’s it.

Gordy: Wow! That’s impressive! Even more important than the contract you signed for me.

Mr. King: I would hope so. Now let’s close with prayer. Would you pray, Gordy?

Gordy: Dear God, we thank you that you signed your agreement and we can believe it. You kept your promise to Abram and made him the father of many nations. And you also made an agreement for us by giving us Jesus as our Savior. Thank you for making us your friends forever. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.