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# Biblical Covenants

## *God's Covenant with Us*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explain the meaning of the word “Covenant.”
- To teach about the Covenant that God has made with us.
- To lead children into a Covenant relationship with God.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Genesis 1:28-29; 2:16-17 (God's Agreement with Adam and Eve).



### MEMORY VERSE

1 John 3:1: See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!



## RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week



## INTRODUCTION

The Bible teaches that God made a ‘Covenant’ with us. The word ‘Covenant’ means “an agreement.” So, in other words, God made an agreement with us to love us and take care of us. Today, we will learn in greater detail about God’s Covenant with us, which shows His great love for us.



## ATTENTION GETTER

### Activity: Making a Contract

#### Ask:

How many of you have seen a real contract?

#### Show:

This is a sample of a real contract made between a student and teacher, in a US school (Show the children the Sample Contract in the Student Workbook).

As we can see, this contract is an agreement that the teacher has made with the student. The student has promised to eat quickly, instead of being slow and distracted. If the student keeps his promise, the teacher, in turn, promises to give him a fish sticker. Once the student is able to collect ten fish stickers, he will be able to pick out a goldfish for the class.

Let's make a similar contract today.

### Memory Verse Contract

Ask the children to fill up the contract found in the Student Workbook. A sample is given below. The teacher can modify the wording according to the convenience of the class.

**CONTRACT**  
**ALL PEOPLES CHILDREN'S CHURCH**

**I promise I will:** learn my memory verses every week

**My teacher promises he/she will:** give me a sticker for each memory verse that I learn

**Then, I will get:** a Keychain when I finish collecting seven stickers

**If I break my promise next Sunday:** I will write the memory verse ten times as consequence

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 ME

\_\_\_\_\_

MY TEACHER

\_\_\_\_\_

TODAY

### Explain:

As you can see, a Contract is basically an Agreement.

**It involves a Requirement and Promise:**

You're required to learn one memory verse every week, and you agree to fulfill this requirement. You 'promise' to learn the memory verse. In return, I promise to give you a sticker for each memorized verse.

**It involves a reward:**

If you keep your promise next Sunday, I'll reward you with a sticker.

**It involves a consequence:**

If you don't keep your promise next Sunday, I'll make you write the memory verse ten times.

- When you sign this contract, it shows that you agree to the three things mentioned in the contract: the promise to fulfill the requirement, the reward and the possible consequences.
- In the same way, when I sign the contract, it shows that I, the teacher, also agree to the three conditions in the contract.

God made an 'agreement' similar to this one, with Adam and Eve, when He created them. Only, this 'agreement' wasn't written down on a piece of paper. They just remembered the 'agreement' in their hearts. Let us now look at their story in greater detail.





## TEACHING CONTENT

In the beginning, God decided to make people. He decided to make them in His own image, to keep Him company and look after the world.

So the Lord took some clay from the ground and made the shape of a man. He breathed gently into the shape, and the man's eyes opened for the first time. In this way, God created man and called him Adam.

The Lord loved Adam so much that He made a beautiful garden for him to live in. The garden, called Eden, was full of many wonderful things. Beautiful flowers grew everywhere. Birds sang in the trees, streams flowed through the valley and animals roamed across the fields.

Adam played with the birds and animals, and enjoyed himself very much. But he couldn't help noticing that none of them was human. And he wished there was another human that he could talk to.

Soon afterwards, God took a rib from Adam's side and made a woman. When Adam woke up, he was thrilled to see Eve. She too was human... just like him... and he was very happy to have her as his wife.

God told the man and woman that it was their job to take care of their new home. God blessed them, saying, "All this is for you. Help yourself to anything you like. But never touch the tree in the middle of the Garden. That tree gives knowledge of good and evil, and you must never eat its fruit. If you do so, you'll die." So Adam and Eve agreed to obey God and not eat its fruit.

In this way, Adam and Eve made an ‘agreement’ to obey God. This ‘agreement’ was not written down on paper. Adam and Eve didn’t sign a paper-contract saying, “We agree to obey.” They just simply agreed in their hearts.

Just like the contract we signed today, Adam’s contract too had three parts.

### **Their ‘Agreement’ had a Promise and Reward:**

#### **Read Aloud:**

Genesis 1:28-29: God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

**Explain:** God promised to bless them and take care of them. They would be given the privilege to rule over everything on earth as king and queen.

### **Their ‘Agreement’ had a Requirement**

#### **Read Aloud:**

**Genesis 2:16-17:** And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

#### **Explain:**

They were required to never eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge.

## **Their 'Agreement' Had a Consequence:**

### **Read Aloud:**

**Genesis 2:17:** ... but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.

### **Explain:**

If they broke the agreement and ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, then they'd suffer the consequence, which was the punishment of death.

However, when Satan tempted Eve to eat the fruit of that forbidden tree, both Eve and Adam disobeyed God. In this way, Adam and Eve chose to break their promise and sinned against God.

### **Human Contracts vs God's Agreements**

The contract we made this morning is a human contract. And as we all know, humans are not always trustworthy; they tend to change their minds. So, if I decided to cancel the contract next week, I could easily do it.

But God is not like us humans. Because He is completely holy and completely trustworthy, He doesn't break His agreements whenever He feels like it.

So, human contracts get cancelled now and then. But God's "agreements" will never be cancelled.

### **God's Love for Adam and Eve:**

Adam and Eve had originally agreed and promised to obey God. But later they listened to Satan and ate the forbidden

fruit. As a result, they had to face the punishment mentioned in the 'agreement.'

God had promised that if they disobeyed, the consequence would be that they would die. So when they disobeyed, their spirits died immediately. This basically means that, in that moment, they became separated from God. The Lord could no longer be friends with them, because He is holy. A holy God can't be friends with sinful people, because holiness and sinfulness can't mix.

This was very painful for the Lord. He had created them so that He could be friends with them forever and ever. But now because of the broken agreement, He could longer be with them.

So God decided to do something special to save His two friends, Adam and Eve. He decided to take their punishment upon Himself.

Think about it! God, who had done absolutely no wrong, decided to take the punishment for their disobedience! This is why Jesus came to the earth and allowed the Jewish leaders to hang Him on the cross. While hanging on the Cross that day, Jesus took all the sins of Adam and Eve on His shoulders. He also took all the sinful things you and I have done, upon His shoulders. He carried our sins for us. And He took the punishment for our sins by dying on the Cross.

This is the only reason why, today, we're able to make friends with God. He died on the Cross and rose again to make us part of His family.

**Ask:**

**According to our contract this morning, what should I do, if you don't learn your memory verse next Sunday?**

I must make you write the verse ten times.

**Let's imagine for a moment that X (name of a student) doesn't learn his memory verse next week. What punishment should I give him on Sunday?**

I must make him write the verse ten times.

**Explain:**

Imagine for a moment that I don't want to punish X. I feel sad for him when I see how hurt he is.

So, I tell him, "X, I'm a trustworthy teacher, like Jesus. So I can't just break up the contract we made last week. You **must** receive the punishment for what you've done. You **must** write the memory verse ten times ..."

"However, I don't want to make you suffer. So I'll take your punishment. I myself will take your notebook and write the memory verse ten times."

Imagine me doing that for each one of you who doesn't learn the verse! Wouldn't that be quite a sight! Me, sitting here and writing out the memory verse ten times in each of your notebooks!

I don't think I would feel like doing it! But Jesus did something far greater for us! He was willing to be tortured on the Cross for us! He was willing to die for us!

### **Covenant vs Contract**

This is the reason why we use a special word to describe God’s “agreement” with us.

We don’t call it a ‘contract,’ because people in a contract are usually imperfect. They’re not always concerned for each other.

But God is not selfish. He cares very deeply for us. So He tries to find a way to continue showing us love even if we break our side of the agreement.

So we don’t call God’s “agreement” a contract. Rather we call it a “Covenant.” God’s Covenant shows the deep love He has for us, even when we don’t deserve it.

### **Example of Marriage:**

For example, when two persons marry we call it a covenant (not a contract). We call ‘marriage’ a covenant because in a covenant, the husband and wife are concerned for each other. They choose to always love each other, and never break their covenant-agreement. A contract on the other hand is easily broken.



## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

***Note:*** All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

**On the Cross, Jesus took the sins of the whole world on Himself. He took everybody’s punishment upon Himself.**

**Does this mean everybody is now a friend of God? Does this mean everybody will go to heaven?**

We learnt today that an 'agreement' is made between two persons. Both persons have to agree to follow the conditions laid down in the 'agreement.'

God showed His readiness to make a covenant-agreement with us, by sacrificing His Son on the Cross for us. But many people are not willing to be part of this 'Covenant.' They have different reasons for refusing:

- Some of them believe that God doesn't exist. So they refuse to fulfill the requirements of His Covenant.
- Some of them believe in other gods. They don't believe that the God of the Bible is the only true God. So they reject God's Covenant.
- Some enjoy living in sin. So they don't want to become part of God's Covenant and obey His teachings.
- And some don't even know that God has made a Covenant with us. They don't know that if they choose to be part of this Covenant, Jesus will take them to heaven after death.

None of these people can enjoy a personal friendship with God, because they have refused to become part of His Covenant. Even though God loves them deeply, because they have rejected His Covenant, they will go to hell after death.

**What must we do to become part of God’s covenant?**

First, we must admit that, just like Adam and Eve, we have disobeyed God. Some of us have told lies. Some of us have behaved rudely with others. And some of us have committed other sins. We must admit to God that we have sinned against Him by doing these things.

Second, we must request God to make us part of His Covenant by forgiving all our sins. He will definitely forgive us, because Jesus has finished taking our punishment upon Himself.

Third, we must agree to be part of the Covenant by following Jesus. This means that we will have to obey Him and love Him through all our thoughts, word and actions. We must think only those thoughts which will honour Him. We must speak only those words which will not hurt others. We must only do those things which will make Jesus happy.

When we agree to live in a way that pleases the Lord, and we request Him to make us part of His Covenant, then we become part of God’s family. Once this is done, nothing will be able to separate us from God’s love and friendship.

**After entering God’s Covenant of Forgiveness, what do you think will happen if I commit a sin (such as telling a lie)? Will God change His mind once again and send me to hell?**

God never breaks his “agreements.” He sent Jesus to the Cross to pay the punishment for all my sins—including my future sins. So God will not send me to hell once I agree to become part of His family.



However, my sins will block God's blessings. God's Covenant contains many blessings and rewards for our enjoyment. We will not be able to enjoy these if we choose to live in sin.



## APPLICATION

If you have not done so earlier, today choose to become part of God's family by agreeing to accept His Covenant:

1. Admit you are a sinner.

"All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory"  
**(Romans 3:23).**

2. Be willing to turn from sin (repent).

"... you can be sure that if you don't turn back to God, every one of you will also die" **(Luke 13:5).**

3. Believe that Jesus Christ died for you, was buried, and rose from the dead.

"God loved the people of this world so much that He gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die" **(John 3:16).**

4. Through prayer, invite Jesus into your life to become your Lord and Saviour.

"So you will be saved, if you honestly say, 'Jesus is Lord,' and if you believe with all your heart that God raised him from death. God will accept you and save you, if you truly believe this and tell it to others **(Romans 10:9-10).**



## CLOSE WITH PRAYER

Lead the children in prayer as they recommit their lives to following God and fulfilling the requirements of obeying and loving Him. Also pray with those who're making a commitment to follow Jesus for the first time.



# Biblical Covenants

## *Nature of God's Covenant*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach that God is Faithful to His Covenant.
- To explain how God 'Establishes' His Covenant.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Deuteronomy 7:9; Genesis 6:18; Leviticus 26:44; Isaiah 59:1-2  
(God's Covenant of Faithfulness)



### MEMORY VERSE

Deuteronomy 7:9: Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; He is the faithful God, keeping His covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments.



## RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Why do we call God's Agreement a 'Covenant' and not a 'Contract'?
- What must we do to become part of God's Covenant?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (1 John 3:1).



## INTRODUCTION

Last week, we learnt that God has made a Covenant with us. He has made an agreement to protect and provide for everyone who becomes part of His Covenant. Today we will find out what the Bible says about this covenant. We will look at some of the words and phrases that the Bible uses to describe this Covenant. Hopefully this will give us a deeper insight into the Nature of God's Covenant with us.

### Note to the Facilitator

There are **at least seven characteristics** that define the Nature of God's Covenant with us. This session discusses **only two** characteristics:

- God is Faithful to His Covenant
- God 'Establishes' His Covenant

The other five characteristics are discussed at the Junior and Senior Levels (Std 4-9).



## ATTENTION GETTER

**Prepare beforehand:**

**Objects that you will require:**

- Container that can hold water
- Empty staples box
- Two cotton balls
- Weights (to hold the objects under water)
- Ziploc packet

**Activity: How Long?**

Fill the container with water. Place one cotton ball in the staples box, and the other in the Ziploc packet. Explain that the purpose of the staples box and the Ziploc packet is to keep the cotton balls safe and dry.

Immerse both in the water (you'll need to use weights, to prevent them from merely floating on the top). Any heavy object, such as a stapler, can be used as a weight to hold them under the water.

**Ask:**

The staples box is made of cardboard, and it has tiny gaps. How long do you think it can keep the cotton ball dry? 5 mins? 10 mins? Or longer?

(Allow the children to express their opinions).

How long do you think a Ziploc packet can keep a cotton ball dry? 5 mins? 10 mins? Or longer?

(Allow the children to express their opinions).

**Explain:**

Some people are like a staples box. They appear strong and reliable on the outside. So people trust them, and choose to depend on them (Just like the cotton ball which is depending on the staples box for protection).

But slowly, as time passes by, they allow circumstances and situations to get them all wet, and they stop being reliable. As a result, those who depended on their promises end up suffering (just like the cotton ball which is ultimately going to get soaked).

On the other hand, some people are like the Ziploc packet. They can be trusted for a long time. For instance, the cotton ball inside the packet will stay safe and dry.

**Ask:**

How would each of you describe yourself? Do you keep your promises for a little while, and then forget about them? Or can people depend on you for a long time, just like the Ziploc packet?

(Give the children time to reflect on their level of reliability).

**Explain:**

We make promises almost every day:

- We promise our parents that we'll not talk or get distracted during class time.

- We promise to return home from play, on time.
- We promise to clear up our toys after we finish playing.
- We promise to pray for a friend's prayer need every single day.

We make so many promises! But how dependable are we in keeping those promises? Do we keep our promises for a whole week? Do we keep them for an entire month?

Sometimes we're not as reliable as we should be!

**NOTE:** You can either open the staples box now, or after the class, to find out if the cotton ball is still safe and dry.



## TEACHING CONTENT

### God Is Faithful to His Covenant

Last week, we learnt that God has made a Covenant with us. He has made an agreement to protect and provide for everyone who becomes part of His Covenant.

But how dependable is God? Is He like humans who forget their promises after a little while? Or is He truly reliable? Today we'll find out from the Bible how trustworthy the Lord is in keeping His Covenant.

#### Read Aloud:

**Deuteronomy 7:9:** Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; He is the faithful God, keeping His Covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments.

**Ask:**

According to this verse, how long does God promise to keep His Covenant?

(To a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments).

**Explain:**

This verse explains that God will keep His Covenant for at least a 1000 generations! This basically means that if you choose to become part of the Lord's Covenant, He will take care of you throughout your whole life. Then, after you've gone to be in heaven, He'll look after your children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Then after all of them die, He will, in turn, take care of their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. In this way, He'll continue to take care of each successive generation.

So, we can have the full assurance that God is totally reliable. He's more reliable than any Ziploc packet could ever be! We never need to worry whether or not God will keep the Covenant-promises that He has made to us.

**God Establishes His Covenant**

God is not only trustworthy, He is also very capable. He has the wisdom and power needed to fulfill every Covenant-promise that He makes to us.

**Read Aloud:**

**Genesis 6:18:** But I will establish my Covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.



**Ask:**

What do you think it means to 'establish' the Covenant? How will God 'establish' His Covenant with us?

('Establish' is just a big word that means "God will make His Covenant stand" – even when the challenges of life become difficult).

**Explain:**

Picture an ordinary person in your mind. He is not Superman, and he has no special powers.

Now picture **all** the demons of hell attacking this one person. (According to estimates, there are thousands of demons ... probably even millions).

Picture them attacking this poor man in the areas of his health, his finances, his family, his work, and so on. Wouldn't this man completely collapse under the massive attack?

No! Not if he has entered into God's Covenant!

The Lord promises to '**establish**' His Covenant with us. This means that He will keep His Covenant even if one million demons attack us. He will make sure that He keeps His promise. In other words, even if the demons wipe out the person in every area of his life, **God will restore him**.

In fact this is what the Lord did for Job! And God did the same for Noah. The flood wiped out everybody on earth. But the Lord promised to 'establish' His Covenant with Noah. So, even though everybody perished, Noah and His family continued to 'stand.' He was able to re-establish a good life after the flood, because he was under the protection of God's Covenant!

Are you under the protection of God’s Covenant? Is every member of your family under the protection of God’s Covenant?

If any of your loved ones have not yet accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour, pray seriously for them. Unless they come under the protective covering of Jesus, Satan and his demons will destroy their lives. On the other hand, if they choose Jesus, He will ‘establish’ His Covenant with them, and help them to “stand tall.”



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Note:** *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

**Why do you think God doesn’t forget His Covenant-promises, the way humans do? What makes Him different?**

Deuteronomy 7:9 describes God’s Covenant as a “Covenant of Love.” Because God loves us with an “everlasting love” (a love that lasts forever), His promises are also ‘everlasting.’ They last forever; He never breaks or forgets even one promise.

**What if I choose to live in sin and rebellion? Will God ‘establish’ His Covenant (cause His Covenant “to stand”) in my life, even then?**

Even when we’re sinning, God tries to continue showing us love and care:

**Leviticus 26:44** says, “Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them or abhor them so as to destroy them completely, breaking my covenant with them. I am the Lord their God.”

God says to the Israelites that if they sin against Him, He'll allow enemies to capture them, and take them away as slaves. But He adds that even in the land of their slavery, He'll not hate them or reject them completely. He promises not to destroy them totally because He loves them. His everlasting love makes Him want to continue showing kindness.

However, it's also true that our sinfulness blocks God's blessings from reaching us:

**Isaiah 59:1-2** says, “Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.”

So, its foolishness to live in sin, and have sin block out God's blessings.

**How can we say that God 'established' His Covenant in Job's life? Didn't God allow him to lose all his money? Didn't God allow him to suffer with painful sores?**

Sometimes God allows us to suffer for a little while, to make us spiritually stronger. We must use this time of suffering to continue trusting God and obeying Him.

If we do this, the suffering will end at the appointed time. Then, God will restore us back to normal—just as He did with

Job. The Lord will definitely cause His Covenant-promises “to stand” and be fulfilled in our lives.



## APPLICATION

Today, we have learnt two things about God’s Covenant with us:

- The Lord will stay faithful to His Covenant-promises forever and ever.
- Even if He allows suffering into our lives, it’s only temporary. He WILL definitely fulfill the promises that He has made to us.

We must learn to express our thankfulness for God’s Covenant-love and faithfulness. We can do so in two simple ways:

- When you promise to love and obey God, keep your promises. Don’t forget them.
- When suffering or difficulties come, don’t wonder if God has left you. Simply continue to trust and obey. Then, you will see the Covenant-promises being fulfilled in your life.

Also, make it a point to regularly pray for those loved ones who have not yet entered into God’s Covenant of Love. Pray that they too will turn to Him, so that they too can enjoy His love and protection.



## CLOSE WITH PRAYER



# Biblical Covenants

## *The Blood Covenant*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To help children see that there is “God-given life” in the blood.
- To teach that the Blood Covenant requires submission of OUR WHOLE Life.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Leviticus 17:11; Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23 (His Life in Exchange for Ours)



### MEMORY VERSE

Leviticus 17:11: “... the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.”



## RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- For how many years will God stay faithful to His Covenant-promises? 30 years? 50 years?
- What should be our attitude and belief when we're facing difficulties?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Deuteronomy 7:9).



## INTRODUCTION

For the last two weeks, we have been looking at God's Covenant with us. Today, we will study one more detail of this Covenant ... about why the Bible calls it a "Blood Covenant."

In olden times, a Blood Covenant was a very serious thing. The two partners entering the covenant would cut an animal in two and pass between its halves. In essence, they were saying, "If I don't keep my side of the covenant, may I be killed just like these animals." Once they performed this covenant ritual, everything they owned became the common property of both.

Today, we will look at the significance of entering such a Covenant with the Lord.

### **Note to the Facilitator**

There are at least 4 implications of entering into a Blood Covenant. In this session, we will be looking at just one of

these:

- A Blood Covenant is made at the expense of life. So a covenant made by blood signifies a Covenant that encompasses all of life.

[The other three characteristics are discussed at the Junior and Senior Levels (Stds 4-9)].

### **Brief Overview of the Lesson:**

- Physical Life flows in our blood, keeping us alive.  
(We have it **ONLY** because of Jesus' sacrifice).
- Because Jesus' Life flows into all parts of us, He 'owns' all areas of our lives.  
(So we must submit all areas of life to Him).
- However, Physical Life is **NOT** enough, for we will all die physically.  
(We need Spiritual Life too, to enter heaven).



### **ATTENTION GETTER**

#### **Identify the Signs and Symbols**



When you see this symbol at the Airport, what does it stand for?

(It shows there's a ramp available for those who can't climb stairs).



When you see these symbols in a school, what do they stand for?

(They usually show the location of the washrooms for boys and girls).



When you see this symbol in the bus, what does it stand for?

(It shows that smoking is not allowed in the bus).



When you see this symbol in front of the school, what does it stand for?

(It shows there's a school nearby, and that all people should drive carefully).



When you see this symbol at the Mall, what does it stand for?

(It shows the location of the Food Court).



When you see this symbol in the Church, what does it stand for?

(It shows that people should switch off their phones).



When you see this symbol in front of the hospital, what does it stand for?

(It shows that we mustn't blow the vehicle horn, to maintain silence).

As we can see, symbols are picture-drawings that say something to us. These symbols don't have an audible voice that we can hear. But they still talk to us, and tell us what to do.



Let's look at one more symbol:



**Ask:**

When we see this symbol on a hospital door, what does it stand for?

(It shows the location where blood donations can be made).

**Explain:**

When God looks at blood, He thinks of 'Life'. When God breathed into Adam, He breathed 'life' into his blood. Adam became a living person because he now had the breath of God in his blood.

In the same way, all the birds and animals on the earth are alive because there's 'life' inside their blood.

So the next time you prick your finger accidentally, and a drop of blood comes out, remember that God-given life is there inside the drop!



**TEACHING CONTENT**

**His Life Sacrificed in Exchange for Ours**

The Bible explains very clearly that the punishment for sin is 'death':

- God warned Adam and Eve, "... you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die" (Genesis 2:17).
- Paul also taught that, "... the wages of sin is death ..." (Romans 6:23).

Because of this very clear warning, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit:

- Their spirits died immediately (they lost spiritual life immediately).
- Then gradually their bodies began to die too, little by little (the physical life inside them began to fade slowly).

If God had left them in this condition, Adam and Eve would have suffered a horrible fate.

Because their spirits were dead, they were separated from God. The Lord could no longer be their friend; He couldn't provide for them, protect them, or take care of them. Left all alone in a sinful world, the poor couple would probably have been killed by one of the animals. And then they would have stayed in hell forever and ever, totally separated from God's love.

It was very painful for God to think of all these things. He had created them to be their best friend, and take care of them. He didn't create them to make them suffer. So, as we learnt the other week, God decided to do something to help them. Instead of making them suffer, God decided to put the punishment of death on His own Son, Jesus.

However, God’s plan was to send Jesus 2000 years later. So, in the meantime, God sacrificed a lamb. The life of the lamb was taken in exchange for the lives of Adam and Eve.

This is why Leviticus 17:11 says, “... the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.”

2000 years after the first lamb was sacrificed, Jesus came down to the earth, just as planned. And He willingly allowed the Roman soldiers to hammer nails into His wrists and feet. When the blood from His body began to flow out, the physical life contained in His blood drained away.

In this way, Jesus allowed His life to be taken away, **in exchange** for our lives, so that you and I would have a chance to live.

Today, there’s **spiritual and physical** life flowing through you, only because Jesus gave up His own life. So don’t waste your life. Choose to obey God, and allow Him to give you a full and blessed life.



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

***Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.***

**If Jesus had not sacrificed His life on the Cross, would you and I be physically alive today? Why or Why not?**

Jesus gave up His life in exchange for ours. As a result of what He did, there is physical life inside our blood vessels today.

For instance, a dead body too, has blood vessels. But because there is no 'life' inside the blood vessels, it's dead.

If Jesus had not sacrificed His life on the Cross, none of us would be physically alive today.

NOTE: However, if we have not accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior, our spirits are still in a dead state; and there's no spiritual life in us.

**If we're alive because of Jesus' sacrifice, then how must we live? How much obedience does Jesus expect from us?**

In ancient times, when two persons made a blood covenant, by sacrificing an animal, everything they owned became the common property of both. Why? Because blood signifies a covenant that covers ALL of life.

To put it simply, because Jesus gave up His life, today there's life flowing into my hands. The blood in my hands contains God-given life. So Jesus 'owns' my hands. I must not use them to do anything that would displease Him.

In the same way, the blood flowing into my brain contains physical life too—life for which Jesus had to die. So Jesus 'owns' my mind. I must use my mind to make only those choices that will please the Lord.

In this way, God 'owns' my whole body, because His "God-given life" flows through my entire being. So I must submit to the Lord in every area of my life, including my studies, my

play-time, my friendships, my TV-viewing, my video games and so on.

God gave ALL of Himself to me. He gave up His whole life for me. So now, in turn, I must dedicate my whole life to Him—including every area of my life.

**Do only Christians have God’s ‘life’ flowing in their blood?  
Or do Non-Christians have it too?**

When Adam and Eve sinned, they brought sin, death and decay into the world. So all plants, birds, animals and humans were supposed to die.

But because Jesus made the decision to sacrifice His life, all other life was able to continue. So even non-Christians have physical life in their blood only because of what Jesus has done. As a result, He ‘owns’ them, the same way He ‘owns’ the believers. This means that they too should submit their lives to Him.

If they refuse to submit to Him and worship only Him, their spirits will continue to be dead inside them. So they will not gain spiritual life.

When they die, the physical life in their blood will stop. And without the spiritual life, they’ll end up in hell, separated from God forever.

Isn’t it sad that they should go to hell, even after Jesus made such a beautiful sacrifice on their behalf? It’s our duty to tell them about the salvation plan of Jesus, so that they too can join us in heaven.

**Based on all that we have studied today:**

**What is “physical life”?**

The life flowing inside our blood, which keeps us alive.

**What is “spiritual life”?**

Those who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, have life inside their spirits too. So even after the physical life stops, they continue to live united with God in heaven.

On the other hand, those with dead spirits will be sent to hell, and become separated from God forever.



### APPLICATION

Based on what we have learnt today, there are two responsibilities for us to fulfill:

- We must submit ALL of our lives to Jesus—not just some if it.
- We must tell non-Christians about what Jesus has done for them, so that they too can submit fully to Him and become part of His family.



### CLOSE WITH PRAYER



# Biblical Covenants

## *God's Covenant with Noah*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explain the background to the Noahic Covenant.
- To show the significance of the 'Rainbow.'
- To teach that the Name of Jesus alone can save us from future judgment.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Genesis 6, 8:22, 9:1-17 (The Noahic Covenant)



### MEMORY VERSE

Genesis 9:15: I will remember My covenant between Me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life.



## RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Why do you think God said that we must never drink blood? (Leviticus 17:10-14)
- Jesus shed His life-blood for you. How did you show the Lord your gratitude this week? (Give examples)
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Leviticus 17:11).

### Note to the Facilitator

There are **five covenants** mentioned in the Bible. In this session, we will be studying only God's Covenant with Noah.

[The other four covenants will be discussed at the Junior and Senior Levels (Stds 4-9)].

### Brief Overview of the Lesson:

- Story of Noah and Significance of Rainbow.
- Why the people were drowned by a loving God.
- How to make Jesus your Safe Ark.



## INTRODUCTION

We have learnt so far that God made an agreement with Adam and Eve to be their friend and provide for them. We saw how this agreement was broken, and what God did for us to save us from the consequences of our sins.

Today, we'll take a closer look at the first formal Covenant that God made with humans—His Covenant with Noah.





## ATTENTION GETTER

### Story Sequencing

The Story of God's Covenant with Noah is depicted in four pictures, in the Student Workbook. Ask the children to number the pictures in the right sequence. Encourage them to briefly explain how the objects in each picture are connected to the Story of Noah.

Once you have their attention, narrate the story in detail, emphasizing the Covenant that God made with Noah.



## TEACHING CONTENT

### God's Covenant with Noah

(Taken from DLTK's Growing Together)

The story of Noah is amazing! It includes a family, all the animals of the earth, a huge boat, a flood and why we have rainbows.

It all starts with Noah. Did you know that after Noah was 500 years old he had 3 sons? I don't know about you but I've only met one or two people that were 100 years old and they were old! After Noah was 500 years old, things started getting very interesting for him.

One day as God was thinking about the people on earth, His heart became very sad. He could see that all the people had become very bad, so bad that they stopped thinking of anything good.

God was so sad and hurt that he wanted to get rid of every person and all the creatures that He had made. He wanted all the evil to stop.

The thing about God is that He gets very angry at our sin and all the bad stuff in the world but we also know that God is love. God IS love, so that means that He can be disappointed when we do bad things but He still loves us, and that's why He remembered Noah.

Noah was the only one that was righteous (which means that he did things right). He was a good guy and he walked with God. So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all the people because the earth is full of fighting because of them. I am going to destroy them and the earth."

God then gave Noah instructions on how to make the boat. He told him what kind of wood and how big to make it. He also told him to put a door in the side of the ark and to make it with three floors. The ark was humongous! We'll get to that more later in the story.

The Bible says that next God told Noah that He would make a Covenant with him. A Covenant is an agreement with a promise. He would save Noah, his wife, and his three sons and their wives. They would be safe in the ark because God was going to flood the whole earth and everything else would die.

I'm missing one other BIG thing that's going in the ark with Noah and his family... and that is... the animals! Seven of all clean creatures, and seven of unclean creatures male and female. Plus two of every kind of bird and every creature that moves along the ground. Then food for each of them for as

long as they were on the boat. Yikes! That's a lot of animals and a lot of food. I think it would've been a very full, noisy, stinky place to be, but they would all be safe.

It's hard to describe how big the ark actually was but if you think of some of the biggest animals you know (elephant, moose, buffalo, giraffe, rhino, gorilla) plus all the other little animals that couldn't be stepped on ... they needed a lot of room! Some people think it took over 100 years to build the ark and the Bible says that Noah was 600 years old when the flood waters came.

Keep in mind that Noah was building a big ark because God told him to. I have a feeling Noah and his family were teased a lot by other people. What if your neighbour started building a huge boat on your street? It would sound a little strange ...

Have you been teased by others for something that you did? How did that make you feel? Noah felt the same way!

When the ark was done, God gave Noah 7 days warning before the flood to get all the animals and food on board, and told him that He would send rain for 40 days and 40 nights. When everyone was in the ark, God shut the door. Then the rain started. The Bible makes it sound like the rain came from the clouds and that there was also water coming up from the ground. So everything probably was covered pretty quickly.

The floods kept coming for 40 whole days! The ark floated on the water and all the high mountains were completely covered with water. Every living thing died on the earth that wasn't in the ark. So the rain came for 40 days and nights but when it stopped, Noah and the animals couldn't just leave

the ark. There was too much water and no land for them to walk on, everything was covered.

The waters flooded the earth for one hundred and fifty days, which is about five months.

God remembered Noah and all that was in the ark, so he sent a wind to help dry the earth. Finally, in the seventh month after the floods had stopped, the ark rested on the top of a mountain.

A little while after that (40 days) Noah opened a window he had made for the ark and probably let in some fresh air! Ha! Even more importantly, he let a raven out. It would fly back and forth to the ark until the water had dried.

Then he sent out a dove but the dove couldn't find any place to go. He waited a week and then sent the dove out again. This time the dove came back with an olive leaf which meant the waters had gone down. He waited one more week and let the dove out again and this time it didn't return.

From the way the Bible describes Noah, his family and the animals were in the boat for just over a year or 370 days! That's a long time to be on a boat with all those animals!

When the earth had dried up enough, God told Noah that everyone could get out of the boat. That probably was a very happy day! Maybe a little uncertain as well. There would be no one but them on earth and they would have to start all over building a house, collecting food ... there wasn't a big grocery store waiting for them when they got off the ark.

Then Noah built an altar and sacrificed some of all the clean

animals and birds to thank God for keeping them safe. When God saw what Noah had done, He told Noah that He would never again curse the ground even if people became very bad.

Then He made His official Covenant promise with Noah and with all the animals. God would never bring a flood to kill all living creatures and destroy the whole earth again.

Then He gave them a sign for everyone to see this promise. He put a rainbow in the sky and that's to remind us of the promise God made to Noah, the animals and us today!

So, whenever you see a rainbow, say a little prayer and thank God that He loves us and that He keeps His promises.



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Note:** *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

**Why do you think God used the sign of a 'rainbow' to mark His Covenant with Noah?**

God used 'water' to destroy the earth. Noah's family experienced a frightening outpouring of water for 40 days and nights. Then, for another 330 days they could not step out of the ark because of the deep waters outside. As a result, Noah's family must have developed a fear of water.

**What do you think their reaction would have been the next time it started raining? They'd have been terrified!**

So God took the very same rain water and did something beautiful with it. He made it such that every time the sun's rays are reflected inside the water particles, a rainbow gets created. In other words, the same water which once destroyed the world, now creates beautiful rainbows for us to enjoy.

Every time it rained and a rainbow appeared in the sky, Noah's family felt safe. They were reminded of God's solemn promise to them that He would never again send a flood that would cover the whole earth.

**Over the last three weeks we have seen how loving God is. If He is so kind, how could He allow millions of people to drown in the flood? Why do you think He punished the people so terribly?**

The first six verses of Genesis Chapter 6 explain why God drowned all the people, except for Noah's family.

**Genesis 6:1-8:**

“When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. Then the Lord said, “My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.”

The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The Lord regretted that He had made human beings on the earth, and His heart was deeply troubled. So the Lord said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord."

Different Bible teachers explain this passage differently. But one thing that we clearly observe in these verses is that there was some kind of involvement with demons. The people had contact with demons to such an extent that some of them were demon-possessed and gave birth to giants.

When people form such close friendships with demons, their thoughts, words and deeds become **completely evil, totally dedicated to the wicked things of the world and Satan.**

However, Noah's family had nothing to do with Satan or his evil spirits. So the Lord did not destroy them.

**People are saying that the world has now become just as evil as in Noah's days. Do you really think this is true? And if so, do you think God will now send one more flood?**

We do not know exactly how evil the world was in Noah's time. But we can see a lot of evil today.

Also, now we have lots of children's books and movies teaching that witchcraft is good and heroic. (Harry Potter was only the beginning. Now the internet is flooded with

Children’s E-books that promote ‘white magic.’ Satan is definitely working towards forming a direct friendship with the younger generation, using the bait of magic and alien stories).

However, God clearly made a Covenant promise that He would never again send a flood to wipe out humans. So there will never be a flood that’ll cover the whole earth. But the Lord did warn us in 2 Peter 3:10 that He will judge the wicked with a “Judgment of fire.”

Those who are safely within the Covenant of God will not be touched by this terrible judgment. Just as Noah was safe in the Ark, the Lord will keep us safe too.



### APPLICATION

When God decided to judge the world for its wickedness, He protected Noah’s family by instructing them to build an ark. But 2 Peter 3:10 warns us that the judgment coming in the following days will be a “judgment of fire.”

A wooden ark cannot protect the people from this judgment. Not even an underground nuclear bunker will be able to shield them. The only thing that can protect them is the Name of Jesus.

Proverbs 18:10 clearly explains that the **Name of the Lord** is like an **Ark of Safety**:

“The name of the Lord is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.”



What does this mean in practical terms? It simply means that those who choose to love and obey Jesus will be kept safe, just like Noah's family. But those who refuse to follow Him will be destroyed.

### **How to make Jesus your Safe Ark:**

#### **1. Confess the sins in your life and repent of them:**

- Admit (Confess) that what you're doing is a sin. For eg. shouting angrily at your parents is not just 'irritation'. It's a 'sin.' Frankly admit that you have "sinned against God."
- Then 'repent' (turn away from your sinful habit) by making a decision not to repeat your sin.

(Psalms 32:3-5: When I kept silent ... your hand was heavy on me ... Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity ... And you forgave the guilt of my sin).

#### **2. Obey Jesus' Instructions**

If you don't obey the instructions written in the Bible, you'll have many 'woes' (suffering and trials), just like the wicked.

(Psalms 32:8-10: I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go ... Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in Him).

#### **3. Pray for protection**

If you're doing the two things mentioned above, God will hear your prayers and deliver you from all your troubles

(Psalms 32:6-7: Therefore let all the faithful pray to you while you may be found; surely the rising of the mighty waters will not reach them. You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance).



**CLOSE WITH PRAYER**



# Biblical Covenants

## *Mosaic Covenant Vs New Covenant*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To show how the New Covenant is superior to the Old Covenant.
- To explain how Jesus saves and helps us under the New Covenant.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Exodus 19-20; Galatians 5:18; 1 John 1:9; Revelation 13:8; Hebrews 4:15-16 (OT and NT Covenants)



### MEMORY VERSE

Hebrews 8:6: ... the covenant of which He is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.

**Materials Needed:**

- Magic Jelly Balls
- Bowl of water

**RECAP**

- What did we learn about last week?
- If God is loving and kind, why did He cause millions of people to drown in the flood?
- What 3 things must we do, to make Jesus our Ark of safety?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Genesis 9:15).

**INTRODUCTION**

Over the last few weeks, we have been studying Bible Covenants in great detail. We learnt about the great faithfulness of God in establishing His Covenants. We saw how God saved and protected Noah's family because of His Covenant with them. We even saw that Jesus was willing to shed His "life-blood" on the cross to save us, by making a Blood-Covenant with us.

Today, we'll take a closer look at God's Covenant mentioned in the New Testament, and find out how it's much better than the Old Testament Covenant of Moses.

**Note to the Facilitator**

Here is a brief overview of the Lesson:

- How Old/New Covenants were Introduced
- Now “Holy Spirit Leading” has replaced the 613 Laws
- Advantages of the New Covenant



## ATTENTION GETTER

### Prepare Beforehand:

Magic jelly balls are sold by the roadside in Bangalore (especially on the Main MG road stretch - to the left of Brigade road and the Cauvery Emporium - where roadside toys are sold). The small beads are sold in packets.

Soak a few of the beads overnight in water, so that they grow 200 times in size. Also arrange for a bowl of water during the teaching session.

### Activity: Small Beginnings

Display both the packet of tiny beads and the enlarged jelly balls. Comment on how even very small objects have the potential of great growth hidden inside them.

Soak a few beads in a bowl of water. Distribute the leftover beads among the children. Encourage them to soak the beads at home and watch them grow ...

### Explain:

Some things look very small and unimportant in the beginning. But as time goes by, they get bigger and better, and we learn to value them more.

This is the case with the New Covenant as well. While the Mosaic Covenant started with incredible signs and wonders, the New Covenant started with a little baby in a common manger.

Yet over time, people began to discover how big the New Covenant really is. They realized that the Old Testament Covenant of Moses (which they had thought was so grand), was nothing more than a Lilliput when compared to the New Covenant, which was like a huge powerful giant!

We'll study these things in greater detail today.



## TEACHING CONTENT

### **How the Old Covenant was Introduced (Exodus 19-20)**

Three months after the Israelites left Egypt, they set up camp at the foot of Matthew Sinai. Moses went up the mountain to talk to God, and the Lord offered to make a formal Covenant with them, even though they were sinful humans.

Moses was very excited, and immediately went down to the people, to share with them what God had offered.

It was a very serious event. God was not only providing a Covenant, He was revealing a foundation for life. For such a solemn occasion, God desired that the people be completely focused on Him. So He required them to do certain things to make themselves ready to meet Him. He told the people to cleanse themselves for three days (Exodus 19:10), in order to symbolize the necessity for pure hearts as they met with a holy God. And they were to remain away from the mountain (Exodus 19:12), upon penalty of death.

It is a serious thing to meet with the living God. But the Israelites did not know how serious yet. They were not prepared for what happened on the morning of the designated day. On this day the morning sun was darkened by a thick, smoky cloud which filled the sky and covered the mountain peaks. Lightning flashed from the dark clouds. The claps of thunder were deafening. The wind blew strongly and fire could be seen in the clouds and high up on the mountain. The ground the people were standing on, shook. And finally there was a long trumpet blast which grew louder and louder (Exodus 19:18-19).

The people trembled with fear when they heard the thunder and the trumpet, and saw the lightning and the smoke coming from the mountain. They stood a long way off and said to Moses, "If you speak to us, we will listen. But don't let God speak to us, or we will die!"

"Don't be afraid!" Moses replied. "God has come only to test you, so that by obeying Him you won't sin." But when Moses went near the thick cloud where God was, the people stayed a long way off.

God revealed Himself in this awesome and powerful way so that the people would learn to respect Him, and in respecting Him they would learn to obey Him. Then God called for Moses to come up the mountain so He could give him the Covenant law.

### **How the New Covenant was Introduced**

The New Covenant, on the other hand, was introduced very quietly. God didn't come down with lightning or fire. There

was no cloud of thick smoke, and the ground didn't shake. There were just the cries of a little baby as He was born into the world. This is how it took place:

**Christmas Story:**

A long time ago, in the town of Nazareth, lived a young woman named Mary. Mary did her chores, was kind to others and loved God very much. She was engaged to be married to Joseph, who was a carpenter.

One day, while Mary was at home cleaning her room, an angel suddenly appeared. Before Mary could say anything, the angel told Mary that she was favoured by God and that God was with her.

Mary was surprised. She was trying not to be afraid, but she had never seen an angel before.

The angel quickly reassured Mary saying, "Do not be afraid! God has found favor with you. You will have a baby boy, and are to give him the name Jesus."

Mary was confused, she was not yet married to Joseph; so how could she have a baby? The angel thought that this might concern Mary so he said, "The Holy Spirit will perform a miracle, and because of this your baby will be called the Son of God."

Mary accepted all that the angel said and responded, "I am the Lord's servant, and I hope everything you have said will come true."



The angel then disappeared, and Mary was left alone. Then, an angel came to Joseph in a dream and said, “Joseph do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. The child Mary is going to have, is God’s son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus.”

In those days the government decided that they should count everyone that lived in that area of the world. So Joseph had to take Mary to his town, Bethlehem, to register.

When they reached the town, all the hotels were full and there was nowhere that they could stay. Finally, someone felt bad for them, and offered them a place to stay.

The Bible doesn’t say for sure where they stayed but most people think that they stayed in a small barn where animals were kept. Mary and Joseph were thankful that they at least had a place to lay down. It was warm, and there was plenty of straw to lay on.

That night the promised baby was born! This wasn’t just any baby, it was Baby Jesus! The Creator of the whole world, the King of Kings, the One who would save the world!

God sent Jesus into the world with one main purpose—to take our punishment upon Himself and die on the Cross for us. If Jesus took our punishment, then we wouldn’t have to go to hell for our sins.

In this way, God introduced the New Covenant. The Bible tells us that this New Covenant was bigger and greater than the one God gave Moses. Let’s now find out how this is so.

## **OLD COVENANT vs NEW COVENANT**

### **OLD COVENANT**

#### **613 Laws to Obey**

On Mount Sinai, the Lord gave Moses 613 Laws!

- There were 10 laws that clearly explained how God should be treated and worshipped.
- There were 13 laws that explained how to care for the poor and unfortunate people among them.
- There were six laws which taught how to behave towards helpless foreigners living in their land.
- There were 27 laws explaining what to eat and what not to eat ...

And the list went on and on ...

The Lord promised that if the Israelites sincerely obeyed all of these 613 laws, He would treat them as His own treasured possession and bless them richly.

#### **The People Failed to Obey**

Some of the people tried very hard to obey all the Laws. But many a time, they'd feel a strong temptation to disobey, and they'd give in. In this way, all the people, including Moses, broke the Laws of God.

### **NEW COVENANT**

The New Covenant, on the other hand, is very, very different from the Old Covenant.

## **Holy Spirit replaces the 613 Laws**

All those who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour become part of the New Covenant. The Holy Spirit lives within them, and shows them what is right and wrong. If they honour God by obeying His Holy Spirit, then it's enough. They don't need to keep the 613 laws of the Old Covenant.

- Galatians 5:18: But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

## **He gives the ability to Obey**

Under the New Covenant, the Lord makes it easy for us to obey the instructions of the Holy Spirit (Philippians 2:13).

- He gives us a deep desire to obey Him (this makes it easier to obey).
- He also gives us the power to obey (so that we're able to really do it).

This is exactly why Hebrews 8:6 says, "... the covenant of which He is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises."

### **Ask:**

**Based on all that we have learnt today, which would you say is the bigger and better Covenant? WHY?**

(Give the children an opportunity to repeat all that they've grasped from the Lesson).



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Note:** *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

**Why do you think God gave the Israelites 613 laws under the Old Covenant? Isn't this a little too much to ask?**

God showed the Israelites a minute, teeny little pinch of His great glory on Matthew Sinai, and the people almost fainted! God is so holy that His flaming holiness will burn up anything unclean that comes near Him.

This kind of a holy God was offering to live among the Israelites, in their camp. So obviously, the people had to learn how to be holy, so that they wouldn't get wiped out.

It was with this idea in mind, that God gave the Israelites the 613 laws. These laws showed them how unclean and substandard their lives were, and it served as a motivation for them to improve themselves.

Of course, the people could not meet up to His high standards, and they sinned again and again. So, animal sacrifices were offered every day, so that God would 'cover' their sins and not wipe them out with His holy fire.

**When the Old Covenant was introduced, God came to the people with thunder and lightning. But when the Lord came with a bigger and better Covenant, He came as a helpless baby. Why didn't He make a grander entrance the second time?**

Because we're sinful humans, we can't approach God directly. So we need somebody who'll stand before God and talk to Him on our behalf. Jesus became a human being, so that He could do this for all the other humans on this earth.

- ❖ When we face the temptation to sin, and we cry out for help, Jesus represents us. He goes to the Father and says, "I know exactly how temptation feels, because I too was tempted on earth. But I never sinned, and was able to overcome each temptation. So I know how to help this person." And Jesus prays to the Father on our behalf, so that we remain strong and don't give in to the temptation.

Hebrews 4:15-16: For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have One who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet He did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

- ❖ Similarly, when we sin against God and cry out for forgiveness, again Jesus represents us. He goes to the Lord and says, "I died on the Cross and took the punishment for this person's sin. So please forgive this person." And the Father listens to Jesus because He offered His body as a perfect sinless sacrifice.
- ❖ In the same way, when we're facing a big problem, and cry out to God for help, Jesus speaks on our behalf. He says to the Father, "I know what this person is going through because I too faced a lot of problems on earth. So I know exactly what kind of help this person needs." And He asks the Father to provide us with exactly the type of help that we need.

If Jesus had not personally undergone these things as a human, He wouldn't know from experience how horrible pain and hardship feels.

- He became one of us, so that He could experience all that we go through, and offer us help.
- By becoming the Perfect Human who overcame each temptation and difficulty, He is able to help imperfect people like us, today.



## APPLICATION

Under the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit is now our teacher and guide. He speaks to us in our hearts, and teaches us what is right and what is wrong. Ask Him to point out the wrong things in your life. If you sense Him reminding you of certain things that He doesn't approve of, write down these things, and make a conscious effort to stop doing them.

Also, take time to reflect on the areas in which you usually fall into temptation. Jesus, who is representing you in heaven, can help you to overcome each of these temptations. So write down these areas of temptation, and then take Jesus' help in overcoming them.

### **Magic Jelly Balls**

After the session, observe the jelly balls in the bowl. See if they have grown in size.

**Ask the children what lesson they have learnt from the Jelly Balls.**

Things which appear small and insignificant in the beginning, contain the potential to become big and great—just like the New Covenant which started with a human baby. The insignificant little baby turned out to be our Saviour and Representative before God Himself!



**CLOSE WITH PRAYER**



# Biblical Covenants

## *God's Covenant of Salt*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explain why God calls His covenant a “Covenant of Salt.”
- To encourage the children to make “salted offerings” to the Lord.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

2 Chronicles 13:5; Leviticus 2:13; Colossians 4:6; Deuteronomy 14:28-29; Matthew 5:13



### MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 5:13: You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?



**Materials Needed:**

- 2 bowls
- 1 bottle of salt saturated water
- 1 bottle of plain tap water
- 1 raw egg

**RECAP**

- What did we learn about last week?
- Why did Jesus choose to become a helpless human baby?
- This week, which temptations did Jesus the High Priest help you to overcome? Give examples.
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Hebrews 8:6).

**INTRODUCTION**

In the last few weeks, we learnt that God established an unbreakable Blood-Covenant with us, when Jesus shed His “life-blood” on the Cross. We also learnt that He did this just to serve as our High Priest and help us.

Today, we’ll discover that God’s Covenant is not only called a “Blood Covenant” but also a “Covenant of Salt.” We’ll find out why it’s called so, and how it applies to our lives.

**Note to the Facilitator**

Here is a brief overview of the Lesson:

- What Salt signifies:
  - Eternal, enduring nature of covenant
  - Purity of covenant
- What God expects from us (Salted Offerings)
- How to be Salt of the Earth



## ATTENTION GETTER

### Prepare Beforehand:

Items to take to the class:

- 2 bowls
- 1 bottle of salt saturated water
- 1 bottle of plain tap water
- 1 raw egg

Fill a bowl with tap water. Add about 6 tablespoons of salt and stir well until the salt has completely dissolved in the water.

Place a raw egg in the salt solution and observe if it floats. If the egg is not floating, add some more tablespoons of salt until it does. Pour the salt water into a bottle and take it to the class.

### Activity: Magic Water

Pour the plain tap water and the salt water into two separate bowls. Place a raw egg in the bowl of plain water, and watch it sink to the bottom. Next, place the same egg in the bowl containing salt water, and watch it float.

**Ask:**

**What do you think has made the second bowl of water 'magical?' Why does it have the ability to make the egg float?**

(Allow the children to express their opinions).

**Explain:**

There is lots of salt in the second bowl. It has increased the density of the water, making it possible for the egg to float.

In Bible times, salt had a lot of significance. This is why God called His covenant a "Covenant of Salt." Today, we'll be studying the significance of this special name.



## TEACHING CONTENT

**Read Aloud:**

2 Chronicles 13:5: Don't you know that the Lord, the God of Israel, has given the kingship of Israel to David and His descendants forever by a Covenant of Salt?

- This verse refers to God's Covenant as a "Covenant of Salt."

Why do you think God called it a Salt Covenant? Why not call it a Covenant of Sugar? Or a Covenant of Honey? What is so special about salt that God used this particular item to symbolize His Covenant?

**Significance of a Salt Covenant**

Salt is used to preserve food items from rotting. When we preserve things in salt, they last for a very long time.

- So God called His Covenant a “Covenant of Salt.” He wanted the people to know that His Covenant would last forever. It wouldn’t decay after a few hundred years.

Also, salt purifies things. For instance, in olden times, people rubbed a newborn baby with salt, to purify its skin. The salt destroyed all the germs on the skin of the baby.

- So God called His Covenant a “Covenant of Salt.” He wanted the people to know that His Covenant was pure and holy. We can trust God hundred percent because He will never secretly deceive or cheat us.

### **God has Commanded Salt-flavoured Offerings**

#### **Read Aloud:**

Leviticus 2:13: Season all your grain offerings with salt. Do not leave the salt of the covenant of your God out of your grain offerings; add salt to all your offerings.

God specifically ordered that every sacrifice or offering presented to Him, must contain salt in it. The people were strictly told not to offer anything without adding salt to it.

Why do you think God wanted everything to be salted? Was salt His favourite flavour?

As we saw earlier, salt symbolizes something that will last forever. So the Lord wanted the people to offer Him commitments that would last forever.

When we need something from God, it’s easy to make promises. For instance, if I want to do well in my exams, I may say to the Lord, “God, if you help me get good marks, I’ll be obedient to my parents.” However, after the exams are finished, we tend to forget our promises and commitments.

God doesn't want us to make temporary promises like this. When God declared that "salt-flavoured" sacrifices and offerings were compulsory, He was essentially saying, "If you want to make any promise or commitment to me, let it be a long-term one that you'll always keep. I'm not interested in short-term promises that you plan on breaking; so don't even make them."

We will now discuss some of the long-term commitments that God wants from us.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Note:** *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

**God has Commanded Salt-flavoured Offerings.**

**Read Aloud:**

Colossians 4:6: Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

**Explain:**

According to this verse, the words we speak must be like a salted offering to the Lord. The same way eating salted popcorn brings great pleasure, the words we speak to people must bring them great pleasure. This pleases the Lord.

**Discuss:**

**What are the different ways in which we must speak, to bring pleasure to the Lord and people?**

- When speaking to parents and elders (Honour them).
- When speaking with friends (Don't gossip; Don't use bad language).
- When speaking to people who are sad or discouraged (Encourage them with comforting Bible verses).
- When disagreeing strongly with somebody about something (Express your opinions politely).
- When sharing the Gospel with a non-Christian (Don't make fun of their religion).
- When speaking to siblings at home (Don't use rude and hurtful words).
- When speaking to a servant (Be polite and show respect).

When we speak carefully, using the correct tone of voice (rather than shouting rudely at people), our words taste like “salted popcorn” to the Lord. They bring Him great pleasure. And they bring happiness to people too.

**Read Aloud:**

Deuteronomy 14:28-29: At the end of every three years, bring all the tithes of that year's produce and store it in your towns, so that the Levites (who have no allotment or inheritance of their own) and the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns may come and eat and be satisfied, and so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

**Explain:**

According to this verse, the people were to bring their salted offerings to the Temple. This was then used to feed those who worked at the Temple, and also those who were poor and orphaned.

**Discuss:**

**Today, what kind of salted offering can we make to the Lord, which will benefit those in full time ministry, and those who are poor and orphaned?**

(Most children receive pocket money nowadays, and they must learn to share it with those in need. So discuss tithing/giving with them).

**Read Aloud:**

Matthew 5:13: You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

**Explain:**

According to this verse, we're supposed to offer ourselves as salted offerings while living on this earth. The same way salt makes people thirsty for water, we must make people thirsty for Jesus—the Living Water.

**Discuss:**

What are some things that we can do to make people thirsty for Jesus?

- Our witness (Share incidents of how Jesus has helped you).

- Our Gospel-sharing (Tell about what we must do to go to heaven).
- Our attitude to others (Are you selfish, or loving and helpful?).
- Our choices/actions (People are watching you. Do your choices and behaviour show that you're a follower of Christ?).

The way we think, speak and behave will either attract people towards Jesus, or push them away from Him. (After interacting with us, if people feel glad that they're not Christians, it means that we're not "salty." We were not able to make them thirsty for Jesus).



### APPLICATION

Reflect on the things you have learnt today.

- God has made a Covenant of Salt with you, which will last forever. You can always depend on Him.
- But can He depend on you? Are you giving Him salted long-term offerings?

Make some specific commitments today, so that you can genuinely be the "salt of the earth."



### CLOSE WITH PRAYER





# Biblical Covenants

## *God's Covenant and My Daily Life*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach that, under the New Covenant, God has written His laws on our hearts.
- To motivate children to obey God's voice in their hearts.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Hebrews 10:16; Ezekiel 11:19; Philippians 2:13 and 4:13  
(God's Laws in our Hearts)



### MEMORY VERSE

Hebrews 10:16: This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.



## RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Why does God call His covenant a “Covenant of Salt?”
- Did you make any salted offerings to the Lord this week, through your words and deeds? Give examples.
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Matthew 5:13).



## INTRODUCTION

Over the last six weeks, we have studied different aspects of Bible Covenants. Today, we’ll study how to apply God’s Covenant to our personal lives.

### Note to the Facilitator

Here is a brief overview of the Lesson:

- God’s Covenant law written on our hearts.
- Are we obeying His voice?
- Ignoring His voice exposes us to danger.



## ATTENTION GETTER

### Migrating Birds

The Student Workbook includes a small activity on Migratory Birds. The purpose of the activity is simply to familiarize children with the migratory habits of birds.

**Explain 'Migration':**

Migration is the word used to describe birds flying from one continent to another. When winter begins, in some countries the weather becomes extremely cold. Because of the snow storms and cold weather, some birds are not able to find food or shelter. Such birds fly away to countries with warmer weather. This is called 'migration.' After the winter is finished, these birds fly back home.

Let's look at some of the most famous bird-flyers that God has created. (Please refer to the Student Workbook).

**Answer the Activity Questions:****Which bird flies the longest distance?**

The Bobolink flies 6000 miles.

**Which birds fly non-stop?**

The Blackpoll Warbler and the Ruby-Throated Hummingbird.

**Why do they fly non-stop? Why don't they rest?**

These birds cross the Ocean. While flying over water they have no resting place. There are no trees in the ocean where they can rest. So they have to fly non-stop!

**Observe**

Migratory birds are such an amazing creation of God! We find it difficult to walk from one end of the city to the other. But these birds fly from one continent to another!

However there's something even more amazing about these birds. They automatically KNOW that when winter begins,

they must migrate. Nobody teaches them this. Nobody even tells them WHERE to go. They simply know it!!!

### **HOW do these birds know where to go?**

- How does the Arctic Tern (which lives in the Arctic), know that it has to cross to the opposite end of the earth, and stay in the Antarctic?
- How does the Blackpoll Warbler know that it has to go to South America? Why doesn't it go to the Antarctic, like the Tern?
- And how does it know where South America is? It has never attended Geography Class! So, how does it know?

**God puts this information inside the bird's heart when it's born! The bird is "genetically programmed" to find its way to the right place, at the right time of the year.**

In the same way, God puts some special information inside our hearts when we choose to become part of His Covenant.



## **TEACHING CONTENT**

### **Read Aloud:**

**Hebrews 10:16:** This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.

### **Ask:**

**This verse says that God will write His laws on our minds. Will He literally do so?**

God doesn't write "Go to Argentina" on the mind of the Bobolink. He just puts this instruction in its thoughts. But the Bobolink feels this 'advice' so strongly that when winter starts setting in, it automatically begins making preparations for a long journey by eating more and resting more.

It responds to the order God has put in its mind, and starts preparing for a 6000 mile long journey!

Just like the migratory birds, we too will sense God's orders so strongly in our hearts that it'll almost be as if they're written on our hearts.

We will sense something urging us in our hearts to do right. This is actually the voice of the Holy Spirit guiding us in the right path.

For eg., if I'm tempted to copy in the exam, I'll sense something inside me crying out, "No! Don't do it!" It's almost as if the laws of God are written on my heart, and they're crying out to me to obey them.

**Read Aloud:**

**Ezekiel 11:19:** I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.

**Ask:**

**According to this verse, what do you think is written in our hearts?**

Through the Holy Spirit, Christ writes in us "an undivided heart," a heart which longs to love and follow Him alone ...

a heart that is NOT divided between a desire for God and a desire for sin.

**Read Aloud:**

**Philippians 2:13:** ... it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose.

**Ask:**

**According to this verse, what does God do inside our hearts?**

Under the New Covenant, the Lord makes it easy for us to obey the instructions of the Holy Spirit.

- He gives us a deep desire to obey Him (this makes it easier to obey).
- He also gives us the power to obey (so that we're able to really do it).

**Read Aloud:**

**Philippians 4:13:** I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.

**Ask:**

**According to this verse, what does God do for us under the New Covenant?**

He supplies us every day with the love and strength that we need to obey Him and follow Him.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Note:** *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

**If God's laws are written on people's hearts, then why do they continue sinning? Why do they murder, steal and cheat?**

God's laws are NOT written on all hearts. Only those who choose to become part of God's Covenant by accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour, have this privilege.

When God's laws are written in our hearts, it makes it easier for us to obey Him. The same way a migratory bird is "willing and able" to do a very difficult thing like crossing a large ocean, we too are "willing and able" to do what God wants, even if He asks us to do something difficult.

We're able to do this because there is something inside us that strongly encourages and urges us to respond to His call. The Holy Spirit inside us, reminds us again and again of the laws of God, and strengthens us to obey them.

In the same way, many a time, the Holy Spirit guides us regarding everyday things. He may ask me to spend time with a student in the class, who is feeling lonely. Or He may quietly warn me to switch off the TV Set if He is not pleased with something that I'm watching. If I'm smart, I'll obey His voice as soon as I hear Him.

However, many Christians continue to sin because they make a deliberate choice to ignore the voice of the Holy Spirit. It's

like a Golden Plover deciding to deliberately ignore the urging inside its heart to fly across the Atlantic Ocean to Brazil.

**What do you think will happen to us if we ignore the voice of the Holy Spirit and do sinful things? For example, what will happen if I decide to lie to the teacher, to protect my friend who has done something wrong?**

Let's assume that a Ruby-Throated Hummingbird decides to ignore the urging in its heart to fly to the West Indies. Let us assume that it has made friends with a lot of Burrowing Owls in the Canadian prairies, and wants to stay the whole winter with them.

Even as the winter deepens and the snow increases, all the trees will lose their leaves. The Hummingbird will have nowhere left, to take shelter from the cold icy winds. There will be no leaves left on the trees to shield it from the cold. Soon, all the food supply will run out as well ... because there will be no flowers left to suck honey from.

The Hummingbird will die a slow painful death, because it refused to obey the voice inside, urging it to fly to warmer climates.

It's the same with us Christians. The Holy Spirit speaks to us in our hearts, urging us not to sin. He warns us when we're about to do something foolish with our friends. But if we want to please our friends more than please God, we may choose to ignore His voice.

When we do this, just like the Hummingbird, we're forced to suffer. We'll find satan taking advantage of our sinfulness and harming us in different ways.



On the other hand, if we obey the voice of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, even when our friends make fun of us, then the Lord will take care of us. He will not allow satan to harm us or destroy our lives.

**Sometimes God asks us to do things that are very difficult. He may ask me to be loving towards my brother, even when my brother is selfish and mean. Is it really possible to obey God in such cases? How do I do it?**

It's not always easy to do the right thing. A little Warbler, with no special equipment or transportation facilities, is asked to travel 2300 miles across land and water, to reach its destination. When the Warbler is flying across the Atlantic Ocean and a storm hits, it can't just stop to rest ... there is nowhere to rest because trees don't grow in the ocean. The little bird has to gather up its strength and continue flying, even though strong winds are hitting it, and the rain is pouring down upon it. It's definitely not easy to do the right thing.

But in spite of the hardships involved, birds don't disobey the voice in their hearts. They know that the voice is telling them something that's for their own good. So they obey.

We need to learn from these birds. We must realize that the Holy Spirit is telling us to do something that is for our own good. Being nice to a selfish and mean brother may be as difficult as flying through a raging storm. But we must do it because it is for our good. As long as we obey, we stay under God's protective covering and He takes care of us.

On the other hand, if we foolishly disobey God's voice, satan will begin to harm us. Slowly but steadily we will begin to notice things going wrong in our lives. We may wonder why our prayers are not getting answered, and we may even blame God. But the truth is, God cannot protect and help us when we deliberately walk out of His protective covering.

So, it's true that obeying God's voice is tough. But as we learnt in Philippians 2:13, God will give us the desire and the ability to obey Him. He will make it possible for us to obey, if we genuinely want to obey.



### APPLICATION

God made a Covenant with us to write His laws on our hearts. He did this so that we would feel a strong urge to obey Him and stay under His protective covering.

Take some time to reflect on what God has been saying to you in your heart, over the last few weeks.

- Is He pleased with you for obeying Him, even in situations when the temptation to disobey was strong?
- Is He reminding you of areas where you have been constantly disobedient?

Be sensitive to the Lord's voice in your heart. Do what He says. He will make your life safe and secure if you obey His voice.



### CLOSE WITH PRAYER



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