**Early Religion Reading Packet**

Name

Class Period

Date

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**BHAGAVADGITA**

*The* Bhagavadgita *is one section of the* Mahabharata*, an epic poem created by the ancient Aryans and is a Hindu holy book. It recounts to story of Arjuna. When the two sides of the family stand ready to battle each other in a war, Arjuna despairs at the thought of having to kill his relatives. He is torn because he is a Kshatriyas, a member of the warrior caste, and it is his duty to fight.* *Lord Krishna, an incarnation (or form) of the Hindu god, Vishnu is Arjuna's charioteer and adviser. He argues against Arunja's reluctance to do his duty as a warrior.*

The deity [Krishna] said, you have grieved for those who deserve no grief. . . . Learned men grieve not for the living nor the dead. Never did I not exist, nor you, nor these rulers of men; nor will any one of us ever hereafter cease to be. As in this body, infancy and youth and old age come to the embodied self, so does the acquisition of another body; a sensible man is not deceived about that. The contacts of the senses, O son of Kunti! which produce cold and heat, pleasure and pain, are not permanent, they are ever coming and going. Bear them, O descendant of Bharata! For, O chief of men! that sensible man whom they (pain and pleasure being alike to him) afflict not, he merits immortality.

There is no existence for that which is unreal; there is no non-existence for that which is real. And the correct conclusion about both is perceived by those who perceive the truth. Know that to be indestructible which pervades all this . … He who thinks it to be the killer and he who thinks it to be killed, both know nothing. It kills not, is not killed. It is not born, nor does it ever die, nor, having existed, does it exist no more. 1 Unborn, everlasting, unchangeable, and primeval it is not killed when the body is killed. O son of Pritha! how can that man who knows it thus to be indestructible, everlasting, unborn, and inexhaustible, how and whom can he kill, whom can he cause to be killed? As a man, casting off old clothes, puts on others and new ones, so the embodied self casting off old bodies, goes to others and new ones . … It is everlasting, all-pervading, stable, firm, and eternal. It is said to be unperceived, to be unthinkable, to be unchangeable.

Therefore knowing it to be such, you ought not to grieve. But even if you think that it is constantly born, and constantly dies, still, O you of mighty arms! you ought not to grieve thus. For to one that is born, death is certain; and to one that dies, birth is certain . … This embodied self, O descendant of Bharata! within every one's body is ever indestructible.

Therefore you ought not to grieve for any being. Having regard to your own duty also, you ought not to falter, for there is nothing better for a Kshatriya2 than a righteous battle. Happy those Kshatriyas, O son of Pritha! who can find such a battle … an open door to heaven! But if you will not fight this righteous battle, then you will have abandoned your own duty and your fame, and you will incur sin…Your business is with action alone; not by any means with fruit. Let not the fruit of action be your motive to action. Let not your attachment be fixed on inaction. Having recourse to devotion … perform actions, casting off all attachment, and being equable in success or ill-success; such equability is called devotion…

The wise who have obtained devotion cast off the fruit of action;3 and released from the shackles of repeated births, repair to that seat where there is no unhappiness. …The man who, casting off all desires, lives free from attachments, who is free from egoism, and from the feeling that this or that is mine, obtains tranquility. This, O son of Pritha! is the Brahmic state; attaining to this, one is never deluded; and remaining in it in one's last moments, one attains the Brahmic bliss.4…

I have passed through many births, O Arjuna! and you also. I know them all, but you, O terror of your foes! do not know them. Even though I am unborn and inexhaustible in my essence, even though I am lord of all beings, still I am born by means of my delusive power. Whensoever, O descendant of Bharata! piety languishes, and impiety is in the ascendant, I create myself. I am born age after age, for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, and the establishment of piety. …

The fourfold division of castes was created by me according to the appointment of qualities and duties. … The duties of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaisyas, and of Sudras, too, O terror of your foes! are distinguished according to the qualities born of nature.5 Tranquility, restraint of the senses, penance, purity, forgiveness, straightforwardness, also knowledge, experience, and belief in a future world, this is the natural duty of Brahmins. Valor, glory, courage, dexterity, not slinking away from battle, gifts, exercise of lordly power, this is the natural duty of Kshatriyas. Agriculture, tending cattle, trade, this is the natural duty of Vaisyas. And the natural duty of Sudras, too, consists in service. Every man intent on his own respective duties obtains perfection. Listen, now, how one intent on one's own duty obtains perfection. Worshipping, by the performance of his own duty, him from whom all things proceed, and by whom all this is permeated, a man obtains perfection. One's duty, though defective, is better than another's duty well performed. Performing the duty prescribed by nature, one does not incur sin.

O son of Kunti! one should not abandon a natural duty though tainted with evil; for all actions are enveloped by evil, as fire by smoke. One who is self-restrained, whose understanding is unattached everywhere, from whom affections have departed, obtains the supreme perfection of freedom from action by renunciation. Learn from me, only in brief, O son of Kunti! how one who has obtained perfection attains the Brahman, which is the highest culmination of knowledge. A man possessed of a pure understanding, controlling his self by courage, discarding sound and other objects of sense, casting off affection and aversion; who frequents clean places, who eats little, whose speech, body, and mind are restrained, who is always intent on meditation and mental abstraction, and has recourse to unconcern, who abandoning egoism, stubbornness, arrogance, desire, anger, and all belongings, has no thought that this or that is mine, and who is tranquil, becomes fit for assimilation with the Brahman.

FOOTNOTES

1. The atman, or individual soul**,** and Brahman, which are one and the same, so all things are connected
2. A member of the ruling warrior caste.
3. Do not concern themselves with the earthly consequences of their actions and develop no attachments to the physical rewards (fame, wealth, children, etc) which might result from those actions.
4. Each caste consists of persons born to that station by virtue of their nature. Each person's karma has made that person's nature suitable for a particular caste. **­­**

**Analysis Questions:** answer the questions based on the reading on a separate sheet of paper *in complete sentences*.

1. Why does Krishna argue that Arjuna should not grieve when men die? What is the Hindu belief associated with this?
2. As a Kshatriyas, what does Krishna say that Arjuna should do? What will happen to Arjuna if he does not do this? What is the Hindu belief associated with this?
3. What does Krishna mean by “Brahmic bliss”? What is the Hindu belief associated with this?
4. What does Krishna mean by “One's duty, though defective, is better than another's duty well performed.”? How does this relate to the Caste System?
5. Summarize Krishna’s argument to Arjuna in **NO LESS** than 5 sentences but in **NO MORE** than 10 sentences.

**The Story of Buddha’s Enlightenment**

There was a small country in what is now southern Nepal that was ruled by a clan called the Shakyas.  The head of this clan, and the king of this country, was named Shuddodana Gautama, and his wife was the beautiful Mahamaya.  Mahamaya was expecting her first born.  She had had a strange dream in which a baby elephant had blessed her with his trunk, which was understood to be a very auspicious sign to say the least.

As was the custom of the day, when the time came near for Queen Mahamaya to have her child, she traveled to her father's kingdom for the birth.  But during the long journey, her birth pains began.  In the small town of Lumbini, she asked her handmaidens to assist her to a nearby grove of trees for privacy.  One large tree lowered a branch to her to serve as a support for her delivery.  They say the  birth was nearly painless, even though the child had to be delivered from her side.  After, a gentle rain fell on the mother and the child to cleanse them.

It is said that the child was born fully awake.  He could speak, and told his mother he had come to free all mankind from suffering.  He could stand, and he walked a short distance in each of the four directions.  Lotus blossoms rose in his footsteps.  They named him Siddhartha, which means "he who has attained his goals."  Sadly, Mahamaya died only seven days after the birth.  After that Siddhartha was raised by his mother’s kind sister,  Mahaprajapati.

King Shuddodana consulted Asita, a well-known sooth-sayer, concerning the future of his son.  Asita proclaimed that he would be one of two things:  He could become a great king, even an emperor.  Or he could become a great sage and savior of humanity.  The king, eager that his son should become a king like himself, was determined to shield the child from anything that might result in him taking up the religious life.  And so Siddhartha was kept in one or another of their three palaces, and was prevented from experiencing much of what ordinary folk might consider quite commonplace.  He was not permitted to see the elderly, the sickly, the dead, or anyone who had dedicated themselves to spiritual practices.  Only beauty and health surrounded Siddhartha.

Siddhartha grew up to be a strong and handsome young man.  As a prince of the warrior caste, he trained in the arts of war.  When it came time for him to marry, he won the hand of a beautiful princess of a neighboring kingdom by besting all competitors at a variety of sports. Yashodhara was her name, and they married when both were 16 years old.

As Siddhartha continued living in the luxury of his palaces, he grew increasing restless and curious about the world beyond the palace walls.  He finally demanded that he be permitted to see his people and his lands.  The king carefully arranged that Siddhartha should still not see the kind of suffering that he feared would lead him to a religious life, and decried that only young and healthy people should greet the prince.

As he was lead through Kapilavatthu, the capital, he chanced to see a couple of old men who had accidentally wandered near the parade route.  Amazed and confused, he chased after them to find out what they were.  Then he came across some people who were severely ill.  And finally, he came across a funeral ceremony by the side of a river, and for the first time in his life saw death.  He asked his friend and squire Chandaka the meaning of all these things, and Chandaka informed him of the simple truths that Siddhartha should have known all along:  That all of us get old, sick, and eventually die.

Siddhartha also saw an ascetic, a monk who had renounced all the pleasures of the flesh.  The peaceful look on the monks face would stay with Siddhartha for a long time to come.

At the age of 29, Siddhartha came to realize that he could not be happy living as he had been.  He had discovered suffering, and wanted more than anything to discover how one might overcome suffering.  After kissing his sleeping wife and newborn son Rahula goodbye, he snuck out of the palace with his squire Chandara and his favorite horse Kanthaka.  He gave away his rich clothing, cut his long hair, and gave the horse to Chandara and told him to return to the palace.    He studied for a while with two famous gurus of the day, but found their practices lacking.

He then began to practice the austerities and self-mortifications practiced by a group of five ascetics. For six years, he practiced. The sincerity and intensity of his practice were so astounding that, before long, the five ascetics became followers of Siddhartha.  But the answers to his questions were not forthcoming.  He redoubled his efforts, refusing food and water, until he was in a state of near death.

One day, a peasant girl named Sujata saw this starving monk and took pity on him.  She begged him to eat some of her milk-rice.  Siddhartha then realized that these extreme practices were leading him nowhere, that in fact it might be better to find some middle way between the extremes of the life of luxury and the life of self-mortification.  So he ate, and drank, and bathed in the river.  The five ascetics saw him and concluded that Siddhartha had given up the ascetic life and taken to the ways of the flesh, and left him.

In the town of Bodh Gaya, Siddhartha decided that he would sit under a certain fig tree as long as it would take for the answers to the problem of suffering to come.  He sat there for many days, first in deep concentration to clear his mind of all distractions, then in mindfulness meditation, opening himself up to the truth.  He began, they say, to recall all his previous lives, and to see everything that was going on in the entire universe.  On the full moon of May, with the rising of the morning star, Siddhartha finally understood the answer to the question of suffering and became the Buddha, which means “he who is awake.”

It is said that Mara, the evil one, tried to prevent this great occurrence.  He first tried to frighten Siddhartha with storms and armies of demons.  Siddhartha remained completely calm.  Then he sent his three beautiful daughters to tempt him, again to no avail.  Finally, he tried to ensnare Siddhartha in his own ego by appealing to his pride.  That, too, failed.  Siddhartha, having conquered all temptations, touched the ground with one hand and asked the earth to be his witness.

Siddhartha, now the Buddha, remained seated under the tree -- which we call the bodhi tree -- for many days longer. It seemed to him that this knowledge he had gained was far too difficult to communicate to others.  Legend has it that Brahma, king of the gods, convinced Buddha to teach, saying that some of us perhaps have only a little dirt in our eyes and could awaken if we only heard his story.  Buddha agreed to teach.

Buddha had achieved his enlightenment at the age of 35.  He would teach throughout northeast India for another 45 years.  When the Buddha was 80 years old, he told his friend and cousin Ananda that he would be leaving them soon.  And so it came to be that in Kushinagara, not a hundred miles from his homeland, he ate some spoiled food and became very ill.  He went into a deep meditation under a grove of sala trees and died.  His last words were...

*Impermanent are all created things;*
*Strive on with awareness.*

Taken from: Boeree, C. George. "The Life of Siddhartha Gautama." Shippensburg University, 1999. Web. 01 Oct. 2012. <http://webspace.ship.edu/cgboer/siddhartha.html>.

**THE SERMON AT BENARES**

On seeing their old teacher approach, the five bhikkhus [Buddhist monk] agreed among themselves not to salute him, nor to address him as a master, but by his name only. "For," so they said, "he has broken his vow and has abandoned holiness. He is no bhikkhu but [Siddhartha] Gotama, and Gotama has become a man who lives in abundance and indulges in the pleasures of worldliness."

But when the Blessed One approached in a dignified manner, they involuntarily rose from their seats and greeted him in spite of their resolution. Still they called him by his name and addressed him as "friend Gotama."

When they had thus received the Blessed One, he said: "Do not call the Tathagata [name the Buddha of the scriptures uses when referring to himself] by his name nor address him as 'friend,' for he is the Buddha, the Holy One. The Buddha looks with a kind heart equally on all living beings, and they therefore call him 'Father.' To disrespect a father is wrong; to despise him, is wicked.

"The Tathagata," the Buddha continued, "does not seek salvation in [strictness], but neither does he for that reason indulge in worldly pleasures, nor live in abundance. The Tathagata has found the middle path.

"There are two extremes, O bhikkhus, which the man who has given up the world ought not to follow-the habitual practice, on the one hand, of self-indulgence which is unworthy, vain and fit only for the worldly-minded and the habitual practice, on the other hand, of self-mortification, which is painful, useless and unprofitable.

"Neither abstinence from fish or flesh, nor going naked, nor shaving the head, nor wearing matted hair, nor dressing in a rough garment, nor covering oneself with dirt, nor sacrificing to Agni, will cleanse a man who is not free from delusions.

"Reading the Vedas, making offerings to priests, or sacrifices to the gods, self-mortification by heat or cold, and many such penances performed for the sake of immortality, these do not cleanse the man who is not free from delusions.

"Anger, drunkenness, obstinacy, bigotry, deception, envy, self-praise, disparaging others, superciliousness and evil intentions constitute uncleanness; not verily the eating of flesh. "

A middle path, O bhikkhus, avoiding the two extremes, has been discovered by the Tathagata-a path which opens the eyes, and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana!

"What is that middle path, O bhikkhus, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathagata - that path which opens the eyes, and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana?

"Let me teach you, O bhikkhus, the middle path, which keeps aloof from both extremes. By suffering, the emaciated devotee produces confusion and sickly thoughts in his mind. Mortification is not conducive even to worldly knowledge; how much less to a triumph over the senses !

"He who fills his lamp with water will not dispel the darkness, and he who tries to light a fire with rotten wood will fail. And how can anyone be free from self by leading a wretched life, if he does not succeed in quenching the fires of lust, if he still hankers after either worldly or heavenly- pleasures. But he in whom self has become extinct is free from lust: he will desire neither worldly nor heavenly pleasures, and the satisfaction of his natural wants will not defile him. However, let him be moderate, let him eat and drink according to the needs of the body.

"Sensuality is enervating: the "self-indulgent" man is a slave to pleasure to his passions, and pleasure-seek. ing is degrading and vulgar.

"But to satisfy the necessities of life is not evil. To keep the body in good health is a duty for otherwise we shall not be able to trim the lamp of wisdom, and keep our mind strong and clear. Water surrounds the lotus-flower, but does not wet its petals.

"This is the middle path, O bhikkhus. that keeps aloof from both extremes.

And the Blessed One spoke kindly to his disciples, pitying them for their errors, and pointing out the uselessness of their endeavors, and the ice of ill-will that chilled their hearts melted away under the gentle warmth of the Master's persuasion.

Now the Blessed One set the wheel of the most excellent law rolling, and he began to preach to the five bhikkhus, opening to them the gate of immortality, and showing them the bliss of Nirvana.

The Buddha said:

"The spokes of the wheel are the rules of pure conduct: justice is the uniformity of their length, wisdom is the tire; modesty and thoughtfulness are the hub in which the immovable axle of truth is fixed.

"He who recognizes the existence of suffering, its cause, its remedy, and its cessation has fathomed the four noble truths. He will walk in the right path.

"Right views will be the torch to light his way. Right aspirations will be his guide. Right speech will be his dwelling-place on the road. flis gait will be straight, for it is right behavior. His refreshments will be the right way of earning his livelihood. right efforts will be his steps right thoughts his breath; and right contemplation will give him the peace that follows in his footprints.

"Now, this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning suffering:

"Birth is attended with pain, decay is painful, disease is painful, death is painful. Union. with the unpleasant is painful, painful is separation from the pleasant, and any craving that is unsatisfied, that too is painful. In brief, bodily conditions which spring from attachment are painful.

"This, then, O bhikkus, is the noble truth concerning suffering.

"Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the origin of suffering:

"Verily, it is that craving which causes the renewal of existence, accompanied by sensual delight, seeking satisfaction now here, now there, the craving for the gratification of the passions, the craving for a future life, and the craving for happiness in this life.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the origin of suffering-

"Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of suffering:

"Verily, it is the destruction, in which no passion remains, of this very thirst; it is the laying aside of, the being free from, the dwelling no longer upon this thirst.

"This then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of suffering-

'Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the way which leads to the destruction of sorrow. Verily! it is this noble eightfold path: that is to say:

"Right views; right aspirations; right speech; right behavior; right livelihood, right effort; right thoughts; and right contemplation.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of sorrow. "By the practice of lovingkindness I have attained liberation of heart, and thus I am assured that I shall never return in renewed births. I have even now attained Nirvana."

And when the Blessed One had thus set the royal chariot wheel of truth rolling onward, a rapture thrilled through all the universes. The devas left their heavenly abodes to listen to the sweetness of the truth; the saints that had parted from this life crowded around the great teacher to receive the glad tidings; even the animals of the earth felt the bliss that rested upon the words of the Tagathata: and all the creatures of the host of sentient beings, gods, men, and beasts, hearing the message of deliverance, received and understood it in their own language.

And when the doctrine was propounded, the venerable Kondanna, the oldest one among the five bhikkhus, discerned the truth with his mental eye, and he said: "Truly, O Buddha, our Lord, thou hast found the truth!" Then the other bhikkhus too, joined him and exclaimed: "Truly, thou art the Buddha, thou has found the truth. "

And the devas and saints and all the good spirits of the departed generations that had listened to the sermon of the Tathagata, joyfully received the doctrine and shouted: "Truly, the blessed One has founded the kingdom of righteousness. The Blessed One has moved the earth; he has set the wheel of Truth rolling, which by no one in the universe, be he god or man, can ever be turned back. The kingdom of Truth will be preached upon earth; it will spread; and righteousness, good-will, and peace will reign among mankind."

Chinese Cultural Studies: The Buddha: Sermons and Teachings (6th century B.C.E.)

From: Ephanius Wilson, *Sacred Books of the East*, rev. ed. (London: The Colonial Press, 1900), pp. 158, 160-61, 171-72, repr. In Mark A. Kishlansky, ed., *Sources of World History*, *Volume I*, (New York: HarperCollins CollegePublishers, 1995), pp. 67-71

<http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/bud-ser.htm>

Answer these questions **from both of the Buddhist readings**

1. How did Siddartha grow up?
2. What did he discover that changed his life?
3. What happened to Siddartha while meditating.
4. Why were the bhikkhus were upset with Buddha and addressed him as “friend Gotama"? What was Buddha’s response to this?
5. Write one sentence that summarizes the main idea of this sermon.
6. What does Buddha mean by “the middle path”?
7. Summarize the four “noble truths” in your own words.
8. What is the bhikkhus’ response at the end of the sermon?

**God’s Covenant with Israelites**

**\*\*\*Answer all questions in complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper\*\*\***

**Covenant with Abraham: Genesis 17:1-22**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.”

Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, “As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram[meaning *exalted father*]; your name will be Abraham [meaning *father of many*], for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.”

Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant.Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

God also said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah [meaning *princess*]. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.”

Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, “Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?”And Abraham said to God, “If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!”

Then God said, “Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac [meaning *he laughs*]. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year.” When he had finished speaking with Abraham, God went up from him.

1. What promises did God make to Abraham?
2. What did Abraham have to do to show devotion to the covenant?
3. What miracle did God pledge so that Abraham might have a son with his wife, Sarah?
4. What is the significance of Abraham’s name change?

**God Renews the Covenant with Moses: Exodus 34:1-16**

The Lord said to Moses, “Chisel out two stone tablets like the first ones, and I will write on them the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. Be ready in the morning, and then come up on Mount Sinai. Present yourself to me there on top of the mountain. No one is to come with you or be seen anywhere on the mountain; not even the flocks and herds may graze in front of the mountain.”

So Moses chiseled out two stone tablets like the first ones and went up Mount Sinai early in the morning, as the Lord had commanded him; and he carried the two stone tablets in his hands. Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.”

Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshiped. “Lord,” he said, “if I have found favor in your eyes, then let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, forgive our wickedness and our sin, and take us as your inheritance.”

Then the Lord said: “I am making a covenant with you. Before all your people I will do wonders never before done in any nation in all the world. The people you live among will see how awesome is the work that I, the Lord, will do for you. Obey what I command you today. I will drive out before you the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land where you are going, or they will be a snare among you. Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and cut down their Asherah poles. Do not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

“Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land; for when they prostitute themselves to their gods and sacrifice to them, they will invite you and you will eat their sacrifices. And when you choose some of their daughters as wives for your sons and those daughters prostitute themselves to their gods, they will lead your sons to do the same.

1. What is the covenant that God makes with Moses? How is it different and similar to the one made with Abraham?
2. Why do you think God tells the people not to make treaties with those who live in the land?

**God’s Promise to David: 2 Samuel 7:4-27**

After the king [David] was settled in his palace and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him,he said to Nathan the prophet, “Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.”

Nathan replied to the king, “Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you.”

But that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying:

“Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling [*According to Hebrew tradition, God’s spirit lived in the Ark of the Covenant, a wooden chest built by Moses. The Ark was placed in a tent called a tabernacle which served as a place of worship*]. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, Why have you not built me a house of cedar?

“Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginningand have done ever since the time I appointed leadersover my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

“‘The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.’”

Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.

1. What did David wish to do for God?
2. What had God done for David?
3. What is God’s promise to David? How does this relate to the covenants with Abraham and Moses?