



SHARING SCRIPTURE

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Covenant Primer

For use: April 4 - April 10

Texts: Genesis 9:15; Isaiah 54:9; Genesis 12:1-3, Galatians 3:6-9, 29; Exodus 6:1-8; Jeremiah 31:33-34

After some COVID-cure promises proved too good to be true, the medical community now investigates other claims with a healthy dose of skepticism.

Some suggested cures, such as Hydroxychloroquine, are generally harmless, though ineffective. On the other extreme, proposals such as ingesting disinfectants prove to be deadly. [1] The jury is still out on treatments that may hold promise, such as Ivermectin, Dexamethasone, and Colchicine, while the results of proper scientific testing are pending. The lesson from all of this is that when it comes to extraordinary medical promises, we should be very careful where our health and well-being is concerned.

God makes us an extraordinary promise recorded in Jeremiah 31:33 that appears too good to be true: “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,’ declares the LORD. ‘I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.’” In this contract, God promises to install holy will and purpose in our minds and hearts. God even promises to be our God and to love us as parents love their children. Of course, we have a deal in the contract too. Verse 34 reveals our part of the contract: “They will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.” In sum, we receive the greatest gift of all for the simple price of getting to know God. Wait ... that’s *all*?

Through illustrations of how the covenant works in the lives of Noah, Abraham,

and Moses, we can investigate the effectiveness of God's covenant promises. God promised Noah that a flood would never again destroy the Earth, and then set a rainbow in the sky as a sign of that contract. God promised Abram that he would be made the father of a great nation, and Galatians 3:29 declares that we are the fulfillment of that promise. God promised Moses that the Israelites would be freed from Egyptian slavery, and Moses led them on the exodus to the Promised Land. God always keeps holy covenants with us.

A contract, of course, always involves at least two parties. We do have a part to play in this covenantal contract. Noah believed God, and that faith led him to build a boat and get on it, even though it had never rained before. Abram believed God, and that faith led him to pack up his family and travel to an unknown land. Moses believed God, and that faith led him to go back to Egypt (where he was wanted for murder) and stand before Pharaoh to deliver God's emancipation proclamation.

According to Galatians 3:26, we are God's children and Abraham's descendants through our faith in Christ Jesus. God's promise seems too good to be true, but it stands up to vigorous scrutiny—we really can receive eternal life in exchange for this faith.

~Chuck Burkeen

[1] <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/trump-suggests-injection-disinfectant-beat-coronavirus-clean-lungs-n1191216>

For Reflection

Connecting: What was the last advertisement you've seen for a product that seemed too good to be true, and later discovered that it was? How did you know that the claims were bogus? Share your story with your group, over your online connection if you aren't yet meeting in person. Better yet, see if you can access the ad on your phone or tablet to show your group.

Sharing: How do you know that God's law is written in your mind and heart?

1. I obey the Ten Commandments to the letter
2. I have a strong, innate sense of right and wrong
3. I feel exceptionally guilty whenever I break God's law
4. Things that used to tempt me to sin don't have as great an attraction for me anymore
5. People have commented to me that they see a change in my life
6. Other:

Applying: Share with your group one of your favorite Bible promises—one that you've seen God keep for you. Did you have to do something to receive the blessings of the promise? Who got the greater end of the deal: You, or God?

Valuing: Do you fully accept that you are a child of God and an heir to the promises of Scripture? Focus your prayers this week on thankfulness on what God has done—and is doing—to fulfill those promises in your life.

Other Helpful Resources

Creative Ministry's website equips you with friendship evangelism, small group, community outreach, and healing ministry tools right at your fingertips. Our website also features Adventist research conducted by Monte Sahlin, as well as Sharing Scripture archives, ScripShots, and more. And if you're tired of staring at a screen, digital files are available for download as PDFs and to print.

We believe CreativeMinistry.org is an online library you'll want to be a part of. We'll see you there!

If you appreciate using Sharing Scripture as a resource, and you know others who may be interested, please share these newsletters with your friends. Better yet, have them personally sign up for this free resource. They can do that by calling 800.272.4664 or by emailing us at creativeministryinfo@gmail.com.

Three decades ago, we created this resource for small groups and Sabbath school classes, and it continues to bless so many people worldwide. Thank you for your continued interest in these biblical themes and what they mean to your life and those people with whom you share it.

Paul Richardson
Executive Director

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