



SHARING SCRIPTURE

Discover • Jesus • Together

An Everlasting Covenant

For use: April 18 - April 24

Texts: Exodus 3:14; Genesis 17:1-6; Genesis 41:45; Daniel 1:7; Genesis 15:7-18; Genesis 17:1-14; Revelation 14:6-7

Rarely has the promise “Till death do us part” been more appropriate than in the experience of Dick and Shirley Meek. Through their married life, Dick, age 90, and Shirley, age 87, enjoyed skydiving, zip lining, and travelling together. They made it a regular habit to enjoy a date every day at 3:00 pm.

The Ohio couple celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on December 22, 2020, telling their children at the time that they were both feeling a bit under the weather. Kelly Meek reflects that, “They said to all us kids, ‘we think we’re getting colds.’” On January 8, they both tested positive for COVID-19. As their conditions worsened, the hospital found space to bring their two beds together. They died in each other’s arms—just minutes apart—on January 16, three days before they were scheduled to receive their COVID vaccines. “They were holding hands and Mom’s head was on Dad’s shoulder,” said Debbie Meek Howell. [1]

God’s everlasting covenant with us lasts well beyond our human lifetimes. It was originally established in the Garden of Eden when God promised to strike the head of the serpent who deceived Adam and Eve, and it carries on through countless generations. God kept the covenant promise with Abram through his sojourn from Ur into Canaan. When Moses led Israel out of Egyptian captivity, it was due to God’s covenant promise. Through the time of the kings of Israel and the Babylonian captivity, God kept the promise. Jesus is the ultimate

fulfillment of that promise, and now we are the blessed recipients of that original covenant.

Often in the covenant relationship, God changes the name of the recipient. Abram (high father) became Abraham (father of nations); Jacob (the deceiver) became Israel (one who prevails with God); Saul (death) became Paul (small). The promise in Revelation 2:17 to each of us who remain faithful to God is that we will receive a white stone (the symbol of vindication) with a new name on it. Only we who receive the new name will understand what it represents in our relationship with God. God knows our characters and quirks so intimately—just like a long-time married couple—that this new name will be intimately personal, just between God and us.

In Romans 8:38 and 39, Paul reminds us that not even death in this life can separate us from the love of God. Neither angels nor demons nor any power in heaven or earth can stop God from keeping the covenant promise of love to us. Those who die in the hope of God's promise of this eternal relationship will only experience a brief interlude before the resurrection. "Till death do us part" becomes "Come, take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world" (Matthew 25:34).

~Chuck Burkeen

[1] <https://abc7ny.com/covid-19-couple-dies-of-holding-hands-coronavirus-dick-meek/9871402/>

For Reflection

Connecting: Have you ever made a promise that, through extenuating circumstances, you were unable to keep? How did you feel about that at the time? Does it still bother you? Share whatever you feel comfortable revealing to your group, through your online connection if you aren't yet meeting in person.

Sharing: Which aspect of your life do you hope your new name reflects?

1. Some personal struggle that I overcame with God's help
2. Some dramatic event in my life
3. Who I was as a friend and family member
4. What I did to contribute to God's kingdom here on earth
5. The relief I feel that I actually made it to heaven
6. Other:

Applying: Some people are so damaged by broken promises and abuse in this life that they fully expect that even God will disappoint them. How could you help a friend who is wracked with doubt accept God's promise of love? What can you say? What can you do?

Valuing: Have you ever felt that you've sinned so greatly that God must have quit loving you for a time? Make [Romans 8:38-39](#) a special focus of your devotional and prayer time during this coming week.

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.

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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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