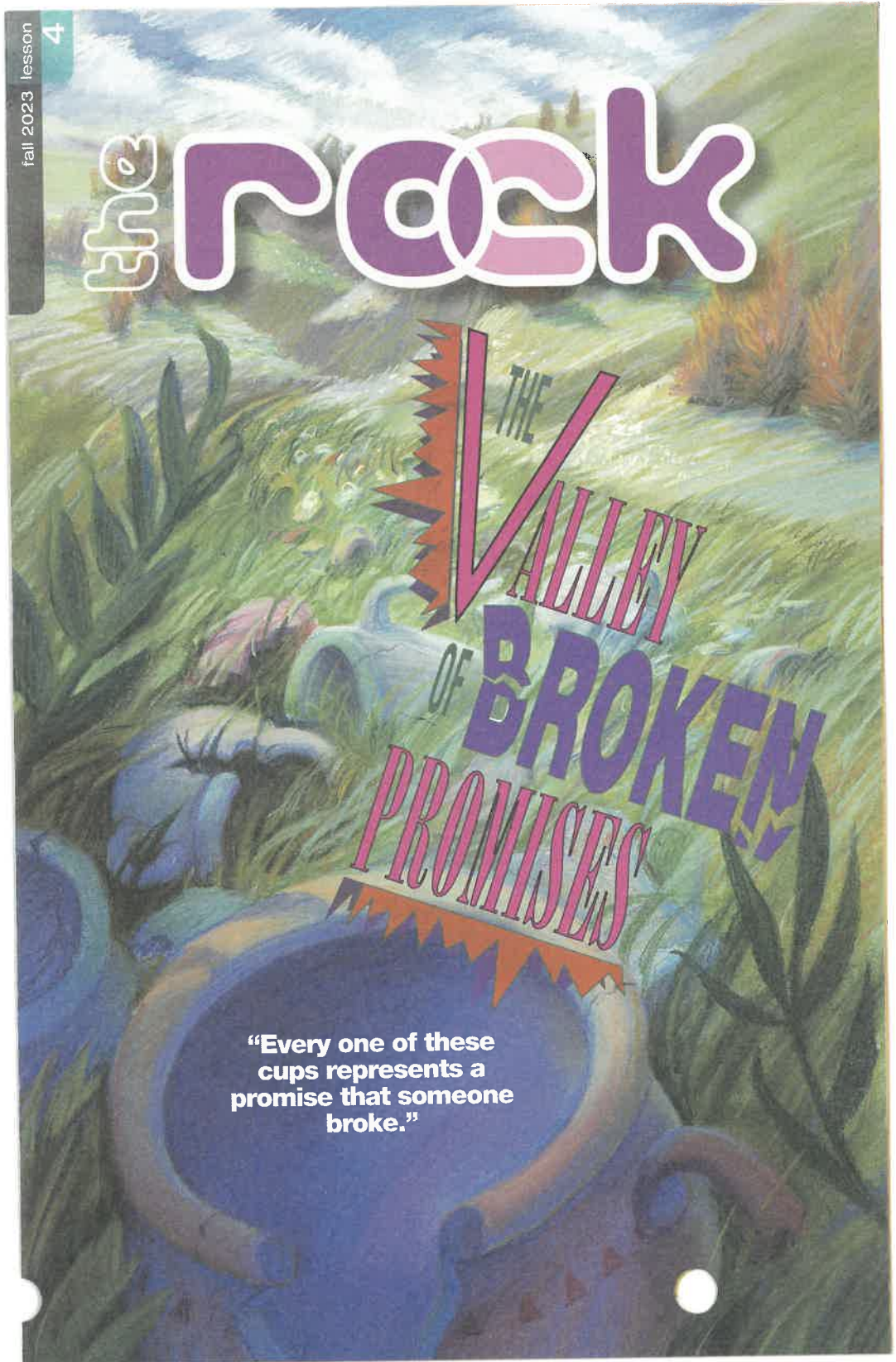


the rack

THE VALLEY OF BROKEN PROMISES

"Every one of these cups represents a promise that someone broke."





everywhere I looked, there were broken cups — glass cups, porcelain cups, golden cups, silver cups, and clay cups. The valley was filled with shattered pieces.

"This is the valley of broken promises," said Benjamin, my trail guide, as he dismounted from his horse. "Every one of these cups represents a promise that someone broke."

He sifted through the rubble and picked up two halves of a broken cup. Gently, he placed the two pieces together.

Then he sighed and handed the pieces to me.

"When you put the pieces together, you can learn what promise was broken,"

Benjamin said, handing the broken cup to me.

Without a word, I placed the two pieces together and stared into the cup. I saw a small mark at the bottom, but it didn't mean anything to me. I looked at Benjamin,



questioningly.

"That cup represents a promise made to a Cheyenne named Black Kettle and his friend Lean Bear," explained Benjamin.

"They were given medals by President Abraham Lincoln. Black Kettle was also given an American flag, which he treasured."

Benjamin told me the whole story.

"If you fly that flag above your teepee, you will not be harmed," said the colonel who presented the flag to Black Kettle. The colonel promised.

As Benjamin talked, I learned that Lean Bear rode out to meet some soldiers who approached his camp one day. While other braves stayed back and watched, Lean Bear went forward alone. He wanted to display the medal from President Lincoln and shake hands.

As Lean Bear approached, the captain ordered, "Fire!" Clouds

of smoke erupted from the soldiers' rifles. Lean Bear was dead.

The other Cheyenne braves surged forward to attack. They could have wiped out the soldiers.

That's when Chief Black Kettle rode into the furious rush of horses and yelled for his friends to stop the attack.

Eventually, he was able to stop the battle, but the damage was done. Bad feelings were stirred up between the Cheyennes and the soldiers.

Benjamin described more battles. He also explained that an Army officer told Black Kettle that if the Cheyennes returned to the camp at Sand Creek, they would be safely under his protection. He promised.

But a man named Colonel Chivington arrived. He shouted, "I have come to kill Indians!"

It was early morning at the Cheyenne camp. Colonel Chivington's men approached. Children screamed. Some of the Indian men ran for their weapons. But Chief Black Kettle was sure the soldiers would not kill because

he flew the American flag from a long pole.

He was wrong. The soldiers began shooting.

A 70-year-old man, White Antelope, ran toward the soldiers, holding up his hands and yelling, "Stop!" A gu

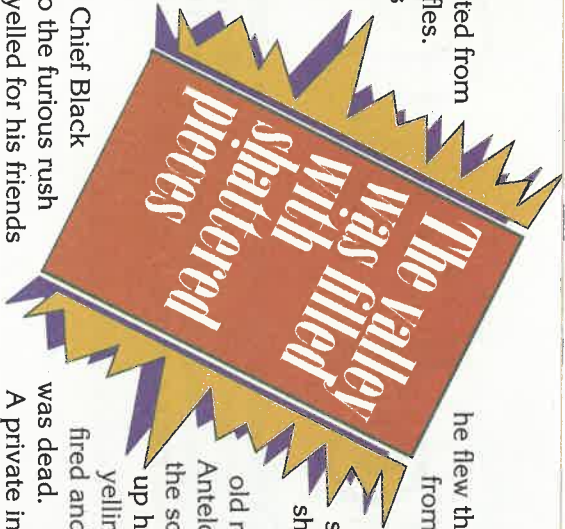
was dead. A private in the Army told his fellow soldiers not to shoot. He, too, was fired upon.

Thirty women hid in a large hole, but they were discovered and destroyed. Children were massacred too.

Many of the Cheyenne were off hunting, so the camp was made up mostly of women and children. The few men at camp pulled out weapons, but they couldn't put up much of a fight.

When the smoke cleared, 105 Cheyenne women and children had been killed. Black Kettle escaped, but 45 Cheyenne men died.

"I wish you hadn't told me that story," I whispered to Benjamin, while gazing at the thousands of shattered cups on the ground. "Doesn't anyone keep his promises?"



God's Promise

Bible Study

When was the last time you made a promise? Did you keep it or did you break it? A covenant is like a promise. God made covenants with people and He never broke them! Even today, God faithfully stands by His covenants. God made a covenant with David. He promised David many benefits.

1. What promises did David receive from God?
2. What did God expect of David's descendants?
3. Describe a biblical covenant without using the words "promise" or "covenant."
4. Why did God offer this covenant to David?
5. If you were David, what would your response have been to God's offer?

THE **NEW** COVENANT

God's Part Our Part

Today's Scripture, 2 Samuel 7:8-17

⁸"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. ⁹I 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. ¹⁰And 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 beginning 'and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over 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: ¹²When 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. ¹³He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴I 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. ¹⁵But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶Your 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.

Hebrews 8:8b-13

⁸"The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. ⁹It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. ¹⁰This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ¹¹No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. ¹²For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." ¹³By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete, and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.

Continued from page 3.

And that's when I saw it. One simple clay cup. It was unbroken.

I dismounted, walked through the rubble, and picked up the one unbroken cup.

"What does this one mean?" I asked.

Benjamin smiled and said, "A man was reclining at a table with 12 friends. While they were eating, the man took the cup, gave thanks, and offered it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'"

"Then the same man turned to

his friends and said, 'In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me.'

"That was his promise," Benjamin said. "A promise that was not broken."

We drank from the unbroken cup.

The story of Chief Black Kettle is true. It's based on the book *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown.



3

If you have come to an agreement with God about the sin in your life—that sin is your problem, that God has the solution, and you have accepted it—you have entered into a covenant with God.

This puzzle is about covenants. Try to solve it without looking up the verses; then (1) collect the letters in the highlighted boxes, (2) separate them by color, (3) unscramble them, and (4) write them on the line below to get a message about covenants.

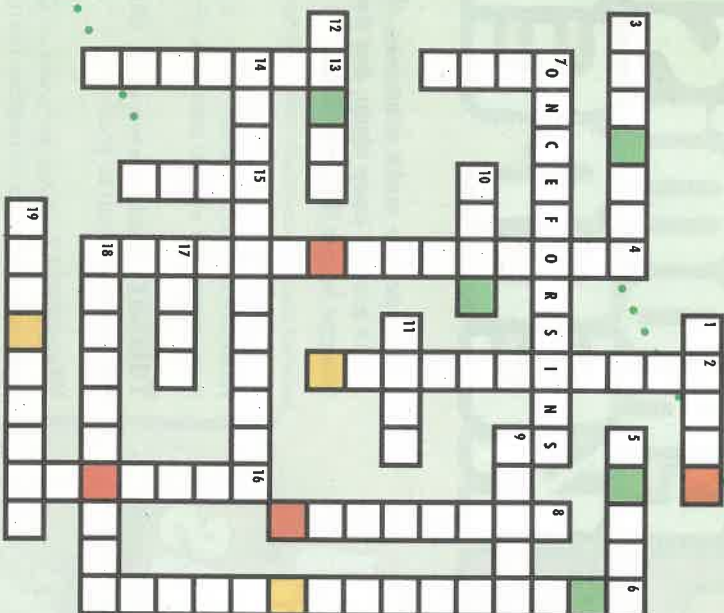
Across

- Mediator of the new covenant (Heb. 12:24)
- Sign of God's covenant with Noah
- Two parties in a covenant must each other (Luke 16:10; Prov. 3:5)
- Christ's death, the new covenant, was *once for sins* (1 Pet. 3:18)
- _____ was saved by a ram. (Gen. 22:13)
- God's covenant allows us to receive His _____ (1 John 3:1)
- God promises this (1 John 2:25)
- He swore an oath to God (Ps. 132:1-2)
- Covenant makes it possible for us to have personal _____ with God
- Promises made at a marriage ceremony
- The first covenant required these over and over (Heb. 10:11)
- Sins forgiven only if _____ is _____ (Heb. 9:22)

Down

- God's covenant always stands (Ps. 105:8, 10)
- New covenant available only to _____ (John 3:16)
- Name of Old Testament covenant—two words (Deut. 4:13)
- God's covenants were often confirmed by this (Gen 26:3)
- God is _____ to His covenant (Ps. 111:7)
- Can this guy count stars or sand? (Gen. 22:15-17)
- He received the first covenant (Gen. 2:16-17)
- The Lord is not slow in keeping His _____ (2 Pet. 3:9a)

Answer: _____ !



WE PROMISE KEEPER

every
day
devos

Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance. Hebrews 9:15a

When people make promises, they don't always keep them. But God always keeps His promises.

MONDAY Read Hebrews 9:15a. What is the promised eternal inheritance?

TUESDAY Read Hebrews 8:12. What does this promise mean to you?

WEDNESDAY What are some of God's other promises you remember from the Bible?

THURSDAY Read Hebrews 9:15a again. Who is the mediator God sent to bring us the new covenant? Have you accepted His offer?

FRIDAY What advice would you give a friend or family member who has just experienced a broken promise?

SATURDAY Make a list of things that last (your allowance, friendships). Draw a line for each item representing how long that item lasts. Then draw a line that represents God's promises and compare this line with the others you have drawn.

Answers to Covenant Crossing: Across—
1-Jesus, 3-rainbow, 5-trust, 7-once for sins, 9-Isaac, 10-love, 11-life, 12-David, 14-relationship, 17-vows, 18-sacrifices, 19-blood shed. **Down—**2-everlasting, 4-whoever believes, 6-Ten Commandments, 7-oath, 8-faithful, 13-Abraham, 15-Adam, 16-promise. Three-word answer: God never lies!

