

# The Promises of God

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[ 0 : 00 ] I thought this would be a great occasion to do something that I kind of sort of promised I would do.

You recall back when we were in our Jeremiah study not too long ago, when we were in chapter 29. We read verse 11 and in doing that made the comment that we need to be careful about how we use individual verses of Scripture.

That we be sure we use them in the context. And so as we did that, then we got to the point of the promises of God. And as we looked at that idea, Elsa asked a question about promises.

And so remember I made the statement that if Pastor Mike ever lets me preach again, I would preach on that. Well, he hasn't let me preach since then. So I thought this would be an ideal opportunity to do that.

So that's what we're going to do this evening. We're going to look at the promises of God. And so turn to Jeremiah 29 and let's refresh our minds as to what was going on there and take a look at it.

[ 1 : 28 ] And then we'll proceed from there. Jeremiah 29. Of course, verse 11 is the verse that we centered on at that point.

But verse 10 is really what we want to pick up because it sets the stage for what God is really saying and why he's saying that. And it pertains to the 70 years captivity of Judah.

And the fact that after that 70 years captivity, then he would bring the people back into the land.

And so in verse number 10 of Jeremiah 29, he says, For thus saith the Lord, that after 70 years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform my good word towards you in causing you to return to this place.

Now take note, really what he's saying there is, I'm going to cause you to come back to the land. I am going to fulfill my promise to you. Because this isn't the first time he's promised the restoration, you recall.

He's just reminding them once again, I've promised to do that. 70 years of captivity is all you're going to have here. Then you'll come back into the land. So I am going to fulfill my promise to you.

[ 2 : 51 ] And there he says, the basis of that is, I know the thoughts I have toward, I think toward you. Saith the Lord, says Jehovah, thoughts of peace, not of evil, to give you an expected end.

All right. So God's saying, this is my heart concerning you. All right. I think of you with thoughts of peace, not of thoughts of evil. I'm not here to wreak vengeance upon you.

Remember, everything he did in bringing judgment was simply the necessity of God to deal with their sin. The righteous, holy God must deal with sin.

All right. Then he says in verse 12, then when that happens, You shall call upon me, you shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And you shall seek me and find me when you shall search for me with all of your heart.

So it's quite evident here that that particular verse, verse 11, is specifically and especially designated to Judah that's in captivity as a promise of God's restoration to them back into the land.

[ 4 : 14 ] And how his heart sincerely feels about them, even though they're in captivity. Now, another popular passage is 2 Chronicles chapter 7, verse 14.

Jeremiah 29, 11. It was popular for a while, a while back. But boy, 2 Chronicles 7, verse 14, you see quite often, even today. All right.

People putting that out there. And usually using that to pertain to our country, the United States.

All right. But take notice with me what he says here. Now, the context of it, recall, the whole context of this passage is the fact that Solomon has built the temple.

All right. That structure that David wanted to build, but God said you can't do that because you're a man of blood. Your hands are bloody hands. Your son will do that.

[ 5 : 17 ] So Solomon builds the temple, the first permanent structure for Jehovah God to dwell in among his people. And so he comes to dedicate that temple and praise to the Lord.

And God answers his prayer in verse number 12 of 2 Chronicles 7. And the Lord, or Jehovah, appeared to Solomon by night and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and have chosen this place to myself as a house of sacrifice.

He said, this is the place I've chosen. All right. You've built it. Now I've chosen it. That this will be the place where you bring your sacrifice and offer them then to me.

Now, verse 13. If I shut up heaven, that there be no rain. Or if I command the locusts to devour the land.

Or if I send pestilence among my people. Now, you don't see that included when people use verse 14. But you can't separate them.

[ 6 : 33 ] Because God knows the heart of his people. All right. They're sinners by nature. These things. Sin's going to become a part of that.

And God's going to have to judge their sin. But when he says, when that time comes, when I have to bring judgment upon your sin. All right.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways.

Then will I hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land. Now, let's dissect that just a moment. If my people, which are called by my name, Israel is the only nation on the face of the earth that has ever had a covenant relationship with God.

That included the promise of a land. The inheritance of a land. God gave that to Abram. So when he said, if my people, a lot of times people think, well, he's talking about Christians there.

[ 7 : 53 ] No. He's talking about the people of Israel. The people of the covenant nation. If my people, which are called by my name. It's not Jesus speaking here.

It's Jehovah God. So the reference to that is. All right. Israel. Israel.

Prince with God. Named after God. E-L. El. The last two letters of the word Israel. If my people, which are called by my name.

All right. Who started the phrase Christians? Christians. Where did that phrase come from? To label that as the people of God in the day of grace.

It's a derogatory term. The church was first called Christians at Antioch. I think it was. I think Antioch. Yeah. Yeah. That's one of them places over there.

[ 8 : 51 ] Yeah. Yeah. So it's a derogatory term. It's not a term that God coined. God never gave us the term Christians. All right.

Now, as time went along, it became a term of endearment. Because we are the people that claim Christ and follow him. All right.

But biblically speaking, God did not give that name to the church. All right. So, if my people, which are called by my name, can't be the Christians, can't be the church, shall humble themselves.

We need to be humble. That's true. All right. Well, if they humble themselves and pray. Yeah.

Which we need to do. And seek my face. That we need to do. Interesting here. And turn from their wicked ways. The New Testament does give a number of destructions to the church about turning away from sin.

[ 10 : 01 ] Not letting sin reign in our mortal body, taking off the old man, put on the new, that kind of thing. But it doesn't talk about wickedness.

But when you look at the sin of the people of Israel, what's the greatest wickedness that anybody can perform?

Idolatry. Yeah. Idolatry. Worshipping pagan deities, pagan gods, man-made. All right. Complete affront to Jehovah God. My people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and turn from their wicked ways.

All right. Then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and heal their land. Notice the terminology. Heal their land. Their land.

The only land that God has ever given to anybody by covenant is Israel and Palestine. Given Palestine to Israel.

[ 11 : 08 ] All right. It's their land. United States of America is not the land that church has been given. Aren't you glad? Amen. It's a mess. It's a mess.

It's a mess. And the thing we can look at in that, that in reality is the joyful idea that what is our land?

Heaven. Yeah. I remember college days at BSU. Our favorite little song to sing was, This world is not my home.

I'm just a passing through. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue. The angels making me from heaven's open door.

And I won't be home in this world anymore. Say it. Yeah. Yeah. That's it. Yeah. You know, we are citizens of heaven.

[12:07] Apostle Paul writes of that. He says somewhere. Is it in Philippians maybe? Or Colossians one of the two. Our conversation or our citizenship is in heaven.

From whence we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. All right. Our citizenship, our commonwealth is not here. It's not Palestine.

It's heaven. Amen. Amen. And the specific rendering of the passage is, It's from heaven then that we, within great anticipation and excitement and longing, look for the Savior to come.

Amen. Yeah. So. All right. So, there's clear indication there that that passage deals with the nation of Israel. Now. So.

It's very evident then that that's the case in a lot of places. Some of the other passages in Scripture speak to the fact as well, God has given promises to His people Israel, the covenant nation.

[13:10] 1 Kings 8, verse 56. Verse 56. Blessed be the Lord that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all that He promised.

There hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant. The Apostle Paul also, when he stands before regents, to give a reason for what he's been doing in his preaching.

In Acts 26, verses 6 through 7, he just lays out the case. Now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, unto which promise are twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night hope to come, for which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. So there he alludes to the fact God has given those promises to His covenant people, and the twelve tribes of that nation are instantly serving God, looking for and hoping for those truths to come to pass.

In chapter 13 of the book of Acts, verses 32 through 33. And we declare unto you glad tidings, hath that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus again, as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee.

[14:43] Now, does that mean that God has not given us any promises at all as people in the day of grace outside of the commonwealth of Israel? Well, remember what 2 Timothy 3.16 says.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. It's all God breathed, and it's profitable. Oh, aren't you glad you put that in there? It's profitable. Profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God might be perfect, throughly furnished unto good works.

Okay? All Scripture. Now, when Paul wrote that to Timothy, keep in mind that the New Testament was not yet written.

Paul was still in the process of writing a bunch of that. All right? All Scripture he's talking about here alludes to the Old Testament scrolls.

All right? The Old Testament Word of God that they, at that point, did have. He said all of that is written by the breath of God and is profitable.

[15:53] All right? So, keep that in mind and think about how we reconcile then the reality between those promises specifically to Israel and to us today.

Now, we do so simply by being sensitive to the Spirit of God. Realize with me. 2 Peter, if you will. Chapter 1.

Verse 15. Let's start there. 2 Peter 1, verse 15. Moreover, I will endeavor that you may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance.

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came

from heaven we heard, when we were there with Him on or in the holy man.

[16:59] That's the Mount of Transfiguration, that experience that Peter, James, and John had with the Lord Jesus, remember. All right? Look at verse 19.

But we also have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto you do well that you take heed as unto a light that shineth in the dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise in your heart.

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

All right? When the prophets of old penned down the Scriptures, he's saying here, they did not do that from their own thoughts.

All right? They did not manufacture the thoughts that were penned down on the scrolls. Jeremiah's a good example of that, wasn't he? God, by his Spirit, inclined the hearts and mind of the prophets to pin down, I believe, word for word.

[18:17] That's what God told Jeremiah to do. Everything God told them to write. And that's what the Scripture is saying here. All right?

So, if that's the case then, and all Scripture is given by inspiration and is profitable, what do we do with the Old Testament Scriptures?

We simply allow the Spirit of God to do with it in our lives what He wants to do. Okay? And what I mean by that is this. If the Holy Spirit inclined the heart and mind of those men to pin down those words and they become Scripture, the same Holy Spirit has the ability, and I think the desire, to incline our hearts and our minds as to what He wants to say to us in those Old Testament Scriptures.

Now, with that said in mind, all right, be careful with that. That we just don't go tearing through the Old Testament Scripture and point at a finger at that and see what it says and say, okay, God's speaking to me through that.

All right? Not unless the Spirit of God is really inclining your heart toward that. It's kind of like the old radio preacher. He used to pride himself in being able to just open the Bible and just point at a verse and just preach out of that verse.

[19:42] So, one day on the radio, he opened his Bible and he said, I'm going to point to this verse. And he looked at it and he said, hmm, yeah, Nebuchad had a razor.

And it was a really sharp razor. And he went on to talk about Nebuchad's razor. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Don't do that.

Amen? Amen. Let the Spirit of God speak to you in whatever passage He wants to speak to you in the Old Testament in particular. All right? All right. New Testament's a little different. baby doll here, if you will.

I shouldn't use that expression. What should it be? It's a different, different, uh, uh, uh, pardon? Yeah, I know it. Yeah, I have to go quit reading some of its funny papers. It's a different case altogether. All right? All right.

[20:46] So, so that's what we need to do. Uh, now, the first promise that in Scripture that we find that God made to man really is in Genesis 9, 11.

Now, there are some things He said to Adam in the garden, yes. But as far as any specific detail of this is what I promise you. All right? We find it when it relates to Noah in Genesis 9, verse 11.

I will establish my covenant with you. Neither shall all flesh be cut off anymore by the waters of a flood. Neither shall there anymore be a flood to destroy the earth.

All right? Keep in mind, at that point and always, Noah was a Gentile. All right? Abram had not come on the scene yet.

So, the Hebrew nation was, was not yet established. Oh, I've only time to get into that. I watched a movie today about, about Sodom, Gomorrah, and Lot.

[21:58] From what they did, what they had Lot doing, he was Abraham. Yeah. So, anyway, forget that. That movie. Anyway. Yeah. So, that was, that was the first promise that we really see given in that, in the scriptures to Noah, a Gentile.

The foundation of God's promises to Israel lie in Genesis chapter 12, verses 1, 2, and 3. All right? In verse 2 in particular, God said to him, I will make of thee a great nation.

Now, remember, God pulled Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees. He's a Gentile. because there ain't no Jews yet. All right? Pulls him out and makes the promise.

I will make of you a great nation. So, I'm going to take you and I'm going to make something specific from you and through you. And, as a result, I will bless thee.

I'll make your name great. And, thou shalt be a blessing. And, of course, later on, it goes on and says, you will be a blessing to everyone. All right? Speaking of the fact that Messiah is going to come through him is the idea here.

[ 23 : 10 ] All right? So, that's the foundation of all, of all of the, of the promises that God has made to Israel. Because, recognize, if you will, that's the base, I mean, that's the whole foundation of it.

All of God's promise to Israel, all the things he said he would do, have four things as their central figure. Take note. Aposteriority. All right? Abraham, God says to Abraham, I'm going to give you this land that you see.

I'm going to make your name as the stars, your seed as the stars of the heavens and the sands of the sea. I'll give them the land. I'll prosper them. All right? Second element of that is the land.

Spelled out the boundaries for him. promise peace and prosperity and the promise of Messiah to come. Those are the four elements basically of the promises, all the promises God's made through the prophets to the nation of Israel.

Now, the last two, if you will, have somewhat to do with the Gentile promises as well. All right? That we're inclusive in that promising Redeemer, which is Messiah Jesus.

[ 24 : 23 ] promises. Now, promises in the age of grace. Turn to 2 Peter, chapter 1. You're already in chapter 2, aren't you? 2 Peter, chapter 1.

Notice how he starts the passage.

Simon Peter, in verse 1, a servant and an apostle to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ.

All right? Amplified says, those who have received or obtained an equal privilege of like precious faith with ourselves in and through the righteousness of God and Savior Jesus Christ.

So, he addresses believers then in this day of grace. In other words, he addresses the church.

Now, after his salutation in verse 1, he speaks in verse 3 of the work that God has done on behalf of the believer in this day of grace, that work he's done through his son Christ Jesus.

[ 25 : 39 ] He says, for his divine power has bestowed upon us all things that are requisite and suited to life and godliness through the full personal knowledge of him who called us by and to his own glory and excellent virtue.

All right? He's given, granted to us, bestowed upon us everything that pertains to life and godliness or piety. All right?

The life here are not the necessities of life but the absolute fullness of life that God possesses that we get through Christ Jesus. All right?

Godliness is the idea of piety. Now, it's not solely the idea of worship. A lot of times when we think of piety towards God, it is our worship towards God.

But here more so, it deals with the idea of man knowing that he's fully dependent upon God. All right? So, God has given us everything, those magnificent blessings of everything that pertains to our life and him and our piety toward him, the understanding that we are completely, absolutely dependent upon him.

[ 26 : 58 ] And all those things are manifested in our conduct and conversations and sacrifice and in prayer that we offer to the Lord. Now, he has called us by and to his own glory and excellent virtue.

Now, the idea is this. I love this when I read this. The idea is this. What drew, what drew the apostles to the Lord Jesus? Here are the, most of them just ordinary fishermen out fishing.

And they see him. They know prophets have said Messiah is going to come and they see this guy out here preaching and doing this and that. But, you know, they forsake everything they have.

They forsake their nets, their home, everything, and just follow him when he calls them to do that. What caused them to see that? What did they see in him?

Saw fulfillment of the promise, something else though. Remember, in the earthly ministry of Jesus, when Jesus stills the waves and the storm, their expression was, what manner of man is this?

[ 28 : 06 ] See, there was something, there was something in him, in his, I don't know why I'm looking at you when I say this, but I am. And this is, and this is good. This is good, Jim.

Yeah. Well, better you than, than, than Dave. Yeah. When they saw Jesus, there were just something about him. I mean, figure it, his life was completely different than anybody else's.

All the characteristics, all his compassion, his love, his character, if you will, and I'm not talking about the aroma, but the aroma, the fragrance that flows from his life, was unlike anything they had ever seen.

And that was part of the aspect that drew them to him, to follow him. not just what he said, but thus, that virtue as well. All that virtue, coupled with the power of the Spirit of God at operation within his, his humanity.

So, he says, it's by that same virtue, then, that you and I are called to him.

[ 29 : 23 ] All right? Now, in verse 4, then, Paul gets down to the matter at hand, seeing how it's by that greatness of his power and his virtue that draws us to him.

It's by that, then, also, that we are given, that are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises.

All right? Now, there's this very specific passage that speaks of the fact that God gives to the church, to the believers in the day of great, not just promises, but great and precious promises that by these ye may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption of us in the world through lust.

All right? Great and invaluable promises are given to us by his great and glorious power that's freely given to us. Now, the Jews were distinguished from every other people's by what?

What distinguished them above, beyond, any other kingdom on the earth? How about God's presence with the nation? Okay?

[ 30 : 44 ] Yeah. No other country, no other kingdom had the presence of their deity, although it would be pagan, in their presence. Israel did.

They had the only one true and living God present with them. All right? Now, so, that's what distinguished them from everyone else.

All those promises they received from God, the promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, all the prophets. Now, in that, remember, God promised to be their God to protect them, to support them, to save them, and to give them their inheritance, the land of promise.

All right? And then, of course, to cause the Messiah to spring up from them. Peter here, though, intimates for us that the believers to whom he's writing here have been given promises, exceedingly great promises, by the Lord.

And those promises, of course, came through a great price, and that was through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. Those promises include an inclusion with the church of God being made part of the church, redemption in and through the blood of this cross, the continually, continued indwelling presence of the Spirit of God and His influence upon and in our life.

[ 32 : 20 ] The resurrection of the body, eternal rest at the right hand of God, partaking in the glory of Christ. All those things He's promised to the church in the day of grace.

So, salvation's not exclusive to the nation of Israel. All right? Now, with that in mind, run over to Hebrews and just let me remind you of that just a moment.

Hebrews chapter 11. He gives that long roll call of the faithful, and then in verse 32, in following unnamed people of faith and faithfulness to God.

And look at verse 39. Remind you of that. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise.

In other words, they didn't live until those promises were fulfilled to the nation of Israel. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect or complete.

[ 33 : 41 ] Let me read that to you out of the Amplified. All of these, though they won divine approval by means of their faith, did not receive the fulfillment of what was promised, because God had us in mind and had something better and greater in view for us, so that they, those heroes and heroines of the faith, should not come to perfection or completeness apart from us.

That is, before we could join them. Amen? Glorious stuff that God has given to us and promised us. So, our confidence in His promises as seen in 2 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 20.

For all the promises of God in Him are yea and in Him unto the glory of God. And in Him, amen, rather, unto the glory of God by us.

All the promises that God's made are yea, that is, they're true in themselves and amen, faithfully fulfilled to those who believe in Christ Jesus.

The promises are all made in reference to Christ because it's only through and by Him that we can receive the promises of grace and the mercy that comes with that.

[ 35 : 01 ] Alright? Now, let me read that again in the Amplified. For as many as are the promises of God, they are all find their yes, their answer, in Him, that's in Christ.

For this reason, we also utter the amen, that so be it, that amen to God through Him in His person and by His agency to the glory of God.

Now, what's our response to the promises to be? Here's where the rubber meets the road. Amen? God's given us promises. What are we going to do with them? How do we respond to that?

2 Corinthians 7, 1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Now, those promises are spoken of in actually chapter 6, verses 17 and 18, which talk about the separation of the believer from the ungodly world and the idea that we're not to be partakers of their sinfulness.

[ 36 : 08 ] Alright? He says in verses 17 and 18, Wherefore, come out from among them, be a separate, says the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing. And I will receive you and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord.

Yeah. I'll receive you, recognize you as my friends and my adopted children because I'm going to be a father unto you. You know what the father does.

He protects, he brings counseling to his children, he guides them, and he is their friend. So he's going to express that feeling toward the believer in the day of grace.

And he does, doesn't he? Romans 8, verses 15 through 16. Remember what he says here. This is in the Amplified as well. For the spirit which you have now received is not a spirit of slavery to put you once more in bondage to fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption.

That's the spirit producing sonships in the bliss of which we cry, Abba, Father, or Father, Father. The spirit himself thus testifies together with our own spirit assuring us that we are the children of God.

[ 37 : 28 ] Amen? Yeah. Is there anybody here that doesn't know that you're your father's child? Do you have any children or grandchildren that don't know you're their grandmother or grandfather or mother and father?

Sometimes you wish they didn't, but hey. No, of course. Likewise, the spirit of God works within our spirit to give us that assurance, that knowledge, that understanding that we are indeed the people of God.

So he says, let's cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh. That's outward sins, literally, that he talks about there. Impure desires of the filthiness filthiness of the spirit, unholy thoughts, corrupting imaginations, everything that would try to direct us and draw us into sin.

He said, avoid those things. And then perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Bring into completeness the holiness that's already been begun by the spirit of God in your life.

It's the idea of edging further and further into Christ likeness. All right? And we do that in the fear of God, that is, in reverence for God and who he is.

[ 38 : 47 ] Father, again, thank you for your loving kindness today. And again, thank you for this privilege of being together with your people and looking again into your precious word. Father, thank you that you love us so much that you sent your son to die for us so that we can come into a relationship with you through him.

But also, Father, thank you for the reality that you have given promises that are so glorious to your people, to Israel and to your church.

And Lord, how glorious and amazing those are. And the epitome of that is that when we get to be with you, we will share in your son's glory.

And what a joy and tremendous blessing that is just to think about. So we look forward to that day.

And until then, just keep us fresh in your word, keep us fresh in your promises and enable that to motivate us to live our lives free from sin and sanctified in you.

And we'll thank you for it in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Thank you.