

Podcast 294 God Watches over His Word to Perform it.

Steve: We're going to continue our series on the importance of magnifying God's word, because God's word is an extension of God Himself. As God is, so is His word. We read last week Psalm 138 that says, "I give you thanks, O Yahweh, with my whole heart. Before the gods, I sing your praise. I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness. For you have exalted above all things, your name and your word." That is a powerful statement and we're going to go deeper today by exploring more promises that God made to His people.

Let's pray: Father, help us to take in more than we've taken in up to this point about how much You value Your word, how You watch over Your word, how Your word is an extension of Your being and Your character. I pray that You help me to read well and comment well, but give us all ears to hear what You, by Your spirit are communicating to our hearts today. In Jesus name, Amen.

Steve: You know that I am a devotee of God and His Word, right? It should go without saying. I wouldn't have read the Bible every year for 40 plus years if I didn't believe in the efficacy of the word. About a year ago, I reconnected with a few of my friends from way back. Now, we meet together regularly via online meetings.

In the providence of God, a couple of these men were here at my home a week ago. Our studies and gatherings in Jesus' name have taken my appreciation for the Bible to a deeper level. I have been helped to see God's word in a different way and it has taken weeks of just going over and over promises that God made and comments that God made that have helped me to dig deeper in Scripture.

Since it's true that "every" word is inspired, and that men shall not live by bread alone but by "every" word that comes from the mouth of the Father, then anything that comes from God's mouth needs to be treated with reverence and respect.

God has specific reasons for why He says what He says. One of the verses that we're going to start with today is Jeremiah 1:11-12. It would be interesting to poll people to see how many people have read the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah is an extremely significant book in scripture.

Every year that I read it, I think I just want to go back and read it again as soon as I finish it. But as soon as I've read Jeremiah and Lamentations, then I move on to Daniel and Ezekiel and I think the same thing about those books, but Jeremiah still captures my attention more than many others.

Jeremiah 1:11-12, "The Word of Yahweh came to me saying, 'Jeremiah what do you see?' and I said 'I see an almond branch.' Then Yahweh said to me, 'You have seen well.'" Now buckle your seat belt for this next phrase. "For I am watching over my word to perform it."

I'll read it again, "I am watching over my word to perform it." After God speaks words, He then watches over these words to make sure that He fulfills them to the letter.

Confession, I have not done well with this as a dad. I have said things to my family like, "We'll do this such and such," and "We'll do such and such," and then I just forget about it. Sadly wife and kids didn't forget about it. They took me at my word and to me, I just was filling the air and it wasn't so much a promise as it was an aspiration. I blew it and I had to confess and repent of that.

Now that my wife, sons and I are being much more open and talking to each other, that was a big thing because I would just say things and they'd believe what I said and I didn't follow through. Just recently, my granddaughters, for their Christmas, I pledged to take them to a local amusement park.

But since I learned about following through on promises with my own family, I took that very seriously and I fulfilled that promise to them in spades. I made sure that I did it. I didn't care how much money it took, or what I felt like, or how much time. I wanted to be faithful to my word.

That's a character flaw on my part and I've learned from it. Hopefully, I'm moving forward and being careful that when I say something, I follow through. God doesn't have the same character flaws that Steve has. God says something and then He watches over His word to perform it.

I'm going to illustrate this in two men's lives in scripture. The first is Noah in the 9th chapter, "Behold I establish my covenant with you." A covenant is a promise that He makes to them. It was a contract, "and your offspring after you and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, livestock and every beast of the earth with you. As many as came out of the ark, it is for every beast of the earth. I establish my covenant with you that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood."

"And never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth . This is the sign of the covenant that I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you for all generations. I have set My bow in the cloud and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth."

When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember My covenant that is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh, and the water shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." (Genesis 9:9-16)

I like rainbows. I like to go outside after a rain and sometimes when it's still raining because if I see the sun peeking through and it's raining, I know there's going to be a rainbow. Rainbows do not mean what the world, the flesh, and the devil say today.

Rainbows are a sign that God said something to Noah, and His sons, and every living creature that, "Never again will I wipe out all living flesh with a flood."

That rainbow is a sign that God put in the heavens to remind Him and remind us that that is fixed. That blesses me just talking about it. This is God, honoring His covenant with man.

God also made some promises to another man in Genesis. His name was Abram. Let's read Genesis 12:1-3, "Yahweh said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'"

This is an unbelievable covenant that God makes with Abram. In the 15th chapter, verse 13, He said, "Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in the land that is not theirs will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for 400 years." We saw that fulfilled to the letter when they were in Egypt for 400 years.

And in Genesis 17:1-8 "Abram was 99 years old. Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. That I may make my covenant between Me and you and may multiply you greatly.'"

This is a man with no kids, "Then Abram fell on his face and God said to him, 'Behold my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham. For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.'"

"I will make you exceedingly fruitful. I will make you into nations, kings shall come from you, and I will establish my covenant between Me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant."

"To be God to you and to your offspring after you, and I will give to you and to your offspring after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."

Boom. He took the first promise in the 12th chapter, and He expanded it and added more details in the 15th chapter.

Then we come to the Exodus 2, "The people of Israel groaned because of their slavery, and God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob."

Now, I haven't gone and taken the time to reiterate these things but God did take His covenant and He reestablished it with Isaac, and He reestablished it with Jacob, who later had his name changed to Israel. However notice that He remembered His covenant.

In Leviticus 26:42, "I will remember my covenant with Jacob. I will remember my covenant with Isaac, and my covenant with Abraham." Leviticus 26 is sad. "They're going to get persecuted, they're going to be humbled, and He Himself is going to turn his face against them." But He...I'll just keep reading then, verse 44, "Yet for all that, when they're in the land of their enemies. I will not spurn them. Neither will I abhor them. So as to utterly destroy them and break my covenant with them, for I am Yahweh their God. But I will, for their sake, remember the covenant with their forefathers, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations."

Deuteronomy 9, "That he may confirm the word that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Remember your servants." This theme continues to run through scripture. Am I overdoing it or have you had enough? Should I keep going?

Scott: Keep going.

Steve: David sought to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem and Uzzah touched it and died. When you read the first account of that, all you see is that David was terrified of God and went into depression.

But when you read Chronicles, it says, "Because we sought Him not according to the ordinances, this is what happened. And we figured it out. The Levites are supposed to carry the ark, not a new cart." David figured this out and in the 16th chapter of Chronicles, he brings the ark back, there's much rejoicing, and he established singing and worship.

He set apart Asaph and others for worship and giving thanks. He didn't forsake what Moses had done, he added worship. Then he has this wonderful song which first appears in 1 Chronicles 16:12.

"Remember the wondrous works that He has done. His miracles and the judgments He uttered. All offspring of Israel, His servant, children of Jacob His chosen ones, He is Jehovah our God, His judgments are in all the earth. Remember His covenant forever. The word that He commanded for a thousand generations."

"The covenant that He made with Abraham, His sworn promise to Isaac which He confirmed to Jacob as a statute and now..." I added the word and now, "To Israel as an everlasting covenant saying, 'To you, I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance.'" By the way did kings come out of Abraham? Sure.

Were they in the land of Canaan? Yes. Have they been multiplied? Absolutely. Will they have power on the earth? Yes. There's a whole nation that wasn't even there at the beginning, and now it's a power in the earth. Because of a promise made to Abraham followed through to Isaac, confirmed as a statute to Jacob, and now to Israel as an everlasting covenant.

There's your Old Testament background. Notice Luke 1, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for He has visited and redeemed His people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant, David.

As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. To show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath that He swore to our father, Abraham."

Moving ahead, Galatians, the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring, and it does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ. This is what I mean. The law which came 430 years afterward does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God so as to make the promise void. Or if the inheritance comes by the law, it is no longer comes by promise. God gave it to Abraham by a promise.

Here we are in Galatians. We're talking about father Abraham. This is man that God had promised, "I will make your name great." And He has. You and I are children of Abraham, who is the father of all those who believe.

Romans 4, "The promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith." Whoo!

Further down, 16th verse, "That is why it depends on faith in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring, not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, as it is written, I have made you the father of many nations."

I could keep going, but I think you get the idea. I think that we should be reading Romans 4 a lot because here's the real definition of faith. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God. God had said to him, "You're going to have kids." He's 100 years old. He laughed.

Here's what it says, "No unbelief made him waver, concerning the promise of God. But he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God. Fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised. That is why his faith was counted to him as righteousness."

He never stopped believing day after day, month after month, year after year. When is my son going to appear? Finally, he gets to the point where he can't see any hope. He's an old guy. He doesn't even have the potential to have children, and God says to him, "Keep believing" and he says, "All right." He was fully convinced.

Hebrews 6, "when God made a promise to Abraham since he had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by himself saying, 'Surely, I will bless you and multiply.' Thus, Abraham having waited patiently obtained the promise."

God watches over His word to perform it. He gave us these incredible examples to illustrate how He does just what He said He would. God made a promise to Noah and He's fulfilled it to the letter. That earth has not been wiped out by a flood since that rainbow appeared. He made promises to Abram and passed them onto his offsprings and his offspring who is Christ. We saw that word fulfilled to the letter.

By the way, there's this nation on the other side of the Mediterranean, called Israel. They're there because God made a promise to His people. That nation, to me, is a promise in the flesh. These people disobeyed God. They spread all over the Europe and all over the world. Then He brought them back because of promises that He made to a man. He has, for thousands of years, been watching over that word to fulfill it. We see this in the New Testament, Paul quotes from him in Galatians. Paul talks about it in Romans, the writer of Hebrews talks about Him, because they're going to make the point, God keeps His promises.

Now how does that apply to me? God promised me and you, and to all followers of Jesus, "I will be with you always. I will never leave you nor forsake you. Nothing can separate you from My love, I never change." If Steve had made those promises, you might be tempted to doubt because Steve in the past has not had a perfect track record.

God has a perfect track record and when He makes a promise, He is watching over those promises to see that they are fulfilled to the letter. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for. Abram had the assurance of things hoped for. He had the conviction of things not seen. That's why he's the father of all of us who believe.

You might not feel like God is with you. You might think that He doesn't love you anymore, and those are all false. Because He promised, and He's God, and He has a proven track record, all through scripture, and He never changes.

That gives me renewed faith not only in promises that He's made to us, but on promises He's made to other believers. There's a ton more we can talk about this in scripture, and we'll do it and succeeding podcasts. What do you think?

Scott: Can I add one more verse in there? There is a verse in 2 Corinthians that just gives me hope and encourages me, and I had to look it up because I don't have this one memorized, but it's the one that talks about all of His promises being Yes, in Christ.

2 Corinthians 1. The whole context is pretty cool. If you start in verse 18. "As surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not 'Yes' and 'No.' For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you, by me, and Silas, and Timothy was not 'Yes' and 'No,' but in him, it has always been 'Yes.' For no matter how many promises God

has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. and so through Him, the 'Amen' is spoken by us to the glory of God."

Steve: Amen. You laid a very good foundation because that's the next broadcast is about Christ, Who is the word made flesh.

Let's close in prayer: Father, help us to grab ahold of this. Enlighten our minds, strengthen our faith. Let these words which we have read go deep, for You are trustworthy, You are worthy of trust, because You're a man of Your word. You're a God of Your word, and even promises that You made to frail humans, because You made them, You follow through. Thank you for these promises. Thank you for this inspired record of your promises. I pray that You help me to lean on Your promises, count on Your promises, and believe in Your promises. Thank You for being my Dad, our Dad, our God. You're good. You're trustworthy. We worship You in Jesus' name, Amen.