

Podcast 298 The Promises of God

Steve: We've been working on this concept of the promises of God in several podcasts. Let's begin with a little review.

Psalm 138:1-2 "I give You thanks, oh, Yahweh, with my whole heart. Before the gods, I sing Your praise. I bow down unto 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."

Now, we've talked a lot about God's name. One of the reasons that God's name is holy, and one of the reasons we're not to take it in vain is because God's name is an extension of Himself. It's His character, it's His nature. Every part of His person is wrapped up in His name. When we take His name in vain, we're taking God Himself in vain. If we curse God, we're cursing His name. It's all one.

In Jeremiah, we see this expression about His word, "Yahweh said to me, 'You've seen well for I'm watching over My word to perform it'." He has exalted His name, He's exalted His word. Not only has He exalted His word, He's watching over His word. I have an image in my mind of God sitting in heaven on His throne looking down and keeping track of every word that He has uttered, He is watching over it to see that it's fulfilled to the letter.

We saw that he fulfilled His promises to David. We observed Jesus coming to do His will. He took our sins, He broke the power of hell. However there was another agenda which is very important to heaven. He fulfilled every promise made about Him to the jot and tittle even after He had perished on the cross. This was done to fulfill God's word.

Jesus, the Father, the Word of God, the name of God, the promises of God, they're all inextricably interwoven. It's a part of who they are. What they're about. They are an extension of God's of character and His faithfulness.

It's funny I even have to say this, but Psalm 18 says, "God's way is perfect. All the Lord's promises proved true". "The Lord is faithful in all his words", found in Psalm 145. They're all inspired.

I'm getting way ahead of myself, I haven't even stopped to pray.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for revealing what You have to us. We know that we cannot understand these things without the help of Your spirit. We know that we're blind until we are born from above, then we begin to see dimly. Perhaps, we see people as trees walking, as that man that Jesus healed. As we continue to pursue You and pursue Your ways and pursue Your word, we see more clearly.

Thank You for what You have revealed to us about Jesus. Thank You for what You've revealed to us about Your word and Your name. I pray today that You'll give us ears

again to hear what Your spirit is pouring out to us. We live in troubling times. Thank You that when all around our soul gives way You then, as the song says, are all our hope and stay in Jesus' name, Amen.

Steve: We've made a pretty strong case, if you want to put it that way, about God being faithful to His word. God fulfilling His promises to David, to Jesus. I thought, "Boy, we could just stop, and we can just meditate on some of our favorite promises in the Bible."

I was going to start off by saying, "Scott, what are some of your favorite promises?" While you're thinking, I'll give you a couple of mine. I was thinking of, "I am with you always. I will never leave nor forsake you."

Nothing can separate me from God's love. God never changes. You can go on and on, all of these promises, so it's your turn. Go ahead, give me a couple. One or two, whatever you want to do.

Scott: One of them that comes to me offhand is God's promise not to put us to shame. There's a couple of times in the Psalms where He says, "No one that hopes in you will ever be put to shame," or "I trust in you, do not let me be put to shame," that kind of stuff.

Steve: Nice.

Scott: I don't know why exactly. Confession time, I've had a fear of doing something that would shame my whole family, and I've prayed many times that verse that God not let any of us be put to shame.

Steve: Amen. When we get to Heaven, your family's going to come up and say, "Thanks, Dad." Faithful to the end. Amen. It'll be the opposite. You won't be put to shame, you'll be honored. I'm not a prophet, but I believe it.

OK, thank you!

Scott: Sure.

Steve: Of course, you were the one that brought this up several weeks ago. 2 Corinthians 1:20 says, "All the promises of God find their yes in Him. That is why through Him that we utter our Amen to God, for His glory."

I started digging a little bit. First I looked in the Greek, I looked in the New Testament and I found out that it's pretty much one word that means "promise" and it's "epangelia." which is made up of two words, "epi" which means appropriately on and "angelia," you can probably figure it out, is angels. "Angelo" is really the word to announce, which is what angels do. They announce, they're messengers, they're delegates.

176 times it's used in the New Testament, most of the time, angels are celestial bodies, they're angels but they can also be messengers, or delegates of a human that

have a purpose, that have been sent. It's putting together an appropriate summons. It's announcing what is fitting.

Walter Kaiser, who wrote a book called "Back Toward the Future -- Hints for Interpreting Biblical Prophecy" (he was the president of Gordon-Conwell when my son was there) says this, "Almost every New Testament use of the word "promise" points back to the Old Testament. In fact, it's a legal term that refers to an "officially sanctioned promise."

Now, 176 times it's used and I'm looking them all up this morning and boy, I was overwhelmed with the vastness of this study. We could have a whole Bible study just on the New Testament word "epangelia." One of the reasons I said what I did in the beginning is there's not one word in the Old Testament that is clearly the word to be translated, "promise."

In fact, there is a plethora of words. There's a whole bunch of them, like oath, covenant, promises. His spoken word. Just take "word," and there are 9 or 10 words in the Strong's numbered concordance that can be translated word. There are words for oath, for covenant, and for promises.

I'll just read you a couple scriptures to try to paint this picture. "A promise is only as good as the one who makes it." When God utters anything it is true. It's a promise. It's an oath. It's trustworthy because God is the one who backs it up and since His word is an extension of His being."

1 Kings 8:56, "Blessed be the Lord, who has given rest to His people Israel according to all that He promised, not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses, His servant." (NASB)

I also found a name, Amariah, because that's the O-M-R. In the Hebrew it's the consonants, but it's actually an aleph, which doesn't have any sound and an M and an R, but it can be A-M-E-R, I-M-E-R. Amariah means Yah has promised. What a great name. This is used several times.

Remember that every time you read "word" or "promise" or "oath" or "covenant" or "vow," these are all extensions of God.

1 Chronicles 16:10. I think I'm reading again from the NASB. "Glory in His holy name, let the heart of those who seek the Lord be glad. Seek the Lord and His strength, seek His face continually. Remember His wonderful deeds which He has done, His Marvels and the judgments from His mouth, O seed of Israel, His servant, sons of Jacob, His chosen ones. He is the Lord our God. His judgments are in all the earth."

"Remember His covenant forever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations, the covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac. He also confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, saying, 'To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion of your inheritance.'"

He starts off with bless Your name, glory in Your name. Seek God, seek His strength, seek His face. Remember what He has done. Then he ends up with all these words, "word," "covenant," "confirmed," "He spoke," they're all the same thing.

Consider the promise, "To you I will give the land of Canaan," which reminds me that Israel is the land of promise. It's the promised land. It's a specific piece of territory carved out by God where He chose put His chosen people, put His name there, and be identified with the land and His people.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s the people of Israel returned to that land, how many other times have we seen that happen in history? I can't think of any but God promised them, after they disobeyed Him, "I'm going to cast you out of this land." Then He said that in the latter days, "I'm going to bring you back to this land," and He did.

I have been in that land. Scripture comes to life when you walk through that land and you see all that God promised. That's a big message we need to remember.

God promised something. God fulfilled His promise. God will always fulfill His promises, always. He can't help it because he's God. He doesn't change. He is faithful to His word. He's faithful to His messages. He's one with His message.

Romans 15:8, "I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs."

He became a servant to Judah to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, everything that He promised Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, who had his name change to Israel, which is why we have the promised land called Israel to this day.

Let's go back to what we specifically started with. I'll give you just a couple promises to me that I count on. If you remember Daniel 9:1–2, "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who is made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans, in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books, the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, 70 years."

I'm going to read now in Jeremiah 29:10. Here's what he says. "Thus saith Jehovah, 'After 70 years are accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform My good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.'"

Jeremiah said it. Daniel was faithfully reading the word of God, the words of Jeremiah, and said, "Hey, I can do the math. The 70 years is up."

In Daniel 9:3, Daniel says, "So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. I prayed."

How do you pray for a nation? He confesses their sins, and he reminds God, "You said to Jeremiah, You made a promise to Jeremiah that You, after 70 years, were going to

return these people to their land and I am holding You to it. I am reminding You of Your promise, and I'm believing for Your promise to be fulfilled."

He didn't just do nothing and say, "Ah, I hope this happens." He set himself to pray for it to happen. I find myself more and more thinking about the word of God. I want to pray. I want to mix it with faith like Daniel did, and not just read it and say, " Oh, isn't that nice."

I'll give you one promise that I have found myself praying. It's mentioned in Romans 14:11, and in Philippians 2:10, quoting Isaiah 45:23, "I have sworn by My own name. I have spoken the truth, I will never go back on My word. Every knee will bend to Me, and every tongue will declare allegiance to Me."

I am believing that God is going to work things out with this earth and every knee is going to bow to God. Every tongue is going to declare allegiance to Him. It doesn't look like that on the surface right now. Lines are being drawn, evil's on the throne. Prince of the power of the air, the kingdoms of this world, are all arrayed against God. When all the dust settles, I believe that scripture is going to be fulfilled to the letter, and we're going to be standing with God, and we're going to see that every knee is going to bow to Him and every tongue will declare allegiance to Him.

Let's pray.

Father in Jesus' name. This is wonderful stuff. These truths about how Your nature and Your name and Your word are all just one, just like You, the Father, Son, and Spirit, are one.

Thank you for the promises of God. As an extension, words that You have uttered, and You have uttered this word that every knee is going to bow to You and every tongue is going to declare allegiance to You. I say Amen. I agree. I pray for that to come to pass in the name of Jesus.

I pray that You will somehow help all of us that are listening today and reading the transcript, perhaps help us to get it right down deep in the core of our being. You are trustworthy. You are worthy of our trust.

Your words will never pass away. Heaven and Earth will pass away, but Your words, Your promises, Your oaths, Your covenant, everything that You have uttered, will endure forever. In Jesus' name. Give us fresh faith in Your work today. Help us to mix Your word with faith as we read it and declare it in Jesus' name. Amen.