

THE PROMISES OF GOD – BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE KINGDOM

by Jackson Morro

Webster's dictionary defines "promise" as a "pledge to do or not to do some specific thing (verb); the thing promised (noun)." If we examine the notion of a promise, we also see the value of the pledge is ultimately connected to the character and integrity of the one making the promise. A promise, furthermore, puts the recipient of the promise into a realm of "privilege." In the oldest legal sense, privilege is a private ("privi") law ("lege") which gives a person access to benefits not available in general, but only under certain circumstances.

In the Bible we are confronted with something known as "the promises of God." Applying our above analysis to God's promises, we see that God pledges to do, or not do, specific things. The actual things promised by God are the promises. The certainty of receiving the promises is ultimately connected to the character and integrity of God, who is Goodness and Truth, a God who cannot lie (Numbers 23:19; Romans 3:4). God's promises bring believers into a realm of privilege, or "private law" – a condition of blessing granted to those who meet the conditions required to receive the promise.

We sometimes hear that some of God's promises are conditional, being based upon the recipient's meeting certain conditions, while others are unconditional, just a free grant from God. In the strictest sense, however, all of God's promises are conditional. True, God guarantees a certain natural order to this world for *all* people, believers or not – He makes it rain on the just and the unjust. As long as the earth remains, there will be day and night, cold and heat, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest (Genesis 8:22).

Nevertheless, when we talk about the promises of God which release Kingdom of God power and the powers of the world to come, these promises are all conditional – they are granted because Jesus Christ purchased those promises through His life of obedience and His atoning sacrifice – and these promises are appropriated by the believer who comes to God through Jesus and claims the promises by faith – believing that God in His integrity will perform what He has promised for the person who believes (Romans 4:19-21; Hebrews 11:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:24).

The many promises of God cover all aspects of our life. We all know several promises: 1) For salvation: If we confess with our mouth Jesus as

Lord, and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved (Romans 10:9-10); 2) For healing: By His stripes you were healed (1 Peter 2:24); 3) For provision: My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19); 4) For happiness: Delight yourself in the Lord and He shall give you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4); and 5) For our whole life: Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these other things shall be added to you (Matthew 6:33). Several scripture scholars have compiled collections of God's promises and usually they tally over 500 promises in scripture.

What should we know about God's promises?

First, it was Jesus, the seed of Abraham, who received all of God's promises through His life of obedience and atoning sacrifice. "Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say 'and to seeds,' as referring to many, but rather to one. 'And to your seed,' that is Christ." (Galatians 3:16)

Second, when we accept Christ by faith as our Lord, we become one with Him, and so we are in a position to partake of the promises of God *as Christ does*. "For you are all sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ... And if you belong to Christ, you are Abraham's offering, heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:26-29) The Apostle Paul emphatically states that if we are children of God, then we are "heirs also, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." (Romans 8:17)

Third, God has already said "Yes" to all the promises for all His children who will believe for them. Again, the Apostle Paul writes, "For as many (note: not "few," but "many" are the promises of God) as may be the promises of God, in Him (Jesus) they are yes." (2 Corinthians 1:20) It is important for you to realize that God has already said "Yes" to *all* of His promises for *you* if *you* will BELIEVE Him and meet any conditions attached to obtaining the specific promise. Fourth, we are made to be partakers of the divine nature, partakers of the very life and glory of God Himself through His promises. His promises cover every aspect of our spiritual life and our practical everyday life. Peter writes, "Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2 Peter 1:3-4)

Fifth, we inherit the promises of God through faith and patience (Hebrews 6:11-12). We must have faith that each promise of God is true and that God has a fulfillment of that promise for us. Then, we must have

patience – that is, an unflinching endurance to continue believing until the promise comes to pass. Like Abraham, who waited 25 years for the fulfillment of God’s promise of a son born to him and his wife Sarah, we must make a “no turning back” commitment to seeing God fulfill His promises in our life.

Finally, I want to suggest that the promises of God are what we could call “the building blocks of the Kingdom of God” in our life. The central focus of our Lord Jesus’ preaching, teaching and healing ministry was the ushering in of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom was the realm where God’s rule was established and where the power of “the world to come” broke in to earthly life to bring “whole man salvation”: forgiveness of sin, reconciliation with God, healing, prosperity, and a life plan with purpose and eternal value. The Kingdom of God was to battle and destroy the Kingdom of darkness.

Jesus won the resources *in total* for the victory of God’s Kingdom through His Atonement for us. The practical, step by step, day by day implementation of His victory and the up building of the Kingdom of God comes about when we obtain the promises of God by faith. Our lives and the Kingdom of God are built by obtaining the promises of God. We read in Hebrews 11:33 of those “who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions.” While the author of Hebrews might have been thinking of David (1 Samuel 17:34-37) and Daniel (Daniel 6:16-22) who shut the mouths of lions, the Holy Spirit speaks to all of us through this same scripture that WE shut the mouth of Satan, who goes about as a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8) as we go forward, obtaining the promises of God, and building the Kingdom of God.