

God's Promises—Part 1

"For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us" (2 Corinthians 1:20 NKJ).

"Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89 NKJ).

Whitaker House listed 628 promises of God in their book *God Keeps His Promises*. After a careful reading of the Bible for eighteen months, Storms came up with 7,487 promises made by God to humankind. Though it isn't how many there are, but the fact that He keeps every one of them—all are "Yes, and in Him Amen."

God's promises are commitments that He imposes upon Himself. These promises serve as confirmation of His love toward us. However, we must understand that God's promises are in two categories: unconditional and conditional. An unconditional promise is God's commitment to perform without exemptions. An example of this is His promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 that He would make him a great nation and bless all the families of the earth through him. There were no conditions attached to the fulfillment of the promise. A conditional promise, on the other hand, is subject to certain requirements. An example of that is found in Romans 10:9, where God said that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. The word "if" is very important, meaning you have a part to play in the fulfillment of this promise.

Christian faith is dependent on God's promises. How do we know we have a place with God after death? Because of His promises. Before Jesus went to the cross, He promised His disciples and every believer eternal home with His Father. Hear what He said: "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:2-3 NKJ).

How do we know God's promises will be fulfilled? Because of His character and ability. If the billionaire Bill Gates promises you a house in Beverly Hills, California, you know he can provide it, but are unsure he will keep his word. But not God! God cannot lie. The Bible says, "If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself" (2 Timothy 2:13). We also read from Numbers 23:19, "God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?"

Secondly, God is immutable—He does not change. In Malachi 3:6, God said, "I am the LORD, I do not change." When God promises, He does not change His mind. If you disobey His instructions, He doesn't change because you failed to do your part, you have not received. And if what you asked is not according to His will, He will not say yes to your wishes. Remember, He knows the best and the right time for each of His children, so delay is not denial. God is faithful and will keep His promise. Joshua toward the end of his life said, "Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass" (Joshua 21:45).

Another reason is that God is eternal—He can't die. A person may promise you something today but may not be here tomorrow. I remember a friend telling me about his colleague who was promised a job by an executive officer after graduation; unfortunately, the executive officer had a car accident and died the weekend of this young man's graduation. But our God does not die. He is eternal!

How about God's ability? The Hebrew name of God, El Shaddai, means "the All-Sufficient One" or "God Almighty." God is sovereign over heaven and earth. He created everything out of nothing, and He has the power to fulfill all His promises. In Jeremiah 32:17 we read, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You." God is omnipotent (all-powerful), omniscient (all-knowing), and omnipresent (all-present).

Since God's promises are numerous in the Holy Bible, let's look at a few of them:

1. **Provision** (Matthew 6:31-32; Philippians 4:19): God knows all His children's needs, and He promised to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.
2. **Protection** (Psalm 23; 91;121; Proverbs 18:10): God is our refuge and our fortress. When we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, He is there to protect and comfort us.
3. **Presence** (Hebrews 13:5): His abiding presence is with us. Hear His promise: "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."
4. **Help** (John 14:16): Jesus knows we can't live the Christian life in our own strength, and He promised to send us a Helper: the Holy Spirit, who lives with us to teach, comfort, and counsel us all the time.
5. **Guidance** (Psalm 25:12; 32:8): God promises to instruct and teach us the way we should go or choose. God is all-knowing and sees our future, so He leads us through His Spirit and saves us from danger ahead by choosing the right way.
6. **Home in Heaven** (John 14:1-3): Jesus promised His disciples and every believer an eternal home with His Father. He has been preparing a place for us, and He will come back and take us to be with Him.
7. **Prayers** (1 John 5:14-15; Jeremiah 33:3): Jesus promised that if we ask anything according to His will, He will answer.

How do we have access to God's promises? Through Jesus. He paid with His own life to give us full access to the promises of God. However, you must become a family member. God is not the Father of everyone, as some suppose. Jesus said to some religious people, "You are of your father the devil" (John 8:44). Of course, God is the Creator of all humankind, but you must be born again to become His child. The Bible says as many as received Him (Jesus), "to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12).

As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have access to God's promises, but we must put ourselves in position to receive or claim them, or else they will remain words on paper. How do we position ourselves to receive?

1. Turn away from sin—The book of Isaiah said, "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2).
2. Have faith in His word—Jesus said, "If you can believe, all things *are* possible to him who believes" (Mark 9:23).
3. Be patient—the Psalmist says, "I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me and heard my cry" (Psalm 40:1).
4. Commit your way to the Lord (Psalm 37:5).