#### Promises of God

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#### A few riddles for you to solve:



## What are like babies – easy to make, hard to deliver?



### What are like crying babies in a theater – should be carried out at once?



### What are like eggs and pies that are easily broken?



The answer is promises.



### Promises are easy to make and hard to deliver.



## Some say promises are made to be broken. Have you ever made a promise that you were not able to deliver?



We humans make promises and we break them. As the saying goes: "promises are made to be broken." But, not so with God.



#### Psalm 105:8

Note what God said about the promises He makes: Psalm 105:8 "He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations."



God is a God of His word. He remembers and He delivers on His promises. So, when He makes a promise, you better believe that it will happen.



Now, we will talk about the promises of God. It is a very broad topic, but we will try to keep the study short, interesting, and hopefully inspiring.



### Are you familiar with some of the promises God made to the believers?



### What is a Promise?



## A promise is a commitment. It is a commitment by someone to do or not to do something.



# As a noun, "promise" means a declaration assuring that one will or will not do something.



# As a verb, it means to commit oneself to do or perform.



To promise is to bind yourself to an obligation about something and to guarantee that you will do whatever you say you will do.



A promise is a commitment to perform.

If I promise you something, I owe it to you to perform it.



### Thus, a promise is a debt. And, a debt needs to be paid and satisfied.



Have you ever made a promise to God?



### Have you ever made a promise to God to obey His commands?



#### Of course, you have!



### You might ask: when did I make a promise to God?



## The answer is quite often. Especially, when we pray to God.



### The scripture says if you promise God an oath you better carry it out fast.



Yet, there is a promise that is sealed with an oath and a symbol. That promise was made at your baptism.



At baptism, you come before God in repentance of your sins, you promise to keep God's commandments, and promise that God will be your Heavenly Father and no one else.



To those who are yet to be baptized, you will have to make this same promise to God when the day of your baptism comes.



### Promise to Abraham



### Many years after the great flood, there was a man named Abram.



Abram was a good man. He owned many sheep and cattle. He lived with his wife Sarai in the land of Haran. He was a righteous and faithful man. But he had no child.



One day, God came to Abram. He said to him, "Abram! I want you to pack up all your things and leave your home! I want you to go to the land I will give you. I promise that I will bless you, and make your family great. I will be with you in all you do, and because of you all the families of the earth will be blessed."



Wow! That was quite a promise! This was a good promise, but it meant that Abram would have to leave the place he knew and go to a strange place he didn't knowsomewhere in the wilderness.



He would have to trust God that everything would be okay, and that everything would happen as promised. It took a lot of faith on Abram's part to move out of his comfort zone and live in a strange land.



And that's exactly what Abram did. Without hesitation, Abram took his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot and set out on the journey in obedience to God's bidding.



They packed everything they owned in the land of Haran and moved to the land of Canaan – the land God promised to give him and his descendants, and the land where God promised to bless him.



It wasn't an easy move. Abram was 75 years old when God told him to pack up everything he owned and leave his home.



The journey from Haran to Canaan was long and fraught with danger! Abram obeyed for he trusted God. He trusted in God's promises!



# 15 years later, Abram was resting in his tent when God appeared to him. This must have been a bit of a surprise!



God said to Abram, "Do not be afraid! I am your defender! I promise that I will give you a great reward." But Abram said, "What kind of reward? I don't even have children!"



And then God took Abram out beneath the starry sky. "Look up at the stars in the sky," God said. "You will have a son. He will have children, and his children will have children, and they will have more children, and one day they will be as many as the stars in the sky."



Abram said, "How can this be possible? I am old!"



## God promised Abram that he would have children, and from him a great nation would come.



God promised that they would live in the land that He will give them. And God promised that because of Abram, all people on earth would be blessed.



Many years later, God again appeared to Abraham. This time God ask that Isaac be sacrificed to Him. Abraham trusted God and in His promises of many descendants.



Abraham trusted that God made him a promise and that God would keep His promise. He reasoned that God would not leave him childless.



8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.



9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.



- 10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.
- 11 And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise.



12 And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.



- 17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son,
- 18 even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."



19 Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.



# Abraham trusted God unconditionally. He moved in the direction of his faith because he trusted God and His promises.



# Abraham was confident that God would deliver what He had promised. That is an important thing to remember!



### Therefore, Abraham earned the accolade as the 'father of the faithful.'



### Romans 4:20

"Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God."



## God is Faithful to His Promises



## To God a promise is a promise. God made a few promises to Abraham and He fulfilled them all.



So, when God makes a promise to you, be assured He will accomplish it as He said He would. God is faithful to His promises.



### Numbers 23:19

"God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act?

Does he promise and not fulfill?"



### Psalm 145:13

"Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does."



### Hebrews 6:17

"Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath."



God has made promises to you too. The Bible Gateway listed 5467 promises God made in the scriptures. That is a lot of promises.



### List of God's Promises:

- 1. To prosper you
- 2. To bless you
- 3. To be gracious to you
- 4. To supply your needs
- 5. To help in time of need
- 6. To never leave you nor forsake you
- 7. To give you life more abundantly

- 8. To give you the Holy Spirit
- 9. To grant you eternal life
- 10. To be a father to you
- 11. To give you an inheritance
- 12. To give you the kingdom



## So, how do we approach these wondrous promises?



God made two (2) general types of promises to His people: a physical promise and a spiritual promise. God promises physical well-being and spiritual salvation.



### Physical Promise



Let us talk about the physical and material promises. It has always been God's plan to bless you and to prosper you.



### Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."



### Philippians 4:19

"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."



### 2 Corinthians 9:8

"And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."



God wants you to be well and happy in this physical life. God promises to bless His people to look after them and to care of them. God wants you to have a full and enjoyable life on earth.



25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?



26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?



- 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?
- 28 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.



29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.

30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?



- 31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'
- 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.



- 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.



God's promise is to take care of you by providing for your needs and for you not to worry about the necessities of life.



God is faithful to His promises; his promises will always come true. A promise is a promise and God is happy to keep His promises.



## Spiritual Promise



Even before God started to fashion the world, he had a plan. His plan is for us to know how good He is, and how much He loves us, and that one day we will come to live with Him forever in His kingdom.



- 1 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.
- 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.



3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.



- 4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."
- 5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."



- 6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.
- 7 Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.



God has promised us eternal life.



### 1 John 2:24-25

"As for you, see that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us—eternal life."



# God has given us very great and precious promises.



This promise is in 2 Peter 1:3-4.



### 2 Peter 1:3-4

3 His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.



### 2 Peter 1:3-4

4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.



The promise is for us to participate in the divine nature, to be a member of the divine family.



### Covenant Relationship



How should we look at God's promises?
Are the promises of God unilateral, onesided, unconditional and nonrepresentative?



God's promises are mutual and reciprocal.

The promises come in the form of a covenant – a two-way promise with conditions set out by God.



When we enter into a covenant with God, which is a form of mutual agreement, both parties promise to keep certain the agreed conditions.



God promises blessings in return for the fulfillment of our promises to Him. Paul calls them "the covenants of promise." God offers great promises and blessings to the His people if and when they obeyed.



# Let us now consider the framework of God's covenant with the ancient Israelites whom He called His firstborn.



### Exodus 19:5

"Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people . . ."



### Exodus 19:8

"Then all the people answered together and said, 'All that the Lord has spoken we will do'"



This covenant framework has not changed in the New Testament times. Jesus said to the disciple in John 14.



### John 14

- 15 "If you love me, keep my commands.
- 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—
- 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.



### John 14

- 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.
- 19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.



### John 14

- 20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.
- 21 Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."



The reciprocal covenant relationship is intact. It never changed. A covenant has two (2) parties: God and us. We both have responsibilities and promises to fulfill.



What is this covenant relationship about? It is about a family relationship – a father and son relationship. I will be a father to him and he will be my son.



#### Galatians 4:1-7

- 1 What I am saying is that as long as an heir is underage, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate.
- 2 The heir is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father.



#### Galatians 4:1-7

- 3 So also, when we were underage, we were in slavery under the elemental spiritual forces of the world.
- 4 But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,



#### Galatians 4:1-7

- 5 to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.
- 6 Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."
- 7 So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.



## Source of Blessing



## What is the source of the blessing? Why would God bless you?



The blessing comes from being an obedient son and daughter. It is just like a father blessing the children. God is no different. He disciplines His children and He blesses them as well.



## The source of blessing is detailed in Deuteronomy 4-7.



## Deuteronomy 4:5-8

5 See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it.



## Deuteronomy 4:5-8

6 Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."



## Deuteronomy 4:5-8

- 7 What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him?
- 8 And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?



## Deuteronomy 5:32-33

- 32 So be careful to do what the LORD your God has commanded you; do not turn aside to the right or to the left.
- 33 Walk in obedience to all that the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.



## Deuteronomy 6:24-25

24 The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today.

25 And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness."



## Deuteronomy 7:12-14

12 If you pay attention to these laws and are careful to follow them, then the LORD your God will keep his covenant of love with you, as he swore to your ancestors.



## Deuteronomy 7:12-14

13 He will love you and bless you and increase your numbers. He will bless the fruit of your womb, the crops of your land —your grain, new wine and olive oil—the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks in the land he swore to your ancestors to give you.



## Deuteronomy 7:12-14

14 You will be blessed more than any other people; none of your men or women will be childless, nor will any of your livestock be without young.



These verses are clear and explicit that blessings are tied to obedience. This talks about keeping God's laws, commandments and decrees.



# The source of blessing is obedience to God's words just as a child obeys his father.



## Purpose of the Blessing



There is a purpose for the blessing. The principle is found in Deuteronomy 4:6-8.



## Deuteronomy 4:6-8

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## Deuteronomy 4:6-8

- 7 What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him?
- 8 And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?



God blesses you because you are His model. When people see your good deeds they will praise God. In turn God blesses you. It completes the cycle.



Your obedience makes you righteous. God will bless you because when they see you they see Christ in you. You have become Christ's model to the world – or as Paul said Christ's ambassadors.



#### 1 Peter 2:12

"Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us."



## This concept can be found in Psalm 67. The exposition is very clear.



#### Psalm 67

- 1 May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us—
- 2 so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.



#### Psalm 67

- 3 May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you.
- 4 May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth.



#### Psalm 67

- 5 May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you.
- 6 The land yields its harvest; God, our God, blesses us.
- 7 May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.



## Beatitudes



Jesus spoke about this in His sermon on the mount. It can be read in this manner too. A person is blessed because of His godly conduct that reflects Christ.



- 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, (those who are humble and in whose spirit there is no guile) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 Blessed are those who mourn, (those who are loving and care having sympathy and empathy to others) they will be comforted.



- 5 Blessed are the meek, (gentle, modest and obedient) for they will inherit the earth.
- 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, (righteous behavior, people who strive to live holy lives) for they will be filled.



- 7 Blessed are the merciful, (kind, forgiving, compassionate) for they will be shown mercy.
- 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, (sincere, truthful and upright) for they will see God.



- 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, (peaceloving, gracious) for they will be called children of God.
- 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, (people who do God's work) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.



- 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. (Those who endure hardship for the gospel)
- 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



Blessing comes to God's people who reflect godly character in their lives. So, people can see Christ in us.



### Matthew 5:13-16

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.



### Matthew 5:13-16

- 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.
- 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.



## Claim Your Blessings



Now, you know God's plan and wish for you. God plans to bless you and to prosper you and to bring you as a son/daughter into His kingdom.



# How do you access these blessings? Here are 3 steps to follow to claim the blessings:



### Step 1

Be included in the covenant of God.

For you to be blessed you must have a covenant relationship.



## Once you are in a covenant relationship – you are now a member of God's household.



Then you are blessed because God dwells in you! God is now your father and you are His son and daughter.



11 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (which is done in the body by human hands)—



12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.



- 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
- 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,



15 by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace,

16 and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.



- 17 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.
- 18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.



19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household,

20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.



- 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.
- 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.



The first thing we need is to enter into a covenant relationship with God. Once you have this father-son or father-daughter relationship, you are in good stead.



### 2 Corinthians 6:18

"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."



# Once you are in this covenant relationship you can expect God to bless you both physically and spiritually.



## Step 2

Keep the commandments.

Jesus said: If you love me keep the command.



John wrote in 1 John 5:3 "In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome."



# Commandment keeping and obedience to God is at the heart of the father and son relationship.



God is training and developing you to be a son and daughter. He is developing a Godly character in you. So, that we all may be like Christ and to grow in the image and likeness of Christ.



#### Romans 8

- 28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.
- 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.
- 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.



The Book of Psalms starts with these words.



### Psalm 1:1-3

- 1 Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers,
- 2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.



### Psalm 1:1-3

3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.



Isn't that a great and wonderful blessing?



## Step 3

Claim your blessings



God said you could come before Him to claim your blessing. If you did not know that you have the right to claim your blessing - you do now. Jesus once told this in a sermon recorded in Luke 11.



- 5 Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread;
- 6 a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.'



7 And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.'



8 I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.



- 9 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.
- 10 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.



- 11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?
- 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?
- 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"



Jesus said, if you want anything: you may just ask. But, we know that it is not that simple.



#### James 4

- 2 You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God.
- 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.



#### James 4

4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.



# So, how do we approach God to claim His blessings? The answer is in Deuteronomy 26.



12 When you have finished setting aside a tenth of all your produce in the third year, the year of the tithe, you shall give it to the Levite, the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied.



13 Then say to the LORD your God: "I have removed from my house the sacred portion and have given it to the Levite, the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, according to all you commanded. I have not turned aside from your commands nor have I forgotten any of them.



14 I have not eaten any of the sacred portion while I was in mourning, nor have I removed any of it while I was unclean, nor have I offered any of it to the dead. I have obeyed the LORD my God; I have done everything you commanded me.



15 Look down from heaven, your holy dwelling place, and bless your people Israel and the land you have given us as you promised on oath to our ancestors, a land flowing with milk and honey."



See, you can come before God to claim your blessings if and when you have obediently and faithfully kept His commandments. If you do, God will be happy to bless you!



## Summation



It is God's plan and wish to bless you and to prosper you. God wants to give you an abundant life – here, right now and in the kingdom.



God will bless you in this life because you are His ambassador and model on earth - because you reflect God's light in you.



The blessing is based on a father and son relationship you have with God. When you are right before Him, you may ask anything from Him and even claim your blessings – both physical and spiritual.



16 The LORD your God commands you this day to follow these decrees and laws; carefully observe them with all your heart and with all your soul.



17 You have declared this day that the LORD is your God and that you will walk in obedience to him, that you will keep his decrees, commands and laws—that you will listen to him.



18 And the LORD has declared this day that you are his people, his treasured possession as he promised, and that you are to keep all his commands.



19 He has declared that he will set you in praise, fame and honor high above all the nations he has made and that you will be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised.



As God's people, He has promised to bless you. Now, please stand for the pronouncement of blessing as God has instructed in Numbers 6.



#### Numbers 6

- The Lord said to Moses, "Tell Aaron and his sons, 'This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them:
- 24 ""The Lord bless you and keep you;
- 25 the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; 26 the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."
- So, Lord may these people put your name in their hearts, that you may bless them.



#### **END**

