

Genesis: Inheriting God's *promises* of the Kingdom through faith and patience.

PROMISES, PROMISES

Hebrews 11:1-22

I. PROMISES, PROMISES!

- A. Promises don't mean a whole lot in our society today.
- B. "God never made a promise that was too good to be true."

II. WHY USE THE WORD PROMISE AS A READING STRATEGY FOR GENESIS WHEN THE ENGLISH WORD SHOWS UP ONLY THREE TIMES IN THE NASB?

(Gen.21:1; 28:15; 50:24; cf. Heb.6:12-17; 7:6; 10:36; 11:9,11,13,17,39)

- A. Apostolic preaching spoke of Genesis in terms of *promise* (Acts 7:5,17; 13:23,32,33; 26:6,7)
- B. While the word *promise* may be lacking in Genesis, the idea, or the concept, is found throughout the book. There are different ways in which God's promise is spoken of in Genesis: God's "*blessing*," "*oath*," "*covenant*," and "*word*."

III. GOD'S BLESSING IS A KIND OF PROMISE.

- A. God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Gen.1:28).
- B. The blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were promises regarding the future (Gen.12:1-3; Gen.27:27-29; 49:1-28).
- C. God's blessing of the seventh day must be understood as a promise of future rest for Adam and Eve (Gen.2:3; Heb.4:1).

IV. OATHS AND COVENANTS ARE A FORM OF PROMISE (Gen.22:16-18; 26:3; 50:24; Psalm 105:9; Heb.6:13-20).

V. GOD'S SPOKEN WORD CAN BE SYNONYMOUS WITH PROMISE.

- A. Everything we expect in a promise is found in the character of God's Word. God's spoken and written Word is certain, trustworthy, truthful, reliable, orderly, and stable (cf. Gen.1; Psalm 12:6; **33:6-12**; 89:1,2; **119:89-90**; Isa.40:8; 55:10,11; Mt.24:35; Mk.13:31; John 10:35).
- B. The stability and orderliness of creation is a reflection upon the trustworthiness of God's spoken Word (**Gen.8:22**; **Jer.31:35**; **33:19-21**).
 1. The stability of God's creation is such that we know when the sun will rise on 9/9/2001 (6:06 a.m.)
 2. The stability of God's creation is such that we know when the sun will set on 9/9/2001 (7:22 p.m.)
 3. The stability of God's creation is such that we know when the sun will rise on 9/9/2080 (6:06 a.m.)
 4. The stability of God's creation is such that we know when the sun will set on 9/9/2080 (7:22 p.m.)
 5. This same God who gives such order and fine-tuning to the world we now live in has also given promises regarding the world to come.

VI. ONE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF UNBELIEF IS TO LIVE AS IF GOD'S PROMISES REGARDING THE FUTURE ARE NOT TRUE. UNBELIEVERS CHOOSE WHAT IS SEEN OVER WHAT IS UNSEEN (cf. Gen.25:27-34).

- A. Unbelievers live as if there is no future judgment which God has promised (John 3:16-18; 12:47-48; Acts 17:31; 24:15,16,25; Rom.2:5-8,16; 3:6; 2 Thess.2:8; 1 Tim.6:14; 1 Thess.1:10; 2 Thess.1:8,9; 2 Tim.4:1; Jude 6; Rev.19:11-21; 20:11-15).
1. Unbelievers don't keep the Sabbath because they don't believe God's promise of rest (Gen.2:3 with Heb.4:1).
 2. Unbelievers reject the authority of their parents (Rom.1:30; Eph.6:1,2; 2 Tim.3:2).
 - a. One of the ways young people can examine their faith is whether they believe God's promises and obey their parents (Ex.20:12).
 - b. Young people, when you rebel against your parents do you confess that sin and repent of it? If you are not turning from your sin, disobedience, and rebellion then you should be worried about whether or not you really are a Christian (2 Cor.13:5).
 3. Unbelievers murder their children, believing the promise of the serpent, "It's my body, and it's my choice" (Gen.4:1; Exodus 20:13; Judges 13:3,6,7; Psalm 51:5; 139:13-16; Jer.1:5; Luke 1:41,44).
 4. Unbelievers commit sexual immorality (Gen.39:12; Judges 16:15-22; 1 Kings 11:1-2; Job 31:1; Prov.2:16; 5:3-5,20; 6:24-32; 7:5,21-23; 22:14; Mt.5:27-30; Rom.13:14; 1 Cor.6:9,18-20; Gal.5:19-21; Eph.5:5; 1 Tim.2:22; Heb.12:14-16; 1 Peter 2:11; 1 John 2:15-17; Rev.21:8).
- B. The serpent makes promises, but they are all lies (Gen.3:1-6; Mt.4:3,6,9; John 8:44; Acts 5:3; 2 Cor.4:4; Rev.12:9)!

VII. IF YOU PROFESS TO BE A CHRISTIAN, ARE YOU WAITING PATIENTLY AND IN FAITH TO INHERIT GOD'S PROMISES? (Heb.11)

- A. Storing up treasures in heaven (Mt.6:19-21)
- B. Crown of life (James 1:12)
- C. The Kingdom (James 2:5)
- D. The new heavens and the new earth (Isa.11:1-9; Isa.41:18-20; 65:17-25; 66:22,23; Hos.2:18,19; Mt.19:28; Acts 3:21; Rom.8:18-21; 2 Pet.3:7-13; Rev.21:1-8)
- E. Christ's coming again (2 Pet.3:4,9)
- F. Sabbath Rest (Heb.4:1-11)
- G. Eternal salvation (1 John 2:25)

QUESTIONS FOR SABBATH DISCUSSION & MEDITATION:

Take what you have learned this morning and make it into a prayer for yourself, your family, the church and/or your nation. Remember that prayer consists in Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication (Feel free to use the outline for praying).

What is the "theme" or reading strategy, we are using for Genesis?

After this morning's sermon, how would you define God's promise? Can we understand any of God's promises apart from Jesus Christ? Why or why not?

Why are God's promises foundational for faith?

Explain how the concept of "promise" is found throughout Genesis?

What is the essential connection between the orderliness and stability of creation with the future promises of God?

How does a life of rebellion against God reflect unbelief in God's promises?

How have the people of God in every age lived by God's promises?

In what ways are you not living your life based upon the certainty of God's promises? How are you going to change?

Prepared by Pastor Aaron Goerner (9/9/2001). See Dt.33:8-10; Ezra 7:10; Malachi 2:7; Acts 17:11; Col.1:28,29; 1 Tim.4:12-16.
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