

God is Sovereign and Answers Prayer

DOES GOD KEEP HIS PROMISES?

Focal Verses • 2 CHRONICLES 6:12-21

Aim for Change

By the end of this lesson, we will REMEMBER God's promise to provide perpetually to Jerusalem a Davidic king; AFFIRM the faithfulness of God and the Christian conviction that Jesus is that Davidic heir; and CHOOSE a prayer life that affirms and trusts God's promises.

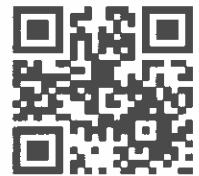
In Focus

Robbie had enough. This was the last time he was going to depend on Marcus to help him out with doing different jobs. Marcus was Robbie's protégé as well as an excellent craftsman, but he was almost never on time, even though he promised not to be late. Marcus' tardiness was negatively affecting the timeline for completing projects. Robbie had confronted Marcus about his tardiness multiple times, but nothing much had changed.

Marcus did not understand why his pay was less this month. Robbie knew this was his main source of income for rent and other bills. Furthermore, they had previously agreed that he would be paid hourly every two weeks. Marcus approached Robbie and voiced his frustration. How could Robbie not pay him his normal check? Robbie revealed that he had deliberately put less in Marcus' check in order to teach him what it means to keep his word. Finally, Marcus understood and connected Brian's lesson to his tardiness. He would be at work on time from now on.

We all are called to live in a covenantal relationship with God. In today's lesson, we will examine how God keeps His promises to us and how we also must keep our promises to Him by the way in which we live. Have you ever noticed how often God keeps His promises in your life?

SCAN FOR VIDEO



Keep in Mind

“Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day”
(2 Chronicles 6:15, KJV).

Focal Verses

KJV 2 Chronicles 6:12 And he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands:

13 For Solomon had made a brasen scaffold of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven.

14 And said, O LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which keepest covenant, and shewest mercy unto thy servants, that walk before thee with all their hearts:

15 Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day.

16 Now therefore, O LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon

the throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me.

17 Now then, O LORD God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.

18 But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!

19 Have respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee:

20 That thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldest put thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth toward this place.

21 Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall make toward this place: hear thou from thy dwelling place, even from heaven; and when thou hearest, forgive.

The People, Places, and Times

The Temple. King David's desire was to build a temple for God (1 Chronicles 28:2). However, God rejected David's plan because he had "shed much blood upon the earth in [God's] sight." The task was charged to his son, Solomon, who began construction after his father's death (1 Chronicles 28:6; 1 Kings 5:3).

The Temple would be a place for Israel where they would turn their hearts toward God. As the resting place for the Ark of the Covenant, it provided a permanent place for the Lord instead of the tent of dwelling. For Solomon and the people, the Temple symbolized the presence of God.

Davidic Covenant. In the Davidic covenant between God and David, God promises David that He will establish a royal dynasty from David's seed—a kingdom that would endure forever (2 Samuel 7:5–16; 1 Chronicles 17:11–14; 2 Chronicles 6:16). Solomon's building of the Temple was a realization of covenantal terms, which culminated in the birth and return of Jesus Christ (Luke 1:31–33; Matthew 1:1).

What type of covenants do we create and enter into today?

Background

The people of Israel, who had wandered in the desert for 40 years, were now completely settled in the Promised Land. They had recently transitioned from a period when judges ruled to a new stage of governance where they had a king to rule over them like other nations. However, the king was not to be like other kings. The Lord was still the King, which meant that Israel was still very much a theocratic nation governed by God.

Although David could not build the Temple, he prepared everything his son needed. He gave Solomon the building plans, gold and silver, including gold and silver lampstands, gold and silver tables, forks, bowls, gold for the altar, gold for the chariots, and gold for the cherubim, plus bronze, iron, wood, onyx stones, precious stones, and marble (1 Chronicles 28:11–18, 29:1–2).

Still, Solomon lacked one major ingredient—the right man with the skill to build the Temple (2 Chronicles 2:7). Solomon wrote to Hiram, King of Tyre, who responded that he would send his master craftsman Hiram, who was skilled to work in gold and silver, bronze and iron, stone and wood (1 Kings 7:14; 2 Chronicles 2:13–14).

Construction for the Temple began in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, and completing the Temple took seven years. Solomon spared no expense in his efforts to produce something wonderful and great (2 Chronicles 2:9). He employed the services of Phoenician artisans and other skilled workers from the community, including immigrants.

With the Temple completed and furnished, Solomon gathers all of the people to bless them (2 Chronicles 6:3). He offers a magnificent prayer of dedication, saying, "For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever" (2 Chronicles 7:3).

How would you rate the importance your church building has in the lives of the people of God?

At-A-Glance

1. Solomon's Posture for Prayer
(2 Chronicles 6:12–13)
2. Solomon's Adoration in Prayer
(vv. 14–15)
3. Solomon's Petition in Prayer
(vv. 16–21)

In Depth

1. Solomon's Posture for Prayer (2 Chronicles 6:12–13)

The dedication of the Temple was an historic occasion for all of Israel. Solomon prayed on a bronze altar, kneeling with his hands spread toward heaven, a familiar prayer gesture (Exodus 9:33; Ezra 9:5; Job 11:13). Solomon's posture reflected his humility and submission to God.

What are some of the typical postures people choose to take during prayer?

2. Solomon's Adoration in Prayer (vv. 14–15)

The prayer begins with adoration and praise for God. Solomon points to God's transcendent uniqueness: "There is no God like thee in the heaven nor the earth." Solomon acknowledged God as covenant-keeping and loving. God had proven to keep His promises to His people. With the Temple completed, an important aspect of the promise to David was realized.

Solomon recognized the responsibility of the people in their covenant relationship with God. God was keeping His promise to them because of His love for them. In the same manner, the people were to keep the covenant by continuing to live in obedience to God, which would reflect their love for Him.

Why do we consider expressing adoration and praise towards God important during prayer?

3. Solomon's Petition in Prayer (vv. 16–21)

As Solomon prays, he transitions from praise and adoration to supplication. He makes three main requests:

(1) “keep ... that which thou hast promised him”—Solomon prayed that God would keep His promise to his father, David. This did not express doubt—Solomon was already seeing the promise fulfilled—but instead, it was a reminder to God that He had promised David a perpetual kingdom. David's heirs would sit on the throne of Israel, foreshadowing Jesus, the son of David.

(2) “Have respect ... to the prayer of thy servant”—Solomon petitioned God to respect his prayer. This was an invitation for God to always be at the center of everything, actively working in their affairs.

(3) “Hearken ... and when thou hearest, forgive”—Solomon's final request is that God will hear from His dwelling place and forgive. This humble supplication acknowledges the people's tendency to sin. He presents several scenarios and pleads with God to hear from heaven and forgive.

How do the elements of Solomon's prayer compare and/or contrast to the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13)?

Search the Scriptures

1. What does it mean to “walk in my law”? (2 Chronicles 6:16)

2. Can we learn anything from Solomon's prayer posture? (v. 13)

Discuss the Meaning

God always keeps His promises. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of us. We are prone to break our promises to God, ourselves, and others. What does keeping our word say about integrity? Discuss the impact of kept or broken promises in one's personal life and the life of the larger community. What can we do to help us keep our promises?

Liberating Lesson

Many people are guilty of not keeping their promises. They commit to themselves and others and abandon them when they no longer want to abide by the terms. Fathers and mothers abandon their children; wives and husbands divorce one another and go their separate ways; resolutions to eat better and exercise are broken daily; and church members promise to volunteer but are too busy to serve as they should.

Broken promises are not without consequences, including pain, hurt, disappointment, and distrust. In what ways have people not kept their word in your life? In what ways have you not kept your word to others? For Solomon, God had proven to be a keeper of His word, and the people of Israel were encouraged to do the same to experience covenant blessings.

How can a deeper prayer life support us in being more faithful to our promises?

Application for Activation

As believers, we are spiritual leaders in a world that is lost. We should exemplify Christ by how we walk or live daily. Three ways to do this are: (1) Keep our promises—List one promise you've made and are determined to keep. (2) Maintain an active prayer life—Commit to pray daily. Invite neighbors, co-workers, friends, and church members to pray with you. (3) Be accountable—Keep a journal about this lesson and write what God says.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

Sources:

Edersheim, A. *Bible History: Old Testament*. Vol. 5. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975. 86.
Spence-Jones, H. D. M., ed. *2 Chronicles*. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909. 63.
Thompson, J. A. *1, 2 Chronicles*. Vol. 9. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994. 228.
VanGemeren, W., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997.

Say It Correctly

Hearken. **HAR**-kin.

Daily Bible Readings

DAY 71

Joshua 16–18
Psalm 33:12–19

DAY 72

Joshua 19–21
Psalm 33:20–22

DAY 73

Joshua 22–24
Psalm 34:1–7

DAY 74

Judges 1–2
Psalm 34:8–14

DAY 75

Judges 3–7
Psalm 34:15–18

DAY 76

Judges 8–12
Psalm 34:19–22

DAY 77

Judges 13–15
Psalm 35:1–6

Notes
