

Series: 2 Peter
Title: Exceeding Great and Precious Promises
Text: 2 Peter 1: 4
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Almost every one operates under the power of promise: the student, the business man, the artist, the scientist. We grow up being taught that if we follow steps a...b...c...then with hard work and determination we can achieve whatever it is we are pursuing.

We know full well that whatever involves man's power and wisdom has thousands of variables that can prevent it from coming to pass—the promises of this world are promises of uncertainty at best. The history of this world has proven it so. Our own history has proven it so. Still, with each new generation this world continues right along, motivated by the power of promise.

Yet, if men will give all diligence for promises of uncertainty what will the regenerated believer do when we are given EXCEEDING GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES by God who cannot lie? Should we not expect the power of our God infinitely greater to create devotion a thousand times more in the believer than with those whose promise is based on uncertainty?

With that in mind I want to speak to you tonight about the EXCEEDING GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES GIVEN TO EVERY REGENERATED CHILD OF GOD.

2 Peter 1: 3: According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

I. THE PROMISES OF GOD ARE EXCEEDING GREAT AND PRECIOUS BECAUSE OF THE AUTHOR.

God who cannot lie confirmed his own counsel by his own oath.

Hebrews 6: 17: Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath:

Note: the elect of God, all of which he has and shall call by his grace, are called “heirs of promise.”

God, WILLING MORE ABUNDANTLY to show unto the heirs of promise the IMMUTABILITY OF HIS COUNSEL: God's counsel is the decree of God, concerning the salvation of his people by Jesus Christ. His decree is immutable—unchangeable because God who decreed it is unchangeable, because he is sovereign, because his wisdom is unsearchable, his arm omnipotent, because there is no condition to be met by those he saves, and because it was purposed in Christ who is the unchangeable Son of God.

The decree of his counsel was that God himself would do all necessary to save all of his chosen, children by sending forth Christ who is our great High Priest, who brings us to God complete and perfect by his own blood and righteousness.

Hebrews 6: 17: Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath:

He not only decreed it, God confirmed his decree by his own oath. It means, God bound himself by his oath. God laid himself under obligation. God became a surety to fulfill his purpose and his promise—He swore by Himself unto Abraham by promising that in his seed [Christ—God himself—the Son of God] all the nations of the earth should be blessed. What exceeding great and precious promises—by the unchangeable God, confirmed by his own oath in his Son.

We see 3 things in that:

1. The super-abounding grace of God
2. The absolute total inability of God's elect to save ourselves
3. That God's promises to the heirs of promise are sure—God could swear by no greater than himself in his Son Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 6: 18: That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

When the Holy Spirit comes into the elect of God in the season of his love, God performs his promise of sprinkling clean water upon us, and making us clean: from all our filthiness, and from all our idols. He gives us a new heart and put in us a new spirit. He shows **the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirming it by his oath.** Thus he creates in us “like precious faith through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ.”

When God does that, he makes his child to know that his promise of giving us eternal life was promised us in Christ before the world began--

Titus 1: 2: In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; 3: But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour.

The promises of God to us brethren are as great and precious, as eternally sure to us, as God is eternally glorious.

Application: Now think to when God first revealed himself in your heart. Did his exceeding great and precious promises, make you “give all diligence”—did God grab you, make you come out of darkness and corruption of your lusts and into the glorious light of our Redeemer? That is why we continue to give all diligence to hear these great and precious promises because by these—he keep us *partaking of him* and keeps us *from partaking* with the corruption that is in this world through lusts. Give all diligence, brethren.

II. THE PROMISES OF GOD ARE EXCEEDING GREAT AND PRECIOUS TO HIS REGENERATED CHILD BECAUSE OF CHRIST.

We saw God interposed himself by an oath to confirm his counsel—it means God became Surety to fulfill his promises himself—God the Son, Christ, is that Surety. He entered into covenant to fulfill all the promises of God for those who are “the heirs of promise.” In the 7th chapter of Hebrews we see how far pre-eminent Christ our High Priest is to those priests under the old covenant.

Hebrews 7: 21: (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord swear and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)

By two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie—his decree and his oath. When did this “swearing in” of our great High Priest take place?

Illustration: The oath of office—before the president takes office or at the end

The oath of God to his Son preceded Christ's entrance and discharge of His priestly office—it was in eternity before the world was made. It was revealed in the time through David—which this verse is quoting--which was revealed “after—or “since the law of the priest in Moses day.” So verse:

Hebrews 7: 28: For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

The pattern which was shown Moses in the Mount—was Christ our High Priest and all things to show a picture and shadow of him to come.

The point is this: Christ has been our great High Priest even before Aaron was ever given. So that we are sure that the promises of God to save us by the perfect finished work of his Son were yes and amen in Christ from before the law ever entered in.

Hebrews 7: 22: By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

Hebrews 8: 1: Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; 2: A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man....6: But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

- Aaron was but a man; Christ is "the Son of God" (Hebrews 7:3, 28).
- Aaron belonged to the tribe of Levi; Christ, according to the flesh, sprang from the royal tribe (Hebrews 7:14), and is the Priest-King.
- Aaron was made "after the law of a carnal commandment"; Christ, "after the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:16).
- Aaron "made nothing perfect"; Christ did (Hebrews 7:19).
- Aaron was unable to bring the sinner, "nigh unto God" (Hebrews 7:19); Christ has (Hebrews 7:25).
- Aaron was not inducted into his priestly office by a Divine oath; Christ did (Hebrews 7:21).
- Aaron had many successors (Hebrews 7:23); Christ has none.
- Aaron died (Hebrews 7:23); Christ "ever liveth" (Hebrews 7:25).
- Aaron was a sinner (Hebrews 7:27); Christ was "separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26).
- Aaron was only the priestly head of an earthly people; Christ is "higher than the heavens" (#7:26), High Priest over his people from the four corners of the earth, over all time.
- Aaron had to offer sacrifice "daily" (Hebrews 7:27)- Christ perfected his people when by one offering "he offered himself" (Hebrews 7: 27.)
- Aaron was filled with "infirmity" (Hebrews 7:28); Christ is "perfect forevermore" (Hebrews 7: 28.)

Hebrews 9: 15: And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

The promises of God are exceeding great and precious because of God the Author, and because of Christ who is himself God the Son the Author and Finisher of our faith.

III. LASTLY, CONSIDER SOME OF THE PROMISES THEMSELVES.

1. There is no more offering for sin.

“Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us” so that we have peace with God in Christ...“*there is no more offering for sin.*” (Heb 10: 15-17.)

2. Reconciliation by the body of his flesh through death (Col 1:21-22.)

Ephesians 2: 19: Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

3. In Christ we have the promise of eternal life.

John 6: 54: Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

4. Because he has given us the Spirit of adoption, we are children and have the promise of inheritance

Romans 8: 17: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. 18: For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are not worthy to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

1 John 3: 2: Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

How glorious that, by God’s promise to us, we are able to look beyond the deceitful riches of this life and see that our true inheritance is with Christ.

5. We have the promise of resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15: 52: In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53: For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. 54: So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? 56 The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. 57 But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

6. Our Savior has given us the promise of reigning with Christ.

Revelation 3: 21: To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Illustration: The Dove and the Hawk

A dove moaned to her fellow-birds how to escape the hawk. One by one they answered her: Stay low—but the hawk can swoop down; Soar high—but the hawk could soar as high as she could; Fly into the forest; but the hawk can hide and maneuver in all the trees; Fly into the city; but there was even more enemies to do her harm; Finally one said, Fly to the hole of the rock. The ole’ hawk can’t penetrate the rock. That is where the believer flies. Riches, honor, pleasures of this world—none of these are the Refuge from all evil—fly to the Rock of Ages, Christ Jesus.

Giving all diligence...

1. Believe the promises of God. They are most sure and certain. God cannot deceive us, or give us a vain and uncertain hope.

If we truly realized the might, the majesty, and the meaning of God's promises, how happy and content they will keep us.

2. Esteem the promises of God (Hebrews 11:13).

Hebrews 11: 13: These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14: For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

3. **Give all diligence** to believe and know and rest in every promise that you might *grow in grace and knowledge of Christ Jesus*.

Hebrews 6: 10: For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11: And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: 12: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises

2 Corinthians 1: 20: For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

Amen!