

The Promises Of God: Yea, Amen

“For how many soever be the promises of God, in him is the yea, wherefore through him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us” (2 Cor. 1:20).

Paul addressed, in earlier verses, the sarcasm of some in Corinth who implied that his word could not be depended upon. They said that at one time his word would be “yea”; the next instant, it would be “nay”. He showed that not only his word was dependable, but much more so that the Word of God was dependable — trustworthy; that however many promises God made, they could be depended upon. Peter wrote of God’s promise and said, “Whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises” (2 Pet. 1:4). God promises are precious and exceeding great because —

OF THE NATURE OF HIS PROMISES. We know, of course, that God has given many personal promises to various folk through the ages — to Abraham, Jacob, David, Hezekiah, et al. Those promises were of great comfort to the persons who received them but have little value to us because they were not made to us. But there are many promises that God has given (although not unconditionally) that affects the whole of mankind. Consider just a few: “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ...” (Isa. 1:18); “and ye shall seek for me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart” (Jer. 29:13); “He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37); “I will in no wise leave thee nor forsake thee” (Heb. 13:5). To these could many more be added. God’s promises are precious because of the nature of them!

THEY ARE CERTAIN. While there may be conditions to be met on man’s part, the promises given by God are clear, definite and certain: no “reneging” on God’s part of the promises He makes to man. Thus we are told “to hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end ... for he is faithful that promised” (Heb. 10:23).

WHATEVER GOD PROMISES TO DO, HE IS ABLE TO DO. The Ephesians writer said of God that “He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Eph. 3:20). It is said of Abraham that when God promised that Sarah would bear him a son, that despite all evidence to the contrary that such a likelihood would occur (he was faced with the barrenness of Sarah’s womb and the old age of them both) that “he wavered not through unbelief but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what he had promised, he was able also to perform” (Rom. 4:20f). Jesus said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall never pass away” (Mt. 24:35). This statement not only asserted God’s faithfulness to keep His word, but also His ability to do what He promised.

God’s precious and exceeding great promises are not unconditional. In 2 Corinthians 6 Paul cites some of God’s promises: He will receive us; we will be His sons and daughters; He will be our God. Yet in 2 Cor. 7:1 Paul wrote, “Wherefore having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves of all defilements of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” To receive God’s promises, we must cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.

The Hebrew writer wrote, “that ye be not sluggish, but imitators of them who through faith and patience, inherit the promises” (Heb. 6:11). The appeal of this writer is that his readers be not sluggish nor sluggards. Paul wrote the Galatians: “and let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9). This passage implies that if we faint we shall not reap; in perfect accord with the Hebrew letter which warns against sluggishness. Through faith and patience (steadfastness, persistence) we shall inherit the promises. This statement is set in contrast with sluggishness. Thus through patience and steadfastness we inherit God’s promises. Through sluggishness we will not.

Thus, if we remain faithful, we shall find that in Christ all God’s promises are “yea” and “Amen”.

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