

THE LORD ... and His unfailing promises

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The promises of God are the most reliable things in the world. When He says, "I will," men may be assured He will never violate an agreement. Among nations important documents have to be read, studied, signed, and witnessed. Often great pressure has to be exerted on signatories to make them honor commitments, but with God this is never necessary. I once asked a diamond merchant if he ever had trouble with people who broke pledges. He gravely replied, "We never sign documents; when we shake hands on a deal, that is it! If a man violated an agreement, he would never again be trusted by his colleagues." Similarly, God's promise is His bond, and it is thrilling to discover the Bible contains many of the "I wills" of the Almighty.

"I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28)

This promise of the Savior is one of the most outstanding of His utterances. No other person could have made such a claim. A millionaire might offer money; a wise man may offer advice. A man in an eminent position in industry could offer help to the unemployed, but no man can promise rest except Jesus. Rest is beyond the purchasing power of money; it is something that applies to man's deepest need. It is an elusive treasure only found at Christ's feet. It is significant that, although two thousand years have passed since Jesus made the promise and although millions of people have responded, no person ever came in vain. The Lord had no money but has enriched the lives of kings and queens. He never attended a university, but the libraries of the world are filled with books about Him. He never had an army; yet His followers have conquered nations without fighting. Jesus substituted love for force and tenderness for weapons, and His methods never failed. He invited people to come, and those who did were satisfied.

"I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Josh. 1: 5)

When Joshua succeeded Moses and became the leader of Israel, he was confronted with a monumental task. The Canaanites had to be subdued, the criticism of Israel silenced, and innumerable problems solved. Although Joshua had been trained by Moses, the fact remained the younger man did not possess the knowledge and experience of the patriarch, who had brought the nation out of Egypt. Yet, he undertook to do the will of God and triumphed magnificently. Undoubtedly his success was outstanding because he relied upon the promises of God. He had been told, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee." It is refreshing to know that God makes the same promise to all who journey toward the Promised Land. Christians need not fight battles alone. God, who called and commissioned His followers, promised to be with them always. The saint is assured of excellent company as he proceeds toward his eternal home.

"I will repay thee" (Luke 10:35)

When the Savior told the parable of the Good Samaritan, He enshrined within it immortal truths. Doubtless He meant to infer He was the great Benefactor who found the suffering man alongside the path of life. His grace met the man's need, and His thoughtfulness prepared for the victim's future. He "set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." (See Luke 10:33-35.) The innkeeper may be likened to the church or any person who cares for converts. To assist people is to do the will of the Savior. What

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is conscientiously done for Him will be rewarded when Christ returns
to earth. No man can outgive God; He knows how to compensate
His children.

"I will come again " (John 14:3)

Prior to His departure from earth, Jesus addressed the disciples
and said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare
a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself;
that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). That was
possibly the most important of all His promises. Even in the earliest
days of church history when saints became martyrs, inspiration was
gleaned from the fact that either they would go to Him or He would
come to them. Death no longer terrified them; they were able to
exclaim, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy
victory?" To those inspired Christians, the grave was but an
underground tunnel leading to the celestial city. They were able to
repeat the words of David, "Yea, though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me"
(Ps. 23:4). If they died, they did so triumphantly; if they lived, they
looked for His personal return. They believed He meant what He
said. That has been the inspiration of the church in all ages, and
it constantly thrills those who believe the Bible. Many indications
of Christ's return may be seen today; there is reason to believe this
age is drawing to conclusion.

God is working His purpose out

As year succeeds to year.

God is working His purpose out,

And the time is drawing near.

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