

Faith in God's Promises

By Rosanna Montoya

As Christians, our faith sometimes lacks full assurance in God's Word and His promises. The Word of God was given to us as finite creatures, so that we can study God's character and read about how faithful He was and still is. The Bible is filled with scriptures to encourage us (Deut. 7:9, Heb 12:1-3, Ps 34:8, Heb 13:5c), in this life, what we as Christians call a Race (1 Cor. 9:24). To make our faith strong, God will often put trials in our lives to strengthen us, refine us and purify us. Daily, we need to place our lives in the Potter's hands (Isaiah 64:8). The One who made the world out of nothing (Hebrews 11:3) is fully capable of taking care of His Children.

Everyday we look to the Lord to meet our daily needs, whether it be basic food on our plates, having our bills paid, or money in our pockets. Beyond the every day essentials, we also look to God to know what His will is for our lives (Jer. 29:11). We wonder about our singleness or maybe getting married someday or if we should take that certain job, etc. Of course when we seek the Lord in all these aspects of our lives, we must be in His Word, for it's the Blueprint for the answers/directions we seek. Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." He is our number one Counselor who will lead and guide us. Isaiah 9:6d says, "And His name will be called...Counselor."

In inquiring of the Lord, He may show us the path to take. He may give us a promise scripture to hold onto, or we may hear nothing at all. But as Scripture commands, we are to *keep* asking, *keep* seeking and to *keep* knocking (Matthew 7:7). It's during these times that our faith in God's Word and His promises, are put to test. God will use these times to strengthen our faith, draw us closer to Him by Word and Prayer or simply show us our hearts. As the children of Israel were led in the wilderness for 40 years, God had said it was to humble them, to test them and to see what was in their hearts (Deut. 8:2).

Jesus says in Matthew 17:20b, "for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there', and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you." Hebrews 11:6a reads, "And without faith it is impossible to please Him." In William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker's NT Commentary on Hebrews, Kistemaker poses a question in regards to Hebrews 11:6, "How do we please God?" By walking with him in faith! We must fully trust God and confide in him as our closet friend... The word *impossible* is a reminder of Hebrews 6:4. It conveys the idea that faith is the indispensable ingredient for pleasing God (p317)."

When we hope in God's Word and have faith in His promises, we then exemplify what Hebrews 11:1 states: "Now faith is the assurance (substance) of things hoped (expected) for, the conviction (evidence) of things not seen." In Matthew Henry's Commentary on Hebrews 11:1, he states what Faith is. "Faith demonstrates to the eye of the mind the reality of those things that cannot be discerned by the eye of the body. Faith is the firm assent of the soul to the divine revelation and every part of it, and sets to its seal that God is true. It is a full approbation of all that God has revealed as holy, just, and good; it helps the soul to make application of all to itself with suitable affections and

endeavours; and so it is designed to serve the believer instead of sight, and to be to the soul all that the senses are to the body (p755)."

Kistemaker talks about the heroes of faith found in Hebrews 11. "In spite of all their trials and difficult circumstances, they triumphed because of their trust in God. For the author, faith is adhering to the promises of God, depending on the Word of God, and remaining faithful to the Son of God (p310)."

God is true in His nature, for Numbers 23:19 states, "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has he said, and will He not do it? Or has he spoken, and will He not make it good?" God will hold to His word and whatever he issues or decrees will certainly come to pass!

Now, what does this mean to the Believer? We are to take God's Word at face value and believe by faith, what our Savior shows us in Scripture.

My heart greatly rejoices in the OT story of Abraham and Sarah who both were promised a child in their old age despite the fact that they were passed the age of childbearing. In Genesis 15:4, The Lord told Abram (who is Abraham) that "the heir shall come forth from his own body", even though he was past the age of child bearing. When he had heard this, verse 6 says, "Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness." Something so Impossible was going to be Possible, by God. Matthew 19:26b says, "...but with God all things are possible." We need to trust in Him.

As the Lord makes promises to His people, we in turn have to wait for the promise which will come about in His perfect timing. During the waiting period, we sometimes can grow weary and lose sight of His promises. We can end up doubting God's written word and end up not pleasing our Father in Heaven. Psalm 42:11 says, "Why are you in despair (sunk down), O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope (wait for) in God, for I shall yet praise Him, The help (saving acts of) of my countenance and my God."

When Abraham and Sarah were told by God that they were going to have a child in their old age, they laughed (Genesis 17:17, 18:12). By them laughing, it showed disbelief in their hearts at what God had promised to them. On a personal note, God actually had to check my heart and remind me of this story as I rolled my eyes in disbelief at one of His promises for me. At that moment, I had felt like Sarah who laughed as she listened at the tent door as her husband Abraham was told that she would have a son of her own. After I examined myself, I said, "but I do believe in your Promise to me." Please note that when Abraham was told by God in Genesis 15:6, he believed, but as some time passed, he laughed at the promise of God in his life (Genesis 17:7). So even though God gave him a promise that he believed, he later laughed in disbelief at what he was told by the Lord (Gen 15:6).

As Christians, we have a God of the Impossible. He is able to do everything and anything. He is Infinite in His being and we are so finite. Let us hold onto His Word and not shrink back in disbelief due to circumstances that tend to fade out the Promises of God in our lives. He's on His throne and He rules justly. Let's continue to look to God and all that He is in His nature and this will make our faith strong.

In closing, I want to close with a line from the Hymn, "When we walk with the Lord"

*Not a Shadow can rise
Not a cloud in the skies
But His smile quickly drives it away
Not a doubt or a fear
Not a sigh nor a tear
Can abide while we trust and obey*

Genesis 18:4 "Is anything too difficult for the LORD?"

You may comment on this article in the comments section of the blog post under the same title.

biblicalthought.com