

Promises, Promises!

Hebrews 4:6-10

I want to step back and spend some time unpacking a supposition that needs to be addressed as we move forward in this book. It is fundamental and foundational to our understanding, but more, it is foundational to your understanding of life in Christ, in fact, life in general. Simply put, it is this truth - When God makes a promise, that promise is kept, always. No matter how long it takes, no matter what it seems like, no matter how many obstacles are in the way of fulfillment. For God, Promises made are promises kept - always.

That understanding drives what the writer of Hebrews is building here - He makes the point over and over again that we build our lives on what God has promised rather than on what we can see, discern, understand or plan. GOD is ALWAYS to be trusted over every other source of information. Here is the flow of the logic -

- God promised that some would enter His rest

- The ones to whom He promised that rest did not enter
- The ones who later entered did not enter the full rest
- Therefore, that rest remains and someday those who are God's people WILL enter it. It is out there waiting for us, and is as sure as the ground upon which we stand.

So, let us consider why this logic is true, why we can cling to His promise despite all appearance and why it is so important that we do so!

I. THE TRUTH OF THE FOOTING

- a. It is based upon the truthfulness of God
 - i. God Cannot Lie

Titus 1.1-3

- ii. He always has more power and information than we do

Jeremiah 51.15-19

- iii. He is the one who has planned the course of all things (spoke about all this last week)

Isaiah 46.9-11

1. He originated the world and all that is in it,
 2. He maintains the universe with all of its intricate details
 3. He had the end in sight before the beginning
 4. He knew every single part of every single detail that had to be worked out for the next part to work.
- iv. Since this is all true, we know that the rest of the structure is sound.

II. PART OF THE PLAN

- a. Every delay and every apparent failure is but part of the plan –
 - i. Joseph into Egypt
 - ii. David learning to be a king while in exile

- iii. Jesus coming 4000 years after the original promise –

Galatians 4:4-5

- b. Time has no bearing on the fulfillment of God's promise

Psalm 90.4-6

2Peter 3:1-9

1. Creation itself
2. Noah
3. The return of Christ

- c. The expanse of time is nothing in the sight of God. This is one of our greatest problems. We think that we should be able to see it in our lifetime, on our timetable, with our understanding. But God **possesses** all time, it is a tool to be used by Him, not a master to be served. He invented time so that we would be able to absorb information, take in data, experience all things in the proper order for we

are NOT like God in regards to time. We ARE bound by time, and in some ways, time is our master. The long-sighted plan of God becomes as incomprehensible to us as our labors are to a microbe.

- d. Our temporal limitations become a liability to us when we attempt to understand the shape of the world in which we live without God's input.
 - i. We observe creation as it is right now, and trying to understand its origins we suppose that the things we see are fundamentally the same as they have always been. Our dating system is based on radioactive decay and the prevalence of certain isotopes., But for the system to work at all we have to assume that the base amounts of those isotopes have remained constant throughout all of creation's history... nothing could further from the truth! Many natural phenomena affect the base level of those isotopes...

ii. We see the universe expanding and assume that it has always expanded at the same rate, then taking that rate backwards we extrapolate a starting date for the universe that completely ignores the ONLY eyewitness account of the event. - akin to my great grandchild one day asking me how the buildings on my property got there. When I tell them I built them, they say, no Pa-Paw that can't be the way it was, you are too old and fat to have done that! This assumption is there in all of our supposed science; our theoretical pretense of our imagined wisdom based upon our faulty understanding of our unobserved, unreproducible phenomena... But God says, no, this is how it happened, I was there. Now, I am aware that there are those hearing me right now that take that as a cop out, that original source is not viable to them for they do not trust the source –

1. First, let me say you have just proven my point for why it is so very important that we trust what God tells us.
2. Secondly, let me offer an explanation for the expanding universe that answers your questions while retaining the authority of scripture...
 - a. Stretched out

Isaiah 45.11-13.

To stretch out the heavens, the very act of moving something that warps its fundamental nature... the scripture attests that God literally stretched out the heavens, three times in Isaiah, twice in Jeremiah God attests to this fact.

Consider that this stretching is a sudden flinging, a quick movement to get to another place. This stretching began the expansion which we can now observe, but

in NO way means that the rate of travel is a constant...

- a. Some will argue that we cannot know these things and so we must just make our base assumptions and go with that. Again, you make my point perfectly. Our process is littered with this sort of terrible logic and is therefore completely unreliable. We MUST take the word of the eyewitness who can tell us what He did!

III. TRUST IS THE BASIS FOR EVERYTHING

- a. Without faith it is impossible to please God -

Hebrews 11:1-6

- b. We come to Christ by faith in the promise –

Ephesians 2:8-10

- c. We are held for redemption by faith that God can be trusted –

Romans 3.21-26

- d. We await His return and the consummation of all things by faith

2Peter 3:10-13

- e. By that faith in the coming fulfillment of His promises we live out His life in this fallen age –

2 Peter 3:14-18