

GOD'S PROMISES ARE SURE

*Webster's Dictionary* defines a promise as “ a declaration that one will do or refrain from doing something specified” (921). The promises of God have many characteristics. Peter says, “*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*” (II Peter 1:4). There is no doubt that the promises of God are great and precious. The promises of God are also sure. “*Blessed by the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: **there hath not failed one word of all his good promise**, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant*” (I Kings 8:56). God promised the land of Canaan to His children and he fulfilled His promise. “*And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he **swore** to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein*” (Joshua 21:43). If God promises it, it will be done! Let's look at what can be learned from the fact that God's promises are sure.

The fact that God's promises are sure **proclaims God's nature**. The writer of Hebrews wrote, “*Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 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*” Hebrews 6:17-18). Robert Milligan wrote in his commentary on *Hebrews*, “Every promise of God is, like himself, absolutely unchangeable” (223). Man will give his word and do everything in his power to honor his promise. Even so, sometimes events that we cannot control happen and our promise goes unfulfilled. Not so with God!

God's promises are sure and **proven by fulfillment**. Someone could ask, “How am I to know that God's promises are sure?” There is a simple test prescribed by God. All you have to do is wait to see if what one prophesies comes to pass. If it doesn't, the prophet is proven false. “*But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him*” (Deuteronomy 18:20-22).

God promised a Messiah. “*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel*” (Isaiah 7:14). Was God faithful to His promise? Of course He was! “*And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us*” (Matthew 1:21-23). God also promised the church (cf. Isaiah 2:2-3; Joel 2:28-32; Micah 4:1-2; Matthew 16:13-20). Acts 2 is the fulfillment of that promise. On that day of Pentecost, Peter proclaimed that what was taking place was God's promise. Peter said, “*But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel*” (Acts 2:16). After the conversion of about 3,000 (Acts 2:41), they were added to the church. “*...praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved*” (Acts 2:47). Once again the promises of God are proven sure by their fulfillment.

“...then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel...” (Amos 7:8)

**FROM GUILT TO GLORY:  
MAN'S GREATEST NEED**

Text: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Man Needed a \_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_, What?

B. \_\_\_\_\_, Why?

II. Man Needed a \_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_ that was Good

B. \_\_\_\_\_ that was Better

III. Man Needed a \_\_\_\_\_

A. A \_\_\_\_\_ that was \_\_\_\_\_

B. A \_\_\_\_\_ that was \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Man Needed \_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_ was needed from Sin

B. \_\_\_\_\_ was needed for Judgment

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**SOLOMON'S LOVE SONG:  
AN EASY ANSWER TO SOCIETY'S BIGGEST  
PROBLEM**

Text: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Their Undying \_\_\_\_\_

A. Solomon's \_\_\_\_\_ Toward the Maiden

B. The Maiden's \_\_\_\_\_ Toward Solomon

II. Their Undying \_\_\_\_\_

A. The Maiden's \_\_\_\_\_ of Solomon

B. Solomon's \_\_\_\_\_ of the Maiden

III. Their Undying \_\_\_\_\_

A. The Shulamite's \_\_\_\_\_

B. Love \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

The sureness of God's promises **provide hope for God's children**. One's hope, and faith should not be based on some emotional feeling but upon substance. The writer of Hebrews states, "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*" (Hebrews 11:1). Because there is evidence for one's hope, we can place confidence in God's promises. Just as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego said, "*...our God whom we serve is able...*" (Daniel 3:17). All can have confidence in God! This confidence in God's promises will give us assurance in our conversion. Paul said to Timothy, "*...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day*" (II Timothy 1:12). Our conversion is safe in God! God's promises are sure, in that we can be confident. This confidence will cause us to trust in our conversion. Therefore causing us to preserve our commitment. Because God's promises are sure, I'm not going anywhere! Paul wrote, "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness*" (II Timothy 4:7-8). God's promises should assure we stay the course.

-Ronnie Hayes

**MEET THE TATER FAMILY**

- Some people never seem motivate to participate, but are just content to watch while others do the work. They are called "Speck Taters."
- Some people never do anything to help, but are gifted at finding fault with the way others work. They are called "Commen Taters."
- Some people are very bossy and like to tell others what to do, but don't want to soil their own hands. They are called "Dick Taters."
- Some people are always looking to cause problems by asking others to agree with them. They are called "Agie Taters."
- There are those who say they will help, but somehow just never get around to actually doing anything. They are called "Hezzie Taters."
- Some people can put up a front and pretend to be someone they are not. They are called "Emma Taters."
- Then there are those who love others and do what they say they will. They are always prepared to stop whatever they are doing and lend a helping hand. They bring real sunshine into the lives of others. They are called "Sweet Taters."

**THE BOOK OF LOVE**

No longer does the singer of yesteryear have to wonder “who wrote the book of love?” because the book answers it itself. “*The song of songs, which is Solomon’s*” (Song of Solomon 1:1). No more fitting description can be given to this book because love is the very core of it. Solomon presents as the object of his affection a young Shulamite maiden whom he loves deeply and devotedly. The book is a poem (song) that Solomon wrote to court and woo her in hopes of making her his bride. However, mind you, this is not older Solomon with his multitudinous harem of seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines. This rather was a young Solomon probably seeking his first true love in the early days of his kingly reign. The text comprising the book is a back and forth dialogue between the maiden and her suitor, in which the affectionate love from wife to husband and husband to wife is picture in its ideal form. The book ends with the now married couple living in happy bliss and devoted husband and wife.

The Song of Solomon, otherwise called “the song of songs” (1:1), is the epitome of Solomon’s writings. The Jews viewed his canonized writings as such: Proverbs—the tabernacle court; Ecclesiastes—the holy place; and the Song of Solomon—the most holy place. Solomon had in his life produced 1,005 songs (I Kings 4:32), but this one preserved is distinguished as **THE** Song of Solomon. It, though, comparable only to Esther, does not mention the name of God, and does not even have a historically or spiritually significant theme, supposedly. Many then would question the validity of its placement in preserved Holy Writ. The answer lies in the fact that it touches a theme that is otherwise only briefly mentioned elsewhere in the Bible and that is the intimacy of physical love as it is intended in godly marriage. When this fact is established, the purpose of the Song of Solomon becomes very clear. Likewise is the need for this book realized when one notices about society what McClish did:

“God created human sexuality and ordained sexual attraction and love in the realm of eligible marriage partners. The Song of Songs does not glorify sexual love as an end in itself nor under any and all circumstances, but it does glorify the beauty of human behavior in the context of a husband and his wife. Evil men and women have dragged the sexual and its fulfillment in the slime and dirt of their own perverted thoughts and deeds. They have made of men and women nothing more than brute beasts at liberty to cavort at will with partners of their own choosing, thus cheapening, corrupting, and all but destroying the concept of the pristine purity of God-ordained sexual behavior. The Song of Solomon at the same time demonstrates the thrill and the purity of the deepest sexual attraction and passion by placing it in and limiting it to the one sphere in which God has placed it—marriage!”

Such is the desperate need of the Song of Solomon, to illustrate the proper placement of sexual love and attraction as being in a godly marriage: “*Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*” (Hebrews 13:4).

As mentioned already, the Song of Solomon is to be interpreted literally as Solomon’s courtship of the Shulamite maiden. Many, though, try to apply a non-literal interpretation to it saying it is really only an allegory for God’s love toward Israel or Christ’s love for His church to come. While it is personally believed that this text is literal, likewise is it conceded that there is a principle regarding the love that Christ has for His church. In fact this would be the means through which Christ is pictured in this book. Christ, as the bridegroom, looks upon the church with the same adoration as Solomon looks upon his bride. The church is the beautiful and glorious bride of Christ, and is to be celebrated in its purity just as Solomon celebrated the physical purity of the maiden. Likewise does Christ anticipate the time in which His church will be presented to Him “*a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish*” (Ephesians 5:27). Great care, though, must be administered in applying the principle because of the physical nature of Solomon’s intended theme.

The ability of this book to handle such a sensitive subject on a high plain of decency sets this book apart as distinct in value. It is a guidebook to the engaged couple upon how to approach their marriage, it is a handbook to the recently married couple upon how to fulfill their passion, and it is a manual to the long since married couple to help them remember the love they still can and should have in their marriage. Let the Song of Solomon be a reminder of the purity, sanctity, and passion that is to be found in marriage.

-Andy Brewer