God Keeps Promises

Printed Text • 2 Chronicles 6:12-17

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: **LEARN** that God keeps His Word, **TRUST** God more than humans, and **IDENTIFY** and celebrate fulfilled promises.

In Focus

Regina grew up having no relationship with her biological father. For many years, Regina yearned to know her father and prayed that God would help her meet him. Nevertheless, Regina managed to remain focused and not get deterred as she pursued excellence in her life. Her relentless attitude placed her at the top of her profession as a firefighter, one of the few women in that role in her city. Her outstanding performance and hard work earned her a special commendation and promotion, which was announced on the evening news. On the eve of the ceremony, Regina received a phone call. A man on the other end asked, "Is this Regina?"

Hesitantly, she responded, "Yes, this is Regina. Who's calling?"

The voice said, "Regina, this is your father. I saw you on TV and you looked so much like your mother that I knew it was you. I've been afraid all these years to call, but seeing you on the evening news, I knew I had to." Regina was overwhelmed and overjoyed. She spent the next hour conversing with her father and finally invited him to come to the public ceremony.

At the end of the ceremony, a man approached Regina with flowers and said, "Regina I'm Ray. I'm your dad." The two embraced. She silently thanked God for rememberin g the prayer she had prayed since childhood.

Some prayers are answered immediately, and others may wait until the time God ordains. Regardless of how long it takes, God will come through just like He promised. What promises has He already kept in your life? Which promises do you believe in for the future?

Keep In Mind

Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day. (2 Chronicles 6:15, KJV)

You have kept your promise to your servant David, my father. You made that promise with your own mouth, and with your own hands you have fulfilled it today. (2 Chronicles 6:15, NLT)

Words You Should Know

Kneel (v. 13) barak (Heb.)—To bless, to bend.
Keep (v. 14) samar (Heb.)—watch, observe.

Say It Correctly

Cubit. CUE-bit.

KJV 2 Chronicles 6:12-17

12 And he stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands:

13 For Solomon had made a brasen scaffold of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven.

14 And said, O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which keepest covenant, and shewest mercy unto thy servants, that walk before thee with all their hearts:

15 Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day.

16 Now therefore, O Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me.

17 Now then, O Lord God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.

NLT 2 Chronicles 6:12-17

12 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in front of the entire community of Israel, and he lifted his hands in prayer.

13 Now Solomon had made a bronze platform 7 1⁄2 feet long, 7 1⁄2 feet wide, and 4 1⁄2 feet high[a] and had placed it at the center of the Temple's outer courtyard. He stood on the platform, and then he knelt in front of the entire community of Israel and lifted his hands toward heaven.

14 He prayed, "O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you in all of heaven and earth. You keep your covenant and show unfailing love to all who walk before you in wholehearted devotion.

15 You have kept your promise to your servant David, my father. You made that promise with your own mouth, and with your own hands you have fulfilled it today.

16 "And now, O Lord, God of Israel, carry out the additional promise you made to your servant David, my father. For you said to him, 'If your descendants guard their behavior and faithfully follow my Law as you have done, one of them will always sit on the throne of Israel.'

17 Now, O Lord, God of Israel, fulfill this promise to your servant David.

The People, Places, and Times

Solomon's Temple. Solomon's Temple is also known as the "first Temple" because it was the first Temple built by the Israelites, as opposed to the second Temple which was built after the Jews returned from exile. Building the Temple was no small undertaking. It took a substantial amount of time merely to accumulate the needed construction materials. The materials David purchased for the Temple during his reign were passed on to Solomon upon his ascent to the throne. David bequeathed Solomon the financial resources of 100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 talents of silver toward the construction of the Temple (1 Chronicles 22). It is estimated that it took approximately three years to fully prepare for the construction of the Temple. Construction of this first Temple began during the fourth year of Solomon's reign (2 Chronicles 3:2) and was completed in the eleventh year, a period of about seven years.

Background

Solomon's construction of the Temple to house the Ark of the Covenant was a long-awaited project. Although his father, David, initially desired to undertake this task, God commanded him not to do so. Instead, God promised David that his son would build the resting place for the Ark. The Temple was designed based on the pattern given to Moses for the construction of the Tabernacle, which served as a portable worship center while the Israelites wandered in the wilderness.

While Solomon's Temple was more elaborate, it included all the basic rooms and furnishings found in the original Tabernacle. This lesson begins with Solomon addressing the people of Israel publicly about the recently completed Temple. He acknowledges the fulfillment of God's promises to David, expresses gratitude for God's faithfulness, and asks for God's continued blessings.

At-A-Glance

1. Solomon positions himself in the presence of God (2 Chronicles 6:12-13).
2. Solomon's Public Acknowledgment of God's Fulfilled Promise (2 Chronicles 6:14-17)

In Depth

1. Solomon Positions Himself in the Presence of God (2 Chronicles 6:12-13)

In verse 12, Solomon positions himself before the altar of the Lord so that the entire congregation can see him as he responds to the blessings God has bestowed upon the children of Israel, in accordance with His promise to David. At this point, the text does not highlight specific words; instead, it emphasizes Solomon's intention to engage with God. In verse 13, the writer describes how Solomon appeared before the people and how they were able to see and hear him. It also mentions the construction of the platform that Solomon made. The platform was a bronze structure measuring 7½ feet long, 7½ feet wide, and 4½ feet high, placed at the center of the outer courtyard. These details not only help the reader visualize the platform but also indicate that significant effort went into its construction. Understanding that Solomon worked on this platform adds depth to the story, highlighting his dedication and the

importance of his role in the worship of God. What are the benefits of understanding one's care and upkeep of the church facilities as an act of worship?

2. Solomon's Public Acknowledgment of God's Fulfilled Promise (2 Chronicles 6:14-17)
In verse 14, Solomon offers a prayer to God, addressing Him as "LORD, God of Israel," and emphasizes that there is no other God like Him. This part of the verse highlights the greatness of God; He is both the Lord and the God of the Israelites, unparalleled and unmatched. Verses 14 and 15 use the Hebrew second-person masculine singular form of "you" to repeatedly emphasize what God has done. Solomon reminds everyone that it is solely God who has upheld His promises and accomplished this significant task.

This focus on God's actions is crucial for ensuring that the people maintain their faith and devotion to Him rather than shifting their attention to Solomon himself. As humans, we often mistakenly redirect our faith from God to the individuals through whom He works. Regardless of the great deeds accomplished by people, it is essential to remember that these can only happen through God's anointing and blessings. Solomon exemplifies how we should respond when God uses us to achieve great things. Are there times when you forget to acknowledge and honor God in front of others?

Search the Scriptures

1. What are the dimensions and purpose of the scaffold on which Solomon stood (2 Chronicles 6:13)?
2. How does Solomon describe God? (v. 14)
3. What conditions did God give for continuing to receive blessings? (v. 16)

Discuss The Meaning

1. Why was the fulfillment of the promise to build a house through David's son Solomon important to the people and the nation?
2. What does the fulfillment of the promise reveal about God, and why does it matter?

Liberating Lesson

There was a time when a person's word held significant value. If someone made a promise, you could trust them completely. However, as time goes on, the importance of keeping one's word is diminishing. People often make excuses for not fulfilling their promises. As Christians, we should honor our commitments because God has set the standard—He always fulfills His promises.

Are you contributing to this social decline, or are you helping uphold the value of keeping one's word?

Application For Activation

Has God made a promise to you about something in your life that hasn't yet come to pass? Take some time today to celebrate the promises God has already fulfilled in your life. Reflecting on God's faithfulness can help you realize that, even if you haven't received the answers you expected, He is keeping His promises to you. Praise God by allowing your words, the meditations of your heart, and your actions to demonstrate your faith in the truth of His promises.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

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_____

_____

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Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

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More Light on the Text

2 Chronicles 6:12-17

12 And he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands: 13 For Solomon had made a brasen scaffold, of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven

The Hebrew word for "stand" (Heb. 'amad, aw-**MAD**) can be interpreted as "stand still," "remain," or "stand upright." Solomon positions himself at attention before the altar of the Lord, in the presence (Heb. panim, paw-**NEEM**), which can also be translated as "before" the congregation of Israel. This congregation encompassed all Israel, including men, women, and children. The act of spreading forth his hands is a common posture in prayer. For example, God warns his people through the prophet Isaiah that just because they spread their hands in prayer this does not mean they will be heard—they must also have a clean heart (Isaiah 1:15). Verse 13 indicates that Solomon constructed a "brasen scaffold," or bronze platform, which allowed him to elevate above the congregation. The mention of the king building the platform suggests that he was actively involved in this construction project, highlighting his skills as a craftsman. The platform's measurements are recorded in cubits, which is approximately 18 inches. The writer's intention is to help readers visualize the scaffold's dimensions for a better understanding of its structure.

The text states that Solomon then kneels on the platform. The Hebrew word for "kneel" is barak (bah-**RAHK**), which can also be translated as "to bless." At this time, Solomon was the king, and his monarchy had been established for 11 years since his father's death in 971 BC. The building of the Temple took about 71⁄2 years. Given his position as king, the length of his reign, and the magnitude of his work, one might expect the people to kneel before Solomon. However, in this moment, Solomon kneels before God. By honoring God in this way, Solomon demonstrates to the congregation that this moment is not about honoring him as king, but rather about honoring the true King of all Israel, God.

14 And said, O LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which keepest covenant, and shewest mercy unto thy servants, that walk before thee with all their hearts.

Solomon declares that the God of Israel is the only true God, stating that there is no God like Him in heaven or on earth. In the ancient Near East, many nations worshiped various deities, such as Baal (associated with rain and storms) and Ashteroth (associated with fertility), but none were like the God of Israel.

Solomon highlights the distinctiveness of the God of Israel, who keeps (Heb. shamar, shaw-MAR) His covenant. The Hebrew word shamar can also be understood as "watches over." In other words, God is the one who maintains and oversees the covenant that He establishes with His people. By recalling God's faithfulness in making and keeping covenants, Solomon reflects on the covenant loyalty of God throughout the nation's history. God not only fulfills His promises but also shows "mercy" (Heb. khesed, KHEH-sed), which signifies favor and kindness, to His servants. These servants are those whose "walk" (Heb. halak, hah-LAHK) or behavior before God is executed with all their "heart" (Heb. leb, LAVE), which can also be understood as encompassing both mind and inner being.

15 Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day.

In verse 15, Solomon specifically addresses the promises God made to David, his father and servant. He emphasizes God's faithfulness in keeping these promises (Heb. dabar, daw- BAR), indicating that what God spoke is indeed a commitment. The same Hebrew verb dabar is used in this verse for the English words "promise" and "spoke." This suggests that God's word is inherently a promise; He is not like humans who may lie or fail to keep their commitments. Solomon then declares that it is God's own hand (Heb. yad, YAWD) that fulfills these promises. The Hebrew word yad can also signify authority and power. Further confirming that God's promise is fulfilled solely by His will and not by any human intervention.

16 Now therefore, O LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the

throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me.

In verse 16, Solomon asks God to remember the next part of the covenant promise. Interestingly, he includes the conditional aspect of this promise. God's assurance was that the sons of David would reign on the throne as long as they remained faithful to the Law and sought Him wholeheartedly. By asking God to remember His promise, Solomon acknowledges the conditions that must be fulfilled to secure the throne for his children.

17 Now then, O LORD God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.

In verse 17 of this text, Solomon requests that God's word be "verified" (Heb. 'aman,ah-MAHN). This Hebrew word can also mean "established," which conveys the idea of making God's word a reality and firm. Solomon asserts that this promise was spoken to God's servant, David. Like David, Solomon recognizes that, despite being kings, they are both servants before God.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY
Solomon Reviews Temple Developments
(1 Kings 8:14–21)

TUESDAY
Forgive and Restore Broken Relationships
(2 Chronicles 6:22–25)

WEDNESDAY
Send the Rain (2 Chronicles 6:26–31)

THURSDAY
Welcome the Stranger
(2 Chronicles 6:32–33)

FRIDAY
Forgive and Restore the Captive
(2 Chronicles 6:34–39)

SATURDAY
Plea for God's Steadfast Love
(2 Chronicles 6:40–42)

SUNDAY
A House of Prayer
(2 Chronicles 6:12–21)