

GOD OF PROMISES & COVENANTS



WHO IS THIS GOD?
WHAT IS HE DOING IN THE WORLD?
WHAT DOES HE WANT OF US?

SUNDAY MORNINGS • AUDITORIUM
JANUARY-MARCH 2017
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• LESSON 1 (January 1) •

The Nature of the God of Promises

PROMISES

- ❖ In your own words, what is a promise?
- ❖ Why are promises even a thing? Why do people make them?
- ❖ On what do promises depend? What makes them work? What makes them fail?

2 PETER AS AN EXAMPLE

As Peter describes false teachers who would “secretly bring in destructive heresies” (2:1), he warns:

These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved. For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. They **promise** them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. (2 Pet 2:17-19)

- ❖ What does Peter want Christians of all eras to understand?

In contrast to these false teachers, Peter turns our attention to God in 2 Peter 3. Speaking of “scoffers” (3:3) who are intent on “following their own sinful desires”:

They will say, “Where is the **promise** of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his **promise** as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his **promise** we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Pet 3:4-13)

- ❖ Again, what does Peter want Christians of all eras to understand?

- ❖ As we think through what Peter is revealing, why is it absolutely imperative that we understand the nature of the God who has made this promise?

If we recognize the importance of grasping the nature of God and want to grow in our understanding of what is happening when he makes a promise, Hebrews 6 is one of the most helpful bits of revelation we have.

For when God made a **promise** to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.” And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the **promise**. For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the **promise** the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. (Heb 6:13-18)

- ❖ In your own words, what is the writer of Hebrews communicating to us?

- ❖ What have we learned about the nature of the God who makes promises to mankind? What difference should those things that we have learned make in our lives this week?