

## Promises, Proverbs, Prayer, Patience

- A. We ought to be a praying people who not only confess our faults to God but also petition Him with requests. **PHIL 4:6.**
1. Jesus spoke of asking which is answered. **MAT 7:7-8; JOH 16:24.**
  2. We distance ourselves from benefits by not asking. **JAM 4:2.**
  3. It is important to know how to pray, what to pray for, and what to expect. **LUK 11:1; ROM 8:26; JAM 4:3; 5:16.**
  4. Without proper instruction, prayers may go unanswered, leading people to doubt God's existence, His love or His ability to answer. **PSA 77:9; LAM 3:8-10; LUK 18:7-8 ct/w 2PE 3:3-4.**
- B. We can expect a positive answer to prayer when (at the least) we:
1. delight ourselves in the LORD, not our lusts, life or loot. **PSA 37:4; COL 3:1-2.**
  2. pray in Jesus' name. **JOH 14:13-14.**
  3. pray in faith, trusting God's existence, word and promises. **HEB 11:6; MAR 11:24; JAM 1:5-6.**
  4. pray according to God's revealed will and subjecting our interests to His will. **1JO 5:14-15; MAT 6:10.**
  5. are steadfast and patient. **1TH 5:17; LUK 18:1-8.**
- C. Scripture is filled with statements of what God's people can expect of Him.
1. We can expect God to be faithful to His own word in spite of man's unbelief. **2TI 2:13.**
  2. We can expect that His government is never overthrown. **DAN 4:34-35.**
  3. We can expect His forgiveness when we confess our sins to Him. **1JO 1:9.**
  4. We can expect Him to preserve His church and word. **MAT 16:18; 24:35.**
  5. We can expect Him to lovingly chasten us for disobedience. **HEB 12:6; REV 3:19.**
  6. We can expect His return to resurrect the dead, judge all, perfect us. **JOH 5:28-29.**
  7. We can expect Him to never allow us to be tempted beyond ability to cope. **1CO 10:13.**
  8. We can expect Him to never forsake us. **HEB 13:5.**
  9. We can expect Him to hear the prayer of the righteous, not evil-doers. **1PE 3:12.**
  10. We can expect that every promise of God in Christ is certain. **2CO 1:19-20; ROM 8:32.**
- D. There are promises of God of eternal scope, such as the salvation, security and preservation of the elect in Christ. **JOH 10:27-29; ROM 11:27-29.**
1. This includes His sworn promise of full salvation in Christ. **TIT 1:1-2; ROM 8:29-30.**
  2. This includes the continual power of the blood of the everlasting covenant. **HEB 13:20; 9:12.**
  3. This includes His sworn promise of temporary suffering for Christ. **ACT 2:27.**
  4. This includes His sworn promise of David's throne in heaven for Christ. **ACT 2:30-32.**
  5. This includes His sworn promise of an everlasting priesthood for Christ. **HEB 7:21.**
  6. The elect are appropriately called "...children of the promise..." (**ROM 9:8; GAL 4:28**).
  7. Such as these are unconditional promises which should merit our prayers of gratitude, not demand. Adjuncts of these sworn promises include many things afore noted which God will certainly perform since "...he is faithful that promised" (**HEB 10:23**).
  8. The sworn promise of a Canaan land for Abram and his seed was not thwarted by apparent deficiencies. **ACT 7:5 c/w HEB 11:9-16.**
- E. There are conditional promises of God of spiritual things to believers which are rooted in the unconditional promise of salvation in Christ (**EPH 1:3-4**) such as:
1. a place in God's spiritual house indwelt of His Spirit. **ACT 2:38-41 c/w 1CO 12:13.**
  2. inward peace and joy. **PHIL 4:6-7; ROM 15:13.**
  3. extra grace and power to successfully resist Satan. **JAM 4:6-7.**

4. spiritual wisdom, understanding, strength and growth. **COL 1:9-11.**
- F. There are conditional promises of God of carnal things to obedient believers. **MAT 6:30-33; LUK 6:38; PHIL 4:19.**
1. These should not be our chief pursuit (**COL 3:1-2**) and must be deemed disposable for the faith. **HEB 10:34.**
  2. Even unbelievers can reap the rewards promised to the diligent. **PRO 13:4; 21:5; LUK 16:8.**
- G. Unlike the unconditional promises which God will undoubtedly keep, He may break His promise that is conditioned upon the obedience of the potential beneficiary. **LEV 20:24 c/w NUM 14:34.**
- H. Unlike God's promises, Proverbs may not be guarantees of expectation.
1. proverb: A short pithy saying in common and recognized use; a concise sentence, often metaphorical or alliterative in form, which is held to express some truth ascertained by experience or observation and familiar to all; an adage, a wise saw. b. *spec. the Book of Proverbs*, a didactic poetical book of the Old Testament, consisting of maxims ascribed to Solomon and other authors.
  2. Proverbs are probabilities of things that are likely to be or to occur under given circumstances.
  3. Proverbs are, by their very nature, not the same as *promises*. Unlike a promise, a proverb may have exceptions:
    - a. (**PRO 10:4**) "...the hand of the diligent maketh rich." Yet, there have been diligent people who were poor. **1TI 5:10.**
    - b. (**PRO 10:27**) "The fear of the LORD prolongeth days:..." There have been God-fearing people who died young. **2CH 34:1-2.**
    - c. (**PRO 15:22**) "Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established." Have you ever known well advised plans to fail? **JDG 20:18-25.**
    - d. (**PRO 16:7**) "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Yet John the Baptist's enemy had him beheaded. **LUK 9:9.**
    - e. (**PRO 22:6**) "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."
      - (1) Most children, though they may rebel for awhile, come around to the wisdom that they were taught.
      - (2) However, some children remain in rebellion. **DEU 21:18-21.**
    - f. (**PRO 22:15**) "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Yet, some children are not corrected by the rod. **DEU 21:18-21; PRO 27:22.**
  4. We should play the odds wisely but expect upsets. **ECC 9:11.**
- I. We can bank on God's promises and bet on His proverbs. This should:
1. help us with our personal peace and assurance before God.
  2. help us have realistic expectations of our God.
  3. help us pray appropriately for the certain sworn promises of God to be fulfilled (and Scripture closes with such a prayer, **REV 22:20**), and for God to consider our proper requests according to His discretionary promises.
  4. encourage not only our faith but also our patience. **HEB 6:11-15.**