

Is There Anyone Who Keeps Their Promises?

Romans 15:8-13

(black Bible page 950; Children's Bible page 1420)

"You can be driven to despair and bitterness by those who've broken their promises to you. Nonetheless, you should have hope – for there is a deeper truth."

Ever have someone in your life break their promise? (Of course you have.)

- You have been "mugged by reality." Unfortunately, this is humanity. *This is us.*
 - Your response is... despair? Increasing bitterness? Cynicism? Can you avoid a downward spiral as the years pass by?
 - Mugged by reality, but there is a *deeper* reality: God is a promise keeper.
 - "It means," said Aslan, "that though the Witch knew the Deep Magic, there is a magic deeper still which she did not know." (*The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*, by C.S. Lewis)
- "For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs..." (Romans 15:8)
- To keep God's previous promises to the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but also Moses, David, etc.), Christ became a servant.

- God's broken promise to David? "The Lord declares to you [David] that the Lord will make you a house... I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom... I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever..." (2 Samuel 7:11-16)
- Substitute promises in Ezekiel 34? "**I myself** will be the shepherd of my sheep... **I** will seek the lost... **I myself** will judge... **I** will rescue my flock..."
- No, both are fulfilled in Christ! As David's son, David's kingdom is established forever in Christ's death, resurrection, and future advent. *And God Himself did it*, since Christ is God incarnate.

"...and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy." (Romans 15:9)

- When we keep our promises, often the benefits of this 'spill over' to others. If businesses keep their promises, we have less litigation, lower prices, etc. If spouses keep their promises to each other, their children flourish. And when God keeps his promises to the Jews, it overflows in blessing and mercy to the Gentiles.
- Both Jews and Gentiles are blessed: "And again Isaiah says, 'The root of Jesse [David's father] will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.'" (Romans 15:12, quoting Isaiah 11:1,10)

Hope. In the last two verses, the word hope is used three times! *Because a promise-keeper inspires hope.*