

“Brace Yourself for Impact” – preparing your soul

01 - Faith

To have faith in something you will first need to have some information or knowledge about the thing in which you want to have faith. To believe a medication can help, you will first need to know a few things. One, you need to know this particular medication exists. Two, you will need to know generally what it has done in the past. Three, you may need to trust the doctor prescribing the medication. The same is true concerning God and what the Almighty is doing in history and in your life. This information is available in the Bible.

The first issue concerning the Bible is to identify or establish what you think of the Bible. Do you know if it is the actual revealed Word of God? Or, do you think and believe it is fiction, or a mere legend written down to manipulate masses of people by the elite priests and royalty? If you do not believe the Bible you will not be able to believe the God of the Bible.

If you do not trust the Bible you will need to get information about God from some other source. Where would you go? Another religion? But, what is the source of authority in that religion? Is it trustworthy?

Instead of going to the Bible for information about God you could use your own judgment and come up with your own opinion about God based on your own thoughts and experience. But, before you go too far down this road of deciding what is eternally true in realms you have never ventured, you should first admit how limited your own knowledge is on simple things you use every day such as automobiles, electronic devices, plumbing systems or air conditioning. If any of these broke down would you simply fix it because you know how, or would you call someone for help? Or, what about political situations in your city, your nation and countries around the world? Do you know when they were established, who is pulling their strings, what are the nations' treaties and where are their boundaries? Or, can you diagnose your own blood condition, translate any foreign brochure into your own language, plant the crops you will harvest for your own food supply next year and read all the books written by mankind just in the last 12 months? (Realize humanity has been writing “books” for 6,000 years.) We would each live miserable lives and perish quickly if today each of us as individuals had to understand all these systems and apply all this information.

If we are that limited in natural knowledge concerning things we have available to us in our daily lives, imagine how hopelessly dark it would be to describe with any accuracy actual spiritual reality using only our imagination and our own unauthenticated knowledge. We cannot create our own medical reality, food system, government, language or history. Neither can we create the Truth about God. This Truth must be revealed to us.

If I created my own reality that did not match true science, nutrition, language or history I would perish miserably and quickly. If I created my own personal “truth” about “god” I would likewise perish.

God reveals himself in order for us to trust him and have confidence in him, his ways and his purpose. God does not come to us to be manipulated by us, but to guide, encourage and empower

us. The Creator comes to assist his creation in fulfilling its created purpose, but never to be manipulated or ruled by his creation.

There are several concepts that God has revealed to mankind that will provide a fortification for the soul. These come as revelations of God's character, ways, purposes and promises. Knowledge of these truths will be the sure foundation for a faith that will stabilize your soul.

02 – Faith Rest

In at least five places in Scripture people are invited to enter a place of rest for their souls by trusting the plan and promise of the Lord.

1. The Exodus Generation from 1445-1405 BC
2. David's Generation 1000 BC
3. Jeremiah's Generation 620-586 BC
4. Jesus' Generation in 30 AD
5. Believers in Jerusalem in 63-66 AD

The Exodus Generation from 1445-1405 BC

- Exodus 33:14 “And he said ‘My presence will go with you, and I will give you **rest**.’ ”
- Joshua 1:13 – “Remember the word that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, ‘The Lord your God is providing you a place of **rest** and will give you this land.’ ”

David's Generation 1000 BC

- Psalm 95:11 – “Therefore I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my **rest**.’ ”

Both Jesus and Jeremiah spoke of this place of rest for a person's soul if that person could hear the words of God and learn God's ways:

Jeremiah 620-586 BC

- Jeremiah 6:16 – “Thus says the Lord: ‘Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find **rest** for our souls.’ But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’ ”

Jesus in 30 AD

- Matthew 11:28-29 – Jesus – “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you **rest**. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find **rest** for your souls.”

Just like in Jeremiah's day (620-583 BC), the people of Jesus' day (27-30 AD) would reject the Lord's offer of rest for their souls:

- Matthew 12:6-8, 14 – “I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. And if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the

guiltless. For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath... But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.”

Believers in Jerusalem in 63-66 AD

- Hebrews 3:18 – “And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his **rest**, but to those who were disobedient?”
- 4:1 – “Therefore, while the promise of entering his **rest** still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.”
- 4:3 – “For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, “As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my **rest**’” although his works were finished from the foundation of the world.”
- 4:8 – “For if Joshua had given them **rest**, God would not have spoken of another day later on.”
- 4:9 – “So then, there remains a Sabbath **rest** for the people of God, for whoever has entered God’s rest has also **rested** from his works as God did from his.
- 4:11 – “Let us therefore strive to enter that **rest**, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.”

This place of rest for your soul occurs when we are confident in God’s plan. God’s rest is not found in external circumstances or achieved with internal distractions. The rest that the Lord invites us to is obtained and maintained by believing the promises of the Lord.

In 1445 BC the people were promised that the Lord would lead them through the wilderness to the land promised to their forefathers. In 1000 BC David spoke of trusting the Creator God to be the sustainer and provider of his people throughout their time. Between 620-586 BC Jeremiah encouraged his generation to return to the established Truth revealed to this people by God through the prophets and the writings of Moses. In 30 AD Jesus, the Living Word, invited the people to come to him and learn of him. In 63 AD the author of the book of Hebrews spoke to those who had heard and trusted in the promises of Jesus Christ. Each of these generations had people who secured their souls by trusting the Word of the Lord, but they also had large numbers who refused to listen, refused to understand and refused believe the clear words they heard.

Those who believed and maintained their confidence in the promises of God despite the opposition (perils of the wilderness, fears of life and persecution for believing the Truth) prepared their souls for rest. Those who understood and trusted the Word of God could stabilize themselves in the midst of confusion, problems and persecution. They would grow stronger. They would mature to produce fruit. And, their understanding and faith would grow.

Those who refused to believe or could not maintain their confidence in the Lord during times of confusion, problems or persecution were either eternally lost or could not grow into mature believers. They either perished for all eternity or lived fruitless lives in this age before their Lord.

Hear and understand the promises of the Lord today so that you may enter his rest.

“You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.”

- Isaiah 26:3

*“Have you not known?
Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength.
Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted;
but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.”*
- Isaiah 40:28-31

03 – God’s Ways and Promises (Preparing Your Soul)

We have received God’s Word and heard his voice in our lives just as they did in the Exodus generation in 1445 BC, David’s generation in 1000 BC, Jeremiah’s generation in 600 BC, Jesus’ generation in 30 AD and the people living in Jerusalem who received the New Testament letter of Hebrews in 63 AD. Like them we have a choice to either receive or reject the Lord’s invitation into his rest. If we can understand these Words and trust God’s ways revealed in these promises then we will be able to stabilize our souls for rest and prepare our minds for action not only in the good times, but even in the worst times. We will be fruitful in season and out of season because we will have entered and stayed in God’s rest. This is absolutely necessary because the day of evil comes to each one of us individually or as a nation. We must prepare our souls now.

To do this we must first hear the promises and understand God’s ways. Today we have an opportunity to inhale the doctrines of Truth. If we do this we can live daily in God’s rest exhaling both the character of the Lord and the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

If you know the character of the Lord and the fruit of the Spirit you will know that it involves much more than joy and peace, because not every situation in life demands joy and peace. Sometimes in the fallen world among those in rebellion to God we will need to be faithful, just, humble and good.

We will need to be faithful to the Lord even while everyone else is compromising his Word and twisting his created order. You will need to remain in God’s rest while you think and speak faithfully to his ways while you are mocked for not compromising and identified as evil for not twisting his created Reality. This will not be an easy fruit of the Spirit to produce if you have lost confidence in God and left the place of rest.

We will need to be just and seek justice even when culture is oppressive. We will need to be just and fair even when a bribe determines innocence or guilt. You will need to speak fairly, honestly and justly when the path to survival requires lies, compromise and betrayal. Are churches preparing your soul

for moments like that? God's word does, and he defends his word with his very nature and then, backs it up with a promise. You can be just in the midst of compromise and still maintain your place in the rest of God.

We will need to "walk humbly before our God" even when it is identified as arrogant and uncooperative by men who demand we bow before them. The humble cannot be weak. There is a time when humility before the Lord will require you to rise up as mighty in the face of rebellious men. You will be in God's rest, but this will not be tolerated by those who do not understand that their momentary greatness in this age was given to them by the Lord. And, it is already passing away. Stay humble my friend and do not fear the lions!

We will need to be good even when men declare "good is evil" and identify "light as darkness". These will be difficult times. These will not be productive days for the "Christian" who has reduced his testimony to tolerate wickedness, cooperate with evil, live patiently in sin and find peace with the bad. A good man at this time will have to be a strong, confrontational man willing to live independently in the rest of his God. I am thinking more of a battle harden warrior than a religious social organizer.

04 - Zephaniah 2:1-3 – Perhaps You Will Be Hidden

"Gather together, yes, gather,
O shameless nation, before
the decree takes effect

—before the day passes away like chaff—
before there comes upon you the burning
anger of the Lord, before there comes upon
you the day of the anger of the Lord.

**Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do
his just commands; seek righteousness; seek
humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of
the anger of the Lord.** – Zephaniah 2:1-3

Zephaniah prophesied to Judah and Jerusalem during the days of Jeremiah's ministry around 618 BC. Zephaniah did not cry out to the people to repent. He did not encourage the people to turn back to the Lord. Instead spoke the Lord's message telling the people of Judah and Jerusalem the day of their judgment and overthrow was set. There would be no national revival, because the line of God's patience had already been crossed. Judah had already been marked for slaughter. As the Lord says through Zephaniah:

"I will utterly sweep away everything... (1:2)

I will stretch out my hand against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem...(1:4) Be silent before the Lord God! (*meaning, these people cannot defend their actions and their thoughts before the Lord, so they have nothing to say. Judgment is coming. Do not petition the Lord for mercy or seek forgiveness*)

For the day of the Lord is near; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice (*the nation of Judah*) **and consecrated his guests** (*The Babylonians who were going to destroy Judah and Jerusalem were the consecrated guests who would offer the sacrifice. This is similar Jeremiah's prophecy in Jeremiah 46:1-10 where Egypt would be offered as a sacrifice by the Babylonians in 605 BC at the coming battle of Carchemish. Also, similar to Ezekiel 39:17.*)...1:7

The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there...1:14

Gather together, yes, gather, O shameless nation...2:1

Jerusalem would be burnt by Babylon 32 years later in 586 BC.

The only encouragement or guidance the Lord gave the believers in Judah and Jerusalem (which would have included Jeremiah, Habakkuk, King Josiah, and a very young Daniel was to prepare their souls. They were to seek the Lord, seek righteousness and seek humility. They were to prepare themselves for impact. Brace yourself for national judgment. They were not promised supernatural deliverance or protection from the negative effects caused by cultural oppression, the coming famine, Babylonian siege, mass starvation, invasion of the city, destruction of homes or deportation to Babylon. Instead, they were told that if they sought the Lord, obeyed his commands, sought righteousness and sought humility then **“perhaps you may be** hidden on the day of the anger of the Lord”.

Hidden from what? The Babylonians? No, because many righteous were taken in the captivities (605, 597 and 586 BC). This included Daniel in 605 BC and Ezekiel in 597 BC. Will they be protected from the famine and starvation? No, because even Jeremiah suffered through times where bread was lacking including the famine of 598 and the siege of 588-586. Will they be hidden in battle fighting for the righteous cause of the Lord? No, because even Josiah, the righteous king, was killed in battle in the Jezreel Valley by Egyptian Pharaoh Neco who was on his way to help the fleeing, splintered Assyrian government in their final stand against the rising power of General Nebechadnezzar and his father Nabopolassar, the king of Babylon.

What does it mean that these believers in Jerusalem around 618 BC “perhaps may be” hidden on the day of the anger of the Lord? The phrase “perhaps may be” in the ESV translation comes from the Hebrew word *‘u-lay* which literally translates “it may be that”. This is not a promise that you “will be” hidden, but is a condition based on your level of success in five areas describe in the same verse:

1. Seek the Lord
2. Be humble
3. Do what the Lord commands
4. Seek righteousness
5. Seek humility

These are the characteristics of a person who is renewing their mind with the Truth of God's words and transforming their soul into the image of Christ. They were the ones who would understand God's promises and be empowered by his truth. They would have the capacity in their souls to trust God's

ways even in times of distress and confusion. Those who seek the Lord will learn of him. Those who humble themselves will lay down their false ideas and corrupted worldviews. With their mind on Christ they will be able to enter into God's rest and do the works of the Lord continuing to be righteous and humble before the Lord. They will be able to hold on to the promises of God because they know God's ways, they know God's character, they know their role in preparing for the coming eternal Kingdom. They will not faint. They will not give up. They will stand on the day of evil. And, when they have done all the stand, they will continue to stand.

These believers will have prepared their souls to face the evil lion and will be ready for deliverance or for death without losing their faith, their confidence or the rest in their souls. They will maintain the peace that passes understanding.

Of course, if they do not seek the Lord or do not know his Word and his Ways, they will be like the seed sown along the side of the road or in the weeds. They will not be able to produce the fruits of righteousness because of one of these two conditions.

One, their roots are too shallow and when the sun rises their plant is scorched. According to Jesus this means, "he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, but when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. The believer at rest having trusted the promises and knowing the ways of the Lord will not alter their confidence or confession in the midst of hardships or when they are being persecuted because of their confidence. The believer with no rest and no understanding of the Bible will quickly fold, not only in the face of persecution, but merely in the midst of a storm. Their house should be on the rock (hearing Jesus' words and doing them), but instead their house is on the sand ("who hears these words of mine and does not do them.")

Two, the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of riches are the weeds that grew in life in the soil intended for the Word of God. Both the worries of life and the confidences in life will choke the Truth. Being overly concerned about worldly problems and overly confident of worldly power will absorb the resources in the soul that are intended to be given to the Word of God. Without Truth a person cannot enter God's rest because their thinking is empty. In vanity they continue to worry about things they cannot control or trust in false concepts that only in their vain imaginations give them a temporary illusion of being in control. Worldly fears and temporal confidences will choke your soul by preventing you from inhaling the promises of God. This, like having no root, keep you from entering into God's rest.

If you do not hear the Word of God, you do not know the Word of God. If you do not know the Word of God, you cannot know God's ways.

If you do not know God's ways, you will easily and quickly decide the world's ways are the ways of the false "god" or idol you have set in your soul in place of the Lord. The ignorant believer will be scorched like a plant with shallow roots in gravel in the heat. The believer focused on either the troubles or the powers of this age will stop inhaling Truth, and they will choke like a plant trying to survive in the weeds.

The believer who knows, understands and trusts the Word of God will produce God's rest in their soul. They will be "like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers."

Today is the day to prepare your soul.

"Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

Hebrews 3:15

"While the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it."

Hebrews 4:1

"Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active."

Hebrews 4:11-12

05 – Two Great Promises

God's "eternal power and divine nature" are clearly understood since they are revealed in creation itself. Our own selves and the world we live in reveal God's power and his character. Those of us educated by and conformed to the modern Western culture may have a hard time accepting the fact this evidence exists in nature because we think as secular humanist. Yet it is true. Creation itself testifies not only to the existence of God, but also to his eternal power. The creation provides details of God's personal character (such as organized, creative, well planned, caring, provider, personal, eternal, transcendent, and more.) There is also detailed revelation that has been recorded from the beginning of time in written form and collected in what we call the Word of God, or the Bible. In the text of Scripture the plan of God and greater detail of his eternal character are revealed. This revelation or information in the Word of God can be classified as promises of God. Now, not every "promise" in the Word of God is what we would desire in our fallen human nature. The natural man may not consider man of God's promises as positive.

Some of the promises in the Bible are similar to what we would use if we had three wishes from a genie in a bottle. These promises in the Word of God guarantee for us what God is going to do for us. These promises of God may be manifest in our temporal lives being fulfilled in a moment, or in days, months or, eventually, years.

But, some of the promises of God come with qualifying words like "wait for it" and require us to possess certain character traits such as endurance, patience, faithfulness, confidence. Some of these promises are given along with phrases such as "in that day", "in due season", "do not give up", and "these died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar."

I will identify a few of the promises of God we have available to us in the Word of God here in the next few chapters. I would like to begin with two overall summary statements. The first is:

God is good.

This is a foundational insight and it is always true. This fact is independent of your feelings, opinion, situation or environment. The bedrock truth that God is good is confirmed several places in the Bible:

“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!” – 1 Chronicles 16:34

“...giving thanks to the Lord: ‘For He is good.’” – Ezra 3:11

“Good and upright is the Lord.” – Psalm 25:8

“No one is good but One, that is, God” – Jesus quoted in Mark 10:18

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” – James 1:17

Understanding and trusting the fact that our Lord, the Creator God, is good is absolutely necessary for a person to enter into the rest of God. In spite of evil in the world and sin in our own hearts, God’s goodness, his eternal character, is active in our world and in our lives. We must come to grips with the reality that light, truth and life can exist simultaneously in a temporal world where darkness, deception and death exist. The presence of darkness does not prove light does not exist, because the existence of light is necessary for darkness to even be defined. Light is a thing, darkness is a non-thing, because darkness is merely the absence of light. You have a light switch, but you do not turn on the dark with a dark switch. If there was no truth, then deception would not be deceitful because you first need truth to pervert to have deception. Something cannot be made dead unless you mean life has been taken away. Darkness, deception and death are non-things. For them to exist you have to have removed light, truth and life. Likewise, there actually is no mystery with the concept that God is eternally good even when we experience bad in life. In fact, a large portion of God’s promises involve him defeating evil and destroying death daily in our lives and bringing about utter annihilation of anything in rebellion to his “good” nature. God does this by being good.

To have faith in God and to enter into his rest your soul will have to hear, understand and believe that God is good. If you cannot accept this promise, then you cannot have faith in the true God and you will never enter his rest.

“Without faith it is impossible to please him,
for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and
that he rewards those who seek him.” – Hebrews 11:6

The second overall summary statement we need to understand and believe to begin entering into God’s rest in our souls is:

If you seek God, you will find God.

The Bible teaches us that if we seek to understand God he will reveal himself to us. The second great Bible promise is that if you decide to seek the Lord then you will find him. God is not hiding. If anyone is hiding it is mankind. In the Garden of Eden it was Adam who hid himself from God, because Adam knew the truth. Adam knew he had sinned, so Adam hid.

The opposite of seeking the truth is suppressing the truth. The fact that God is driving out sin, evil, darkness and death is a basic truth revealed to all mankind through creation itself. But, men, just like Adam, are fearful of this truth because man is by nature in rebellion to God (including God's goodness). In fear men will suppress the truth to help them maintain a sense of sanity because naturally they know God is bringing wrath and judgment on evil and sin.

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven
against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,
who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.” – Hebrews 1:18

So, what may be known about God is revealed and available for those who want to seek and find the Lord. This second promise is a great promise. Not only is God good, but if you want to find this good God he promises that you will find him.

“I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently find me.” – Proverbs 8:17

“From there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him,
if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.” – Deuteronomy 4:29

“You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.” – Jeremiah 29:13

Jesus said: “I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you;
seek, and you will find;
knock, and it will be opened to you.
For everyone who asks receives,
and the one who seeks finds,
and to the one who knocks it will be opened.” – Luke 11:9-10

The first two great promises from the Word of God, and even declared by creation itself:

1. God is good.
2. If you seek God, you will find him.

You may begin preparing your soul to enter the rest of God by hearing, knowing and trusting these two promises. These two promises will fortify your mind during times of trouble or confusion and prevent the invasion of lies, deceit and corrupted ideologies that contradict the nature of God and his availability.

Remember, these promises are true. God's very Word and his reputation defend them. No matter what the world shows you or what deception tells you, the Word of God is living and active standing eternal over all creation with God himself.

“For the word of God is living and active,
sharper than any two-edged sword,
piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow,
and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
And no creature is hidden from his sight,
but all are naked and exposed
to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.” – Hebrews 4:11-12

Begin to know these promises and remember them. Concentrate on these two promises. These two truths will stabilize your soul in good or bad times, in life or death, and in the light or in darkness.

There are more promises with more detail revealed in Scripture. We will now take a look at more of these promises that reveal the Ways of the Lord that will help us anchor our souls and maintain our place in the rest of God.

06 – The Promises: Knowing God's Ways

Some promises include temporal blessings and daily provisions in life.

Other promises include a call to service, endurance and the sacrifice of temporal blessings in order to achieve God's plan as we run the race of life marked out for us.

In the first case the manifestation of the promise is received with thanksgiving in this lifetime. In this second case the blessings and provisions are future.

These two types of promises are distinguished in Hebrews 11 where a rather extensive list of believers leading up to the time of Jesus Christ are commended. Some of these believers had faith to trust God for temporal blessings and daily deliverance. But, others denied the temporal blessing and endured hardships in order to achieve God's plan for themselves at that time in history.

The writer of Hebrews identifies 10 situations where believers received deliverance, provisions and took leadership to accomplish God's temporal plan. In Hebrews 11:33-35 these heroes of faith accomplished these things and received these blessings in their life in this world:

1. Conquered kingdoms
2. Enforced justice
3. Obtained promises
4. Stopped mouths of lions
5. Quenched the power of fire

6. Escaped the edge of the sword
7. Made strong out of weakness
8. Became mighty in war
9. Put foreign armies to flight
10. Received dead back to life

These believers knew God's promises, understood God's ways. They did not compromise God's Truth or the Reality he had created. They were faithful, endured and received deliverance and provision in this world.

These events and provisions are true. Events and provisions like these are available today. God is good and he promises to lead us, provide for us, protect us and empower us to fulfill our lives. Our responsibility is to know God's promises, know God's ways, trust God and endure until he manifests his power and his purpose. These things are accomplished by God as we hold onto his promises by faith and trust him.

After the author of Hebrews identifies these 10 glorious accomplishments of believers in Hebrews 11:33-35 he immediately continues with another list of 15 events in Hebrews 11:36-38 where believers were not delivered, they were not "blessed" with temporal glories and they lived subpar to normal human standards because they also knew God's promises, understood God's ways and were willing to endure temporal defeats in order to remain faithful to God's purpose for their lives. These believers faced with great endurance, patience and faith these things listed in Hebrews 11:36-38 because the good God called them to this:

1. Tortured
2. Refused release
3. Suffered mocking
4. Suffered flogging
5. Chains
6. Imprisonment
7. Stoned
8. Sawn in two
9. Killed with the sword
10. Went about in skins of sheep and goats
11. Destitute
12. Afflicted
13. Mistreated
14. Wandering in deserts and mountains
15. Dwelt in dens and caves

These believers were not spiritual losers, but instead were victorious overcomers who knew the promises of God and knew God's ways. They were unwilling to compromise their faith in the Truth or their knowledge of God's Reality. But, instead of being delivered in this temporal world God allowed these believers to manifest their faith in the midst of hardship. God called these believers to testify to his absolute Truth without denying the Lord. They all suffered and perished in this age without compromising their knowledge, understanding and faith in the good God.

These events and sufferings are also true. Events and sufferings like this occur today. God is good and he promises to lead us, provide for us, protect us and empower us while we endure such mistreatment. Our responsibility is to know God's promises, know God's ways, trust God and endure until he manifests his power and his purpose. These things are accomplished by God when we have faith. Great will be your reward in eternity.

07 – Promises of Provisions and Deliverance

Promises for daily life and provisions

Describe and list many of the promises and provisions for daily life accessible today.

Knowing and trusting these will allow the believer to remain calm and confident in God's rest.

1. **Isaiah 41:10** – “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”
2. **Isaiah 41:13** – “For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, “Fear not, I am the one who helps you.”
3. **Isaiah 43:2** – “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.”
4. **Isaiah 54:17** – “No weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD and their vindication from me, declares the LORD.”
5. **Psalms 32:8** – “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.”
6. **Psalms 37:23-24** – “The steps of a man are established by the Lord, when he delights in his way; though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the Lord upholds his hand.”
7. **Exodus 14:14** – “The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”
8. **Joshua 1:9** – “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”
9. **Philippians 4:19** – “My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”
10. **Psalms 27:1** – “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”
11. **Psalms 34:17** – “When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.”
12. **Psalms 37:4** – “Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.
13. **Psalms 50:15** – “Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.”
14. **Psalms 9:9-10** – “The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you.”
15. **Psalms 103:2-5** – “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you

with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."

16. **Psalm 91** –

17. **James 5:14-15** – "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven."

18. **Matthew 6:31-33** – "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

19. **Romans 8:31-35** – "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?"

20. **2 Peter 1:3-4** – "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire."

21. **Philippians 4:13** – "I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

22. **Hebrews 13:5-6** – "Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'" So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"

08 - The Promises: Knowing God's Ways

#1 – Future Glory (Romans 8:18-19)

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing
with the glory that will be revealed in us.
For the creation waits in eager expectation
for the children of God to be revealed."

- Romans 8:18-19

#2 – Strength in Weakness (2 Corinthians 12:8-10)

"Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.
But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.'
Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses,
so that Christ's power may rest on me.

That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight
in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties.
For when I am weak, then I am strong.
- 2 Corinthians 12:8-10

#3 – Everything Leads You to God's Goodness (Romans 8:28)

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him,
who have been called according to his purpose."
- Romans 8:28

#4 – Rescued from Every Evil Attack (2 Timothy 4:17-18)

"The Lord stood at my side and gave me strength,
so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it.
And I was delivered from the lion's mouth.
The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom.
To him be glory for ever and ever."
- 2 Timothy 4:17-18

#5 – Endurance (Hebrews 12:1-2)

"Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith,
who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame,
and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."
- Hebrews 12:1-2

#6 – The Appointed Time...Wait for It (Habakkuk 2:3)

"The vision awaits its appointed time;
it hastens to the end—it will not lie.
If it seems slow, wait for it;
it will surely come; it will not delay."
- Habakkuk 2:3

"At the set time that I appoint
I will judge with equity."
- Psalm 75:2

"He has set a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness
through a Man whom He has appointed,
having furnished proof to all people by raising Him from the dead."
- Acts 17:31

#7 – Discipline (Hebrews 12:3-11)

“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant,
but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness
to those who have been trained by it.”
- Hebrews 12:11

“In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?”

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
nor be weary when reprovved by him.
For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and chastises every son whom he receives.”

It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.”

#8 – **God Controls Government and Nations** (John 19:11)

“You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above.”
- Jesus in John 19:11

“There is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.”
- Romans 13:1

“By me kings reign, and rulers decree what is just.” – Proverbs 8:15

“Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.
Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the Son,
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”
- Psalm 2:10-12

“He changes times and seasons;

he removes kings and sets up kings;
he gives wisdom to the wise
and knowledge to those who have understanding.”
- Daniel 2:21

“It is I who by my great power and my outstretched arm have made the earth, with the men and animals that are on the earth, and I give it to whomever it seems right to me. Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and I have given him also the beasts of the field to serve him. All the nations shall serve him and his son and his grandson, until the time of his own land comes. Then many nations and great kings shall make him their slave.”
- Jeremiah 27:5-7

“Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares the Lord, making the land an everlasting waste. I will bring upon that land all the words that I have uttered against it, everything written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall make slaves even of them, and I will recompense them according to their deeds and the work of their hands.”
- Jeremiah 25:12-14

#9 – Understanding: The One Who Has, Will be Given More (Matthew 13:12)

“To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven,
but to them it has not been given.
For to the one who has, more will be given,
and he will have an abundance,
but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.
This is why I speak to them in parables,
because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.”
- Matthew 13:11-13

#10 – Wisdom (James 1:5)

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God,
who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.”
- James 1:5

“Wisdom cries aloud in the street,
in the markets she raises her voice;
at the head of the noisy streets she cries out;
at the entrance of the city gates she speaks.”
- Proverbs 1:20-21

“Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God,
that we might understand the things freely given us by God.
And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit,
interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.
The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him,

and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”

- 1 Corinthians 2:12-14

11 – **Secure** (Romans 8:35-39)

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers,
nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- Romans 8:35-39

12 – **Empowered in Contentment** (Philippians 4:11-13)

“I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.
I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound.
In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret
of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.
I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”

- Philippians 4:11-13

“Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have,
for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

- Hebrews 13:5