



## **All the Promises of God**

(Mark 1:1-8)

**Bottom Line:** God is not slow to fulfill His promises but keeps every single one.

**Have you ever made a promise you weren't able to keep? What prevented you from keeping it? How did it make you feel?**

**Has anybody ever failed to keep a promise they made to you? How did you respond? Did it change the way you thought about that person?**

Trustworthiness is a precious quality these days. There's nothing like having a friend, co-worker, or family member that is reliable—that you know you can count on. A trustworthy and reliable person can provide a strong sense of stability in your life when it seems like everything else is going crazy. That may have been how the Jews felt as they were waiting for the Promised Messiah to come. At the end of the Old Testament, God told Malachi that he would “send the prophet Elijah before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord” (Malachi 4:5). But after that promise was made, God did not speak to Israel, and the prophet Elijah did not come, for almost 400 years.

**Has there been a time in your life when you felt God was silent? Have you been, or are you currently, in a season of waiting?**

**Read Mark 1:1-3.**

Immediately after recounting God's promise to “send My messenger”, Mark says in verse 4, “John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” This is Mark's way of saying that John the Baptist was the fulfillment of the promised forerunner that God had said would come. Jesus even confirms this in Matthew 11:14, saying of John the Baptist that “if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who is to come.” Yes, the people of Israel waited for 400 years, but God was faithful to keep His promise.

**Do you think there was anything intentional about God waiting so long? What might Israel have learned in their waiting? What might we learn in our waiting upon God?**

**Read Mark 1:1-3 again. Who was John the Baptist preparing the way for?**

John's role in the history of redemption was to “prepare the way of the Lord.” His job was to get people ready for the fulfillment of yet another one of God's promises, the coming of the Messiah, the One who would save Israel from their sins and reconcile them to God. John said in verse 7, “after me comes He who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.”

**Jesus said that “of all those born of women there is no one who is greater than John.” So how is Jesus mightier than John? (See verse 8).**

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C O M E F O L L O W M E

Jesus was able to accomplish what John the Baptist was preparing everyone for. When he saw Jesus, John the Baptist cried out, “behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!” (John 1:29). Whereas John the Baptist could only prepare people for salvation (by preaching repentance), Jesus actually made salvation possible. Again, God had made good on His promise to send a Redeemer to Israel. Israel waited 400 years for God to fulfill His promise to send “Elijah” (John the Baptist), but they had waited thousands more for God to send a Redeemer. This Redeemer is Jesus Christ, who takes away the sins of the world.

**Read Romans 10:13. What is the promise that we have from God?**

**Read 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. What is the promise that is recorded here?**

**Read 2 Peter 3:9. How does this help us understand why God might be tarrying in His return?**

God’s promise to us today is that if we call upon the name of the Lord, we will be saved. But our time to take advantage of this promise is limited, because there is going to come a day when Christ will come a second time. He will save those who are eagerly waiting for Him (Hebrews 9:28) and enact judgment on those who reject Him. He is graciously waiting, giving us time to repent of our sin and trust in Christ for our salvation. We have no reason to doubt that God will keep any of these promises, He has made good on everything He has ever said He would do. We can trust Him.

**Has God ever let you down? When is a time that He has come through for you? What promises of God do you cling to the most? What promise of God do you need to cling to in this season of your life?**

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**Reflection:** Read these aloud, using your discretion about which questions should be pondered and which questions should be discussed.

**We just finished a series on repentance where we learned that repentance is necessary for us to enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ. God has promised salvation to those who repent of their sin and believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus as the only atoning sacrifice for their sins. You can be assured that God will make good on His promise to save those who receive Him and to punish those who reject Him. Right now, where do you stand? Where are you in your posture before God? One of acceptance? Or rejection?**

**Do you have a hard time trusting God? Why do you think this is? Do you feel that God has let you down in some way? Could it be that you’ve trusted God to do something that He never promised to do? Do you have a hard time trusting other people? Could you potentially be projecting your distrust of people onto God? God is not like us, He never lies, He never deceives, and He never exaggerates. What He says He will do, He does. He is strong enough, wise enough, and sovereign enough to make whatever He wishes come to pass. How can you rekindle your trust in the Lord? What steps of faith can you take to practice relying upon Him and give opportunity to see Him be faithful?**