

Trust God's Promises

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I remember when I started coming to God's church in the mid '60's, Mr. Armstrong would often ask at the Feast or on a holy day or on a tape, he would say, "Why are we here?". He asked that so many times, "why are we here?". Several times he answered that both in print and during his message. He would say, 'We are here (referring to the Sabbath day) to learn the true worship of the true God.' The Sabbath keeps us in mind of the true worship of the true God. We're here to get to know better, the two God beings, with that in mind let's go to 1 Corinthians 8 and look at verse 6. The Bible is very clear and very plain, there is no trinity. There are two God beings. There are many scriptures, you could give a whole sermon on that, but we're just going to give one scripture. I'll be reading out of the King James unless otherwise noted:

1 Corinthians 8:6 *But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, [meaning everything originates from the Father] and we in Him [through the Holy Spirit]; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him. (KJV)*

We've talked about before, God and Christ work together as a team, as a perfectly united team to do God's will. Let's go to Ephesians 3:9, to see that everything originates with the Father, and Christ is the one who implements it—who does it.

Ephesians 3:9 *And to make all [the word men is italicized] men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, (and it tells us God) who created all things [God originated everything, He created all things, but] by Jesus Christ: (KJV)*

As we've talked before God is the originator, God is the planner. We could say if you're using building terms, God is the architect and Christ is the implementer, the doer or again in building terms He would be the builder, the general contractor. The one who actually gets in and makes it happen. The key here, if you follow this through the entirety of the scriptural record is that this relationship is consistent from the beginning of time until this very day. You project it out into the future, this relationship is consistent between God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

God called us for a purpose. God has a purpose in mind for everyone of us. Let's go to Romans 8 and look at verse 28. We normally focus on the first part of this verse; when we go through trials, our mind goes here, that's for sure, mine does. We're going to read that and then focus on the later part of the verse because it talks about God's purpose.

Romans 8:28 *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, ... (KJV)*

If we love God and we put Him first in our life, anything He allows or happens to come our way, is for our ultimate benefit. Then He goes on ...

28 continued) ... to them who are called according to His purpose. (KJV)

There is a purpose for our calling. Sometimes we got off track; decades ago our purpose was to pray and pay. Our purpose was just to support the work, but God has something far greater in mind for us because He wants us to be in the Kingdom of God. His Kingdom, as His children for an eternity. That's a lot more than just praying and paying on a physical level. We all know—we began by keeping God's Sabbath, God's Holy Sabbath. Then we began keeping God's Holy days. That expanded to keeping all of God's commandment—all of God's commandments. Then sending God, His tithe—His tenth. Today we're here to worship God on the Sabbath, and we have a purpose for that, too. It ties in with our calling that has a purpose. Let's go to John 17:3. If we want to have eternal life with God, in the Kingdom of God then this is what we need to be doing. These first five words should get our attention:

John 17:3 *And this is life eternal, [what is it, what is life eternal?] that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (KJV)*

When we were called, you see we started a relationship with God. Before being called, I didn't know God—I didn't know who God was. I had heard of God and I knew about Jesus Christ. We grew up in a Protestant church. Mom would drag us to church, kicking and screaming, so I knew a little bit about that. But I didn't know God until we started studying the Bible, and started learning about how to pray, and started to think about God, and look at all the scriptures that pertain to God and to Jesus Christ. What we began to see, when God threw the switch in our mind and the Bible started making sense, what happened is, we started a relationship with God and Christ. The more we study, the more we know about Them. That's what it's saying right here in John 17:3. The more we pray—we communicate with God, God communicates with us, God puts thoughts in our mind, words in our mouth. We began a relationship that hopefully, will be an eternal relationship between each one of us and the Father and His Son. We get to know Them better by keeping this day and by worshiping Them on this day and by keeping the holy days. We're starting the holy day season here, it's coming on us really fast. As we approach the Passover and the spring holy days, today let's look at the promises God made to two of the patriarchs and to the people associated with those patriarchs. We're going to see these promises that He made to the two patriarchs are vital for our salvation and we're going to see also, what those promises teach us. We're going to find that they teach us more about God and Christ and they teach us above all,

Their great love for each one of us. That's reflected through the holy days and it's reflected through these promises. The title of the sermon is

Trust God's Promises

We're going to need that trust, that faith, that simple belief that God's going to do, what He says He's going to do. We're going to need that trust more and more as time goes on—trust God's promises.

1. God's promises to Abraham and to Abraham's descendants.

His progeny. Let's go to Genesis 17 and begin in verse 1. It's hard to believe in this day and time, when these words were spoken, Abraham was ninety years old. Probably most of us will never reach ninety years old, certainly not today.

Genesis 17:1 *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him ... (KJV)*

“Appeared” has a very broad meaning, it doesn't necessarily mean face to face. It could be in the presence of, or you could hear God's voice.

1 continued) ... *I am the Almighty God; ... (KJV)*

God's introducing Himself. He says, I want you to know who I am, "I am the Almighty God." Now He says this is what I want you to do ...

1 continued) ... *walk before Me, and be thou perfect.* [mature, complete]

2) *And [if you do that] I will make My Covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.*

3) *And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,*

4) *As for Me, behold, My Covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.* [that is a promise]

7) *And I will establish My Covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, [notice what God's part is] to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after Thee.*

8) *And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. (KJV)*

God talks to Abram and He says, "I am the Almighty God", and here's what I am prepared to do. Who made this promise? Which God being made this promise? Let's go to Acts 3 and look at verse 25. We allow the Bible to define the Bible, that's one of the first rules of Bible study—let the Bible define the Bible; another one is look at the context, of course.

Acts 3:25 *Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. (KJV)*

That was the promise that we just read in Genesis 17. Notice verse 26.

26) Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you [those being talked to here in Acts], in turning away every one of you from his iniquities. (KJV)

We see here in these set of scriptures, God and Christ are mentioned together, but verse 25 tells us that God the Father made the covenant with Abraham, Issac and Jacob. He was the one that actually made the covenant who talked to Abraham. We're going to see God made promises and He kept those promises. That's going to be important for us going forward, as this world—as we read in the announcements—keeps falling apart—God made promises to Abraham and his descendants.

2. God's promises to Moses and to Israel.

We tend to focus on this as we get closer to the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. You might want to put a ribbon in Exodus because we're going to be coming back there and I'm going to summarize Exodus 1 and 2. Exodus 1 is Israel is suffering in Egypt and they were suffering horribly. Exodus 2 (I'm just summarizing) recounts the birth of Moses. We know he was raised by the daughter of Pharaoh. We also know that when he was forty years old, he killed an Egyptian who was abusing an Israelite and word got out and he had to flee. He became a sheep herder in Median, he married, he had children and was in Median for forty years; Now eighty years old. After being in Median and being a shepherder for forty years, my guess is in his mind Egypt was a distant memory. You spend forty years doing one thing, herding sheep out in the middle of the wilderness—Egypt was probably a distant memory. Let's go to Exodus chapter 3, you might want to put a marker there. I want to now go to Stephen's account, the decant Stephen; his account is written in Exodus 3. We find that in Acts chapter 7. We'll come back to Exodus 3 in just a bit. Let's go to Acts 7 and begin in verse 22. Stephen was preaching a sermon and the people around him hated him and did not like this sermon. He was building a case for them to accept Jesus Christ. He got them on his side by going back and recounting the history of Israel. So we break into Stephen's sermon, monologue in Acts 7:22. He's talking about Moses.

Acts. 7:22 *And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds ...*

23) And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

24) And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian:

25) *For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by His hand would deliver them: but they understood not.*

26) *And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; [you're Israelites] why do ye wrong one to another? (Why do you abuse one another and fight one another?)*

27) *But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away [pushed Moses away], saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?*

28) *Wilt thou kill me, as thou diddest the Egyptian yesterday?*

29) *Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons. (KJV)*

He was there for forty years; eighty years old. Now in verse 30 we see Moses calling.

30) *And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the LORD in a flame of fire in a bush. (KJV)*

We see here—relating to West Texas that I'm familiar with, you can have tumbleweed the size of this room, and this tumbleweed or sagebrush or whatever, was burning in that dry climate. You light up a bush like that, in a matter of seconds it's burned up. But this bush wasn't burning up, in fact, what we see here is described as an Angel of the LORD appearing out of the flame of this bush. The Hebrew word for "angel" is Strong's #4397 and it can mean an *angel*, absolutely or it can mean *a messenger specifically of God*. The New King James capitalizes Angel, indicating the translator felt this was a Holy being. The Clarks commentary makes a statement, "and who was this but Jesus." I personally believe it was Christ: A messenger of the LORD and He was visible—we know Christ can appear as a man. We won't turn there, but in Genesis 14, Melchizedek appeared to Abraham, and in Hebrews 7 He's identified as Jesus Christ. Melchizedek is called the Priest of the Most High God. We know Melchizedek was Christ; He walked this earth; He conversed with Abraham. He can appear as a man. We, also, know in many places in Revelation—Christ appears in glory; that would fry our eyeballs, I'm sure if we saw Him in full glory. But here, Christ appears in some form, no details given, but he appears as a messenger of God, an Angel of God out of this fire that just keeps burning. Continue on in verse 31:

31) *When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the LORD [not the voice of the Angel of the LORD, the one who sent the Angel] came unto him, [and notice what this voice said to him].*

32) *Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. (KJV)*

We would have our face in the dirt, which I'm sure he did.

33) *Then said the LORD to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground. (KJV)*

Who is speaking to Moses? We were in Acts 3 a minute ago, let's go back there but this time to verse 13, Acts 3:13. This voice coming out of this burning bush says, "I'm the God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob". And again, who is speaking to Moses? Acts 3 in verse 13 makes it abundantly clear.

Acts 3:13 *The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; ... (KJV)*

We see here in the same verse, God the Father and Christ mentioned in the same verse, but it is clear that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is God the Father. You can't twist this one. You can't take this one and make it mean something else. The fact is that Christ confirmed it, Himself, when He walked the face of the earth. Let's go to Mark 12 and look at verse 24. Christ is addressing the Sadducees who believed there was not resurrection. He was chiding them because they didn't know the scriptures very well. These religious leaders, He's saying you don't understand the scriptures.

Mark 12:24 *And Jesus answering said unto them [the Sadducees], Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures ... (KJV)*

They had the scrolls, they were educated men. He's saying you're misinterpreting the scriptures, you don't understand them.

24 continued) ... neither the power of God? (KJV)

You don't understand God's power. He's not real to you. He's not meaningful to you.

25) For when they shall rise from the dead, [Christ is reaffirming to the Sadducees that there is a resurrection] they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.

26) And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? (KJV)

Christ is talking, He's referring to God, He's not referring to Himself, if He was referring to Himself, He would have said I spoke to you out of the bush, but no, He said, God spoke to you out of the bush. So, we see here that the Bible is consistent. We see not only, that God and Christ were together at creation; we're told in Genesis let Us make man in Our image. They were here together at the burning bush, Christ is visible in some form in the fire, God's voice coming out of the bush, as we'll see in a minute, it was God who spoke. That reminds me of what Christ, Himself said—look at John 5:17. You see, They have always been together; They have always worked together; They have always cooperated together. The Father is superior in authority, we've talked about that in a couple of sermons already, but look at John 5:17. Jesus is answering the Jews in verse 16—that's who He's talking to.

John 5:17 *But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto [to this point], and I work. (KJV)*

What He's telling us is, God isn't some absentee God. God isn't off doing something while Christ is doing all the work, nor is the Father doing all of the work and Christ not doing any work. Christ is telling us: We both work—We're both active—We are both involved in the very creation that leads to the Kingdom of God. Let's go back to Exodus chapter 3 and we will pick up the account—we've seen Stephen's narrative of the account. Exodus chapter 3 and we'll begin in verse 4. Some of this will be a little bit of a repeat of what Stephen said, but there's some important information. You have to put all the scriptures together. Stephen is talking about an incident in Acts chapter 7, and in Exodus; Moses is writing about an incident—that same incident. We should put both together, and then we can come to a complete picture, and that's what we're doing.

Exodus 3:4 *And when the LORD saw that he [referring to Moses] turned aside to see, [the LORD saw, not the Angel of the LORD] God called unto him out of the midst of the bush ... (KJV)*

That means God was in the bush along with the Angel of the LORD, which as I've said, I personally believe that is Jesus Christ; why wouldn't it be? They've been together since an eternity, why wouldn't They be together in this bush.

4 continued) ... and said, Moses, Moses. And He said, Here am I.

5) And He [referring to God] said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

6) Moreover He said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. [we know who that is, Acts 3:13 tells us that] And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

7) And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; (KJV)

This tells us something about God. These people that are slaves, He's paying attention to them; He cares about them; He loves them. When they cry out to them—He listens and He hears.

8) And [now is a promise] I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. (KJV)

To me it's exciting to know that God is personally involved and He would come down from heaven, and be personally involved talking to Moses, making plans with Moses,

telling Moses what He's going to do, and then fulfilling those promises. God is not some absentee God. He's not off reclining on a cloud somewhere, while other people do His bidding—no, He is involved.

9) Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto Me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. (KJV)

Perfectly aware of all the details.

10) Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. (KJV)

Notice here, He calls them My people. We're going to see later, we are His people. If He can pay attention to millions of slaves, He can surely pay attention to us.

11) And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12) And He said, [here's another promise] Certainly I will be with thee [a promise and He's saying it to each one of us too]; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. (KJV)

When we come back to this mountain with all those people, you're going to remember that I told you beforehand.

13) And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent Me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is His name? what shall I say unto them?

14) And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. (KJV)

If you look at the Hebrew, it means "I exist that I exist". God is saying, that I've always existed; never had a beginning, never had an end, I've always existed. The New King James, the NIV, the Revised Standard translates this, "I AM WHO I AM". The New Living Translation says, I am the one who always is, not always was—always is, that says it all—I'm the One who always is. We know the title, I AM, can apply to both God and Christ, but we've seen here this applies to God the Father. The reason the title, I AM, refers to both is They're both God, They've both eternally existed; They never had a beginning, will never have an end, that's logical.

15) And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, [this is what I want you to tell them] The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: (KJV)

Notice how many times God refers to Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He's trying to give us a message. He says this is the God that's doing it and we read in Acts 3 that it refers to God the Father.

15 continued) this is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations. (KJV)

Meaning after it was all done, after they left Egypt, crossed through the Red Sea, wandered in the wilderness, went to the promised land, God is saying this whole episode, forty years, is a memorial to Me and My power and what I have done for the nation of Israel.

16) Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt:

17) And I have said [here comes another promise from God], I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. (KJV)

You can't get more specific to take millions of people, drag them out of the most powerful nation in the world, with the biggest army in the world, and take them to a specific place, a specific geographic plot of ground and God says in advance—I'm going to do this. Of course, the Israelites don't believe Them. If God can do that—what can He do for the likes of us? In Exodus 4, God had to demonstrate His power to Israel and that's where Moses' staff turned into a snake and Moses jumped back, and we're told then he had to have faith to reach the tail of the snake and have it turn back into his rod — that took a little faith on Moses' part. Then his hand became leperous sticking it into his robe, that must have been shocking. Then Aaron got a cup of water out of the Nile and poured it on the ground and it turned to blood. Those were demonstrations, in Exodus 4:5 here's the purpose of those demonstrations:

Exodus 4:5 *That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee. (KJV)*

God had to perform some miracles for the Israelites sake. Much greater ones were going to come for Egypt's sake. Then in Exodus 5: Moses' first encounter with Pharaoh, and we know that Pharaoh refused to let the people go. Now we come to Exodus 6. Remember the context, what we're looking at here is God's promises. We've seen some of them already, but there's more to come. God keeps emphasizing over and over, I'm promising to do this, I'm promising to do that.

Exodus 6:1 *Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall He let them go, and with a strong hand shall He drive them out of his land. [His own land]*

2) *And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD:*

3) *And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty... (KJV)*

If you want to keep your finger here, go back to Genesis 17:1, we read it in the beginning ...

Genesis 17:1 *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; ... (KJV)*

That's what He's referring to here. We see that God the Father is the Almighty. He's telling Moses here: I appeared unto your fathers under the name God Almighty.

Exodus 6:3 *... but by My name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.*

4) *And I have also established My Covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. (KJV)*

Who made the covenant with ancient Israel? We've already read it, Acts chapter 3:25 tells us God the Father made the covenant with Israel. Going on in verse 5.

5) *And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; ... (KJV)*

Again, it tells us that God is a personal God; He hears the groaning. When we're going through a trial, and when we're in pain, or whatever is happening to us, and we groan to God—He hears. We can take that to the bank—He hears.

5) *And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered My Covenant. (KJV)*

The covenant with Abraham to take these descendants and get them to the promised land. He says I remember, I haven't forgotten.

6) *Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, [here comes another promise] and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and [here's another promise] I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: (KJV)*

We see here that God the Father is also our Redeemer; Christ is, also, that makes perfect sense since They work together and They share many titles: I AM, God and Redeemer.

7) *And I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God [that's a promise]: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.*

8) *And [another promise] I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD. (KJV)*

We see here in Exodus 6, God promises three times to deliver Israel. He promises it in other chapters of Exodus. God is a personal God. We learn He listens to the cry of people in distress—His people. Then He is our Redeemer. He will take us out of this horrible situation. We see here in Exodus, summarizing Exodus, that it is God Almighty who is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; there's no doubt about that. It is God Almighty who made the covenant with Israel, no doubt about that. He made promises to both Moses and to Israel to bring them out of Egypt; He promised them. He was the One that delivered on the promises. We see that in the scriptural record. He said I'm going to do it, before it ever happened and then it happened. That's a lesson for us. It's confirmed when He promised Abraham before Moses was even thought of, I'm going to take your descendants (they weren't even born yet), and I'm going to bring them into this wonderful land. Then used Moses as a human instrument to make it happen. God heard, God listened, God acted—He kept His promises. Let's go to the book of Hebrews, because this has a direct relationship, not only to Genesis and Melchizedek, but also to what we've been reading about thus far. Let's get the context in Hebrews 1:1 and then we'll go to chapter 6. Hebrews 1:1 tells us about God and about Christ.

Hebrews 1:1 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, (KJV)*

God did it, God was the One that was speaking through them or to them.

2) *Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, ... (KJV)*

We can stop there and tie that into John 1:1 where we're told that Christ is the Word. Christ became the walking, talking, Word as a human being on the face of this earth.

2 continued)... whom He hath appointed [God has appointed] heir of all things, by whom also He [God] made the worlds; (KJV)

God, as we read in Ephesians 3:19, God made the worlds through Jesus Christ. Hebrews 1:1 and 2 is cementing that fact, and establishing a framework to go through the rest of the book. Now let's go to Hebrews 6:13. If you have a marker you're going to want to place it here because we're going to go to some scriptures that relate to this. Again back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Hebrews 6:13 *For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself, (KJV)*

This tells us a lot. It tells us that God made a promise to Abraham and He swore by this promise, but He couldn't swear by somebody else because nobody else is greater than God; Christ reaffirmed that. You can keep your marker here, go to John 10:29. Christ said that His Father was greater than He, in fact, His Father was greater than everything. Talking about those that God has called, and then turned them over to Jesus Christ:

John 10:29 *My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. (KJV)*

Look at chapter 14:28. This is His (Christ's) last hours on earth and He's talking to the disciples and trying to pass vital information to them.

John 14:28 *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for My Father is greater than I. (KJV)*

This is Christ's own words.

31) *But that the world may know that I love the Father; ... (KJV)*

No competition between the Father and the Son, none. Christ loves His Father and there are plenty of scriptures that say I came to do the will of My Father, I want to please My Father: as we all, I know, want to do.

31 continued)... and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do [I am here to do what God commands Me to do] ... (KJV)

Let's go to a third scripture Ephesians 1:17. This is all in context of God swearing by Himself, because there's nobody greater than God. Notice what this says: this is after Christ had died, resurrected from the dead, He is now sitting on the right hand of the Father.

Ephesians 1:17 *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, [who is Christ's God, God the Father] the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: (KJV)*

We see why the Father couldn't swear by anyone greater than Him because there is nobody greater than Him. Let's go back to Hebrews 6:14.

Hebrews 6:14 *Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee [referring to Abraham, God is talking to Abraham], and multiplying I will multiply thee. [that was the promise that God gave to Abraham].*

15) *And so, after he had patiently endured [Abraham was patient and he endured], he obtained the promise. (KJV)*

Verse 16, I'm going to read out of the New Living Translation because the King James is kind of cumbersome.

16) *When people take an oath, they call on someone greater than themselves to hold them to it, and without any question that oath is binding. God also bound Himself with an oath so that those who receive the promise could be perfectly sure that He would never change His mind.*

18) *So God has given us both His promise and His oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to Him for refuge [to God, we go to God for shelter under His wings] can take new courage for we can hold onto His promise with confidence. (NLT)*

Verse 19, back to the King James.

19) *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul [that means life, this hope is an anchor to our very life], both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; (KJV)*

Now what is He talking about? You have a veil before the Holy of Holies, and this hope that we have of eternal life, of an eternal relationship with God; this hope enters through that veil. Remember the veil was rent when Christ died.

20) *Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus [He is the forerunner for all of us], made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. (KJV)*

We know men have put the chapter breaks, so let's just continue. Chapter 7 in verse 1. He's talking about Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:1 *For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, Priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; (KJV)*

We know this was Jesus Christ. He was a priest of the Most High God, Genesis 14:17, there can only be one Most High God and that is the Father. Melchizedek was Priest of the Most High.

Let's summarize this second point about God's promises to Israel and to Moses. We have seen that the Most High, The Almighty, is the God that made the promise to lead Israel out of Egypt—He is the One. He made the promise and then He brought them out through all of the miracles. Then He led them through the Red Sea, and when the tabernacle was built, guess what, He dwelt in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle. This same God, it's all the same God, He dwelt in the Holy of Holies behind the veil. That

tabernacle traveled wherever Israel traveled and God was there. He took Israel all the way to the Promised Land despite their whining and groaning and complaining and all of that; He took them to the Promised Land and gave them this wonderful land. The fact is that He and Christ did it together: from the burning bush, both were there together, to doing all of the miracles, taking them through the Red Sea (that's a story of itself—They were together), guarding them all the way to the Promised Land. They have always been together, they always worked together. Isn't it comforting to know that They are there for us, helping us when we cry out with our groanings. All of these are examples for us today. We can go back, look at this and then apply those lessons to our tribulations and our trials today.

The third point is the key. This is what we've been building up to: God made promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and He delivered; He made promises to Moses and Israel—He delivered. The key is:

3. God promises to deliver us.

Just as He did with ancient Israel; He promises to deliver us. Yes, we're living in a land of sin, I don't care where you live on the earth, we're living in a land of sin (a metaphor of Egypt). Didn't Christ say when He gave the model prayer in Matthew 6, we're supposed to pray daily to God to deliver us from evil; to pray to God to take us out of evil. Some translations say the evil one, either way it's all the same. The evil one has perverted and subjected the entire world. We're enmeshed in that, we live in it, so when we pray to God to deliver us from evil we're asking Him to deliver us from the pulls of the flesh, the pulls of the word, and from Satan and his provocations and his attacks and his trying to derail us. We won't turn there, but in John chapter 10, the parable of the sheepfold, and it says the wolf wants to kill, to steal, and to destroy, and that's exactly what Satan wants. He wants first to steal us from the church, to get us going off somewhere. Then he wants to kill us if he can physically, then he wants to destroy us, that means forever spiritually because he doesn't want us to have eternal life. When we pray to God daily, deliver us from evil—it's from all of this. We're told to pray to God, please deliver us this day from all of this mess that we find ourselves in—in or out of the church. The fact is if we're honest with ourselves, some people have been treated worse by people in the church than they've ever been treated by people outside the church—that is a fact. Again, that shows you the power of Satan. Let's go to Romans 4:1. It's amazing in the New Testament it keeps going back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—because there are lessons there, it's important.

Romans 4:1 [Paul is saying] *What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? (KJV)*

What's the lesson for us? What do we say about Abraham?

2) For if Abraham were justified by works [he could work his way into God's favor], he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. (KJV)

He could glorify in himself—by my works look at what I did, but we know that's not true.

3) For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. (KJV)

God made the promise: I'm going to make a whole nation out of you, multiple generations of people out of you and I'm going to take you to the promised land; I'm going to take you to the land of Canaan. Jumping to verse 17.

17) (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations [Abraham],) before Him [God] whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not ... (KJV)

You could tie in 1 Corinthians 1:26, God calls the weak of the world, not the high, not the mighty—that's exactly what this is referring to. He calls those things which are not as though they were because they are important to God—even though we're nothing we're important to God.

*18) Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.
19) And being not weak in faith, ... (KJV)*

Abraham was strong in the faith. Remember when he had to make that three-day journey, and God told him you're going to have to sacrifice your son, and the knife was coming down. He was not weak in the faith.

*19 continued) ... he considered not his own body now dead [meaning, not able to have children], when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb [she wasn't able to conceive]:
20) He staggered not ... (KJV)*

The Greek means to *hesitate or waver*. Abraham didn't stagger at God's promises; he didn't waver at God's promises.

20 continued)... at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; (KJV)

Even when it seemed impossible—He and his wife have a baby at 100 years old. That's beyond the pale, yet he didn't waiver.

21) And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, he was able also to perform. (KJV)

That's the definition of faith, right there—being fully persuaded that whatever God promises, He's able to bring it to pass.

22) And therefore it was imputed to him [Abraham] for righteousness. (KJV)

Because he believed God—simple promises, he believed them. Now we get into, as it applies to us:

23) Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24) But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; (KJV)

That is a promise that we will be resurrected. He's drawing an analogy as Abraham and Sarah being 100 years old believed God could give them a child. We should have that same faith, that God the Father who resurrected His Son can resurrect us, also.

25) Who [Christ] was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. (KJV)

All of these promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the promises made to Moses and Israel apply to us. They're examples of God delivering on His promises. Let's go to Chapter 5:8.

Romans 5:8 *But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us [absolutely].*

9) Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. [through Christ's death and resurrection]

10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. (KJV)

Christ was dead, He ceased to exist for seventy two hours. God had the power to raise Him back to glory, back to a Spirit Being, sitting at His right hand—God had the power to do that. And because He is the forerunner, the firstfruits of that resurrection, that's something all of us can look forward to, and have absolute confidence—this will indeed happen, just as God brought Israel out of Egypt, just as He fulfilled His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The fourth and last point: we're talking about God promises to deliver us, but that means we have to realize we have a part to play in that.

4. We have a part to play in our salvation.

It is not just (as the Protestants say) accepting Christ, and then you can live whatever you want to live, follow whatever rules you want to follow, and you're going to be in God's Kingdom. That makes no sense whatsoever if anybody reads the Bible—it makes no sense at all. We have a part to play, and we're coming up to that part. That's typified by Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. They're almost upon us and they reflect our part in salvation—look at Romans 6:5. This is a very good explanation:

Romans 6:5 *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death [Christ's death], we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: [we can claim that as a promise]*

6) *Knowing this, [here's our part] that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. (KJV)*

That is our part: crucify the old person. The old way of doing things, the old way of thinking, the old way of talking, the old way of acting—destroyed. That old man is crucified when we are baptized; that old man is left in the water and we come out clean. Notice verse 22.

22) *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

23) *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (KJV)*

There again, you have God and Christ together, working together. God created all things through Jesus Christ. We're being told here that we can have eternal life through Jesus Christ. The Bible is consistent, beginning to end. We're going to look at two more scriptures about our part to play as we approach Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. Ephesians 4:5, our part. As time gets closer to the end, as the world gets worse and worse and worse as we see—we should have an urgency to do this.

Ephesians 4:5 *One Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

6) *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (KJV)*

God permeates everything.

22) *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;*

24) *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; (KJV)*

Phillipians 2:3 tells us, we ought to have the mind of Christ—that should be the new mind that we have. Let's go to Colossians 3:8, talking about (again) getting rid of the old self, putting on the new self that is after the example of Jesus Christ. I'm going to read this out of the New King James.

Colossians 3:8 *But now you yourselves are to put off all these:* [Paul is saying this is what you have to get rid of in your character and your behavior] *anger, wrath, malice ... (NKJV)*

Malice means a motive to do evil to somebody. You don't have their welfare in mind. You want to hurt them, destroy them, do evil to them.

*8 continued)...blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.
9) Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,
10) and have put on the new man [man is in italics, the new person, the new individual] who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him [Jesus Christ] who created him, [the new man; following the mind of Christ]
11) where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all. (NKJV)*

God and Christ doing this together.

*12) Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on [we've been told what we should put off; this is what we should put on] tender mercies, [not wanting to harm anybody or do evil to anybody] kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;
13) bearing with one another [the Greek means literally to put up with one another with all our faults and all our warts and shortcomings] and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. (NKJV)*

It is amazing to me in God's Church to this very day at this very minute how many people don't forgive their church brother or their church sister—they just don't. They hold it against them. They hold grudges, sometimes they hold them for decades—hold it between husband and wife, between friends in the church. No forgiveness, no meekness, no humility. You know, Matthew 18 takes humility. You open yourself up when you go to somebody and say look you said this, or you did that and it hurt me, it hurt my feelings—because you're just standing there all naked, so to speak, and you can get blasted. It takes humility to go to somebody and do that, yet that doesn't happen in the church today—very, very rarely does that happen. People gossip about whatever their offended about. They'll tell everybody, but the person that offended them, and as the gossip circle gets bigger and bigger, and stronger and stronger, then rumors come in, exaggerations come in, untruths come in, and guess what; now the gossip circle takes a life of its own—totally devoid of reality, having nothing to do with reality. It's amazing in God's church! This is why I say we need to have a sense of urgency of changing the culture in God's church. We're a party of one, and all we can do is set a good example—that's all we can do. Ending in verse 13 says you must do this: forbearing one another, forgiving one another. You've got to do it.

*14) But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.
(NKJV)*

Love should bind all of God's people together—bind us together as the body of Christ, and then bind us with the Father and the Son. The love should be the bonding agent, but instead at these end days we have just the opposite. It is sad to say, all too often.

15) And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, [rule means exactly what it says; command, rule, dominion] to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. (NKJV)

The end of this fourth point is, our part is to become like God and Christ: Think like Them, talk like Them, act like Them—have the same motives that they have. What are the motives of God and Christ? To raise children, to be eternal children in God's Kingdom—that's Their motive. If we love one another we won't do anything to harm anybody on that pathway, not ever be a stumbling block to somebody on their path to being in the Kingdom of God and to be in the Church of God and to obey the commandments of God and to keep the Sabbaths of God and the holy days of God. Our part is to become like Them.

We've seen in the very beginning; we read Romans 8:28 that God called us for a purpose and that purpose is to come to know Him and His Son, Jesus Christ. This is life eternal—John 17 tells us that. This is life eternal to come to know You, the only true God and Your Son, Jesus Christ. We do that over time. We get to know Them better and and better through study, through prayer, through discussion, through revelation. God's given us His Word, absolutely given us His Word that has the answers. We will never know it perfectly until we face God and Christ. Nobody has a lock on that, but we strive to know more and more about God and Christ—to keep God's Word. We do by keeping this very day. We're here today because we want to worship God; we want to please God; we want to make God happy with us by doing so, guess what, we develop a closer relationship with the Father and with the Son—that's what we're after. Then, as we get closer to Them; we can look back on Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and Moses and Israel, and realize all of the promises that God made to them. Look what happened; He brought everyone to pass as He said He would, and we can take hold of those promises and apply them in our life. That God will bring us out of slavery to this world—the slavery of sin—to Satan's influences and provocations and, ultimately, we learn from this that God has promised to raise us up to eternal life, if we do our part. Abraham had the simple faith: I'm a hundred years old, but you said I'm going to have a son, so I'm going to believe you. We have to do exactly the same thing. I don't care what it looks like out there in the world. God is going to redeem us; He will resurrect us, and we will be in His Kingdom as His children if we do our part.