

Praying God's words, promises, saving works, and revelation of himself

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<p><i><u>'LORD, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, 6 let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's family, have committed against you. 7 We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.</u></i></p>	<p><i>'the LORD your God, is a great and awesome God.' Deuteronomy 7:21.</i></p> <p><i>'he is the faithful God, who keeps his covenant of love.' Deuteronomy 7:9.</i></p>	<p>God's words and character</p> <p>God's words and saving works</p>
<p><i>8 'Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, <u>'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, 9 but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.'</u></i></p>	<p><i>'if you then become corrupt and make any kind of idol, doing evil in the eyes of the LORD your God and arousing his anger ... The LORD will scatter you among the peoples ... But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.'</i></p> <p><i>Deuteronomy 4:25,27,29, and 30:1-5.</i></p>	<p>God's words and promises</p>
<p><i>10 'They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. 11 Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favour in the presence of this man.'</i></p> <p><i>Nehemiah 1:5-11 NIV11</i></p>	<p><i>'Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' Exodus 19:6.</i></p> <p><i>'You stretch out your right hand, and the earth swallows your enemies. In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling.'</i> Exodus 9:12,13.</p>	<p>God's words and character</p> <p>God's words and saving works</p>

This is what Bible faith was like:

King Solomon: *'Praise be to the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel, just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses' [1 Kings 8:56].*

The Psalms: *'For he remembered his holy promise given to his servant Abraham' [Psalm 105:42].*

Mary: *'He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors' [Luke 1: 54,55].*

Paul: *'No matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ' [2 Cor 1:20].*

Peter: *'Christ suffered for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God' [1 Peter 3:18].*

Furthermore:

John Calvin. *'There is nothing more efficacious than to set his own word before God, and then to found our prayers upon his promises, as if he dictated to us out of his own mouth what we are to ask.'* [Commentary on the Four Books of Moses, Baker, Grand Rapids, vol IV, 75.

In John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, at one time, Christian is defeated by Giant Despair, and confined to Doubting-Castle. After some days of self-pity, Christian makes a wonderful discovery! *'What a fool ... am I, thus to lay in a stinking dungeon, when I may as well walk at liberty. I have a key ... called Promise, that will, I am persuaded, open any lock in Doubting-Castle.'*

Here are the words of Adoniram Judson, pioneer missionary to Burma [Myanmar] tied up, ready for the flames, and asked by his opponents what he thought about his future. He replied: *'The future is as bright as the promises of God'*!

Augustine was Bishop of Hippo Regius in North Africa 395-431. Enjoy his vivid words about God and his promises to us in Christ.

God makes promises, and does them:

'Christ was not on the earth; God promised, and he did it. No virgin had conceived; he promised, and he did it. The precious blood had not been shed by which the hand-writing of our death would be effaced; he promised, and he did it. Human flesh had not risen from the dead; he promised, and he did it ... When all these things he has promised and done, would he lie about concerning the day of judgement? It will come as these things came' [Enarrationes in Ps 73:25].

By making promises to us, God makes himself our debtor, and wrote his promises in the Holy Scriptures:

'God is faithful, who made himself our debtor! This was not by accepting any things from us, but by promising us great blessings. But a spoken promise was not enough. He even chose to bind himself to keep his promise by writing, creating for us a written bond of his promises. So that when he began to fulfil his promises, we might see their fulfilment in Scripture' [En in Ps 109:1]

'For because one generation goes and another comes, and so generations pass by, it was necessary that God's Scriptures should remain as God's written bond for all to read, so we can remain in the paths of its promises' [En in Ps 147:17].

So let us trust in the promises of God!

'Let us trust in God as a debtor most faithful, because we trust him as a promiser most merciful' [En in Ps 23, II, 9.]

'From what God has done, we must believe in what he will still do' [Sermo 130:3].

'Promises point us to God's works, not our own. Promise is what God himself will do' [Epistula 140, 48].

'For no person in this world is strong, except in the hope of God's promises' [En in Ps 88:1].

Think of the opening words of the Lord's prayer. In the words, 'Our Father in heaven', we appeal to the character of God, the saving works of God, and the words of God.

You might like to make a list like this, linking the prayers you pray with God's character, saving works, and promises.

Jesus said, 'I will build my church' Matthew 16:18	'Lord Jesus, please build your church here in Doncaster. Bring many people to faith in you, and build us up in faith, love, and hope, and to maturity in you.'
'In all things God works for the good of those who love him' Romans 8:28	'Gracious God, this is a mess, and it is hard to see what you are doing. But please do as you have promised, and work it for good, in Jesus' name.'
'The LORD is my shepherd' Psalm 23:1.	'Dear heavenly Father, please care for Ann, and be her loving shepherd day by day. May she know your loving protection and care, day and night.'
'The LORD reigns, he is robed in majesty' Psalm 93:1.	'Great God of all the nations of the world, rule in your mighty power, in justice, in mercy, and in peace. Bring justice and peace in this world.'
Jesus said, 'You shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God' Matthew 4:4.	'Lord Jesus, teach your followers to live as you lived, on every word of God in the Bible. Feed us, teach us, encourage us, warn us, rebuke us and train in godliness and good ministry by this heavenly food.'
'If we confess our sins, God will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9.	'Dear heavenly Father, I have sinned against you. Please forgive and cleanse me as you have promised, by the blood of Jesus.'
'I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.' Matthew 8:11.	'Gracious God, please do what your Son Jesus has promised. Even in our time, bring many people from every nation and language into your kingdom, as they hear and read of the Lord Jesus, and his saving death on the cross and mighty resurrection. Bring them to faith in Christ, repentance for their sins, gospel hope and assurance, and maturity in Christ.'

You can either begin with a Bible verse, and turn it into a prayer or base a prayer on it: or you can think of something for which you want to pray, and then find a Bible verse as a basis for the prayer.

Why not create your own list!