

The Sure Word of God

by Chuck Smith

God's word is sure and always keeps its promises, leading to eternal life for those who follow Him and shame and everlasting contempt for those who do not.

Duration: 34:30

Scripture: Numbers 23:19, Psalm 33:6-9, Isaiah 40:8, Matthew 24:35, Titus 1:2

Topics: "Word Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the certainty and fulfillment of God's promises. He uses the example of God's judgment upon Jerusalem to illustrate this point. The preacher highlights that God's pronouncement of judgment is accompanied by a threefold confirmation: 'I have spoken it. It shall come to pass. I will do it.' He emphasizes that God does not change His mind or spare those who deserve judgment. The preacher also emphasizes the importance of choosing the right path in life, one that leads to everlasting life rather than shame and contempt. He warns against the danger of a comfortable gospel and encourages listeners to put their faith and trust in God's sure word. The sermon concludes with a blessing and a prayer for God's guidance and peace.

Transcript

And shall we stand to read the Word of God? Psalm 33. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright. Praise the Lord with heart, sing unto Him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

Sing unto Him a new song, play skillfully with a loud noise. For the word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in truth. He loveth righteousness and judgment.

The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea as an heap.

He layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

For He spoke, and it was done. He commanded, and it stood fast. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught.

He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance.

The Lord looketh from heaven. He beholdeth all the sons of men. In the place of His habitation He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

He fashioneth their hearts alike. He considereth all their works. There is no king save by the multitude of an host.

A mighty man is not delivered by much strength. A horse is a vain thing for safety, and neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy.

To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waiteth for the Lord. He is our help and our shield.

For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us according as we hope in Thee. Let's pray.

Father, as we come before You today, we thank You for Your Word, and for the certainty, the steadfastness of Your Word, that what You have said You have brought to pass, and You will bring to pass. Lord, may we put our trust in You and in Your Word, that we might have that blessed assurance, knowing, Lord, that Your Word is steadfast and true. Bless, now we pray, the study of Your Word.

Open our hearts, Lord, to the things of the Spirit. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

You may be seated. Tonight we will be going through Ezekiel chapters 23 and 24 as we continue our journey through the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation. So we encourage you to study over these chapters and join with us tonight, and hopefully any questions that might arise in your mind as you are reading will be answered for you tonight as we go through chapters 23 and 24 of Ezekiel.

This morning we'd like to draw your attention to the 24th chapter, verse 14, where we read, I the Lord have spoken it, it shall come to pass. I will do it, I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent. According to Thy ways and according to Thy doings shall they judge Thee, saith the Lord God.

If God has said something, what do you suppose are the probabilities of that coming to pass? It might interest some of you to know that up to this point, God is batting a thousand percent. At the time of Solomon, when Solomon as he was dedicating the temple, he said, Blessed be the Lord that has given rest to his people Israel according to all that he promised. There has not failed one word of all his good promise which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

And since the days of Solomon and his declaration that not one word has failed of all of his promises, we can say today, some 3,000 years later, that what Solomon said is true today as it was in the days that Solomon spoke it. Not one word of God has failed. We notice here in chapter 24 that Ezekiel is prophesying the siege, the final siege and the destruction of Jerusalem.

We note at the beginning of the chapter, verse 1, he is careful to give to us the date of this prophecy. Again, in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came unto

me saying. So it's the ninth year of the reign of King Zedekiah.

It is the tenth month and the tenth day of the month. When you go back to 2 Kings, chapter 25, verse 1, this very date is given to you also, the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year of King Zedekiah. And we are told there in 2 Kings that this is the day that the siege of Jerusalem began by the Babylonian army.

Israel, Jerusalem was about 500 miles away. Ezekiel didn't have a telephone, nor did he have radio transmissions, but on this very day he had the word of the Lord. And the very day that the siege of Jerusalem began, he gave this prophecy in chapter 24 in which he describes the siege and the success of the siege of the city of Jerusalem by the Babylonian army.

Could not have known this except by the spirit of the Lord. It would be weeks before a runner could come and inform the people that the siege of Jerusalem had begun. But there in Babylon, he is informing the people of the beginning of this siege.

Ezekiel was fond of using illustrations. And here he set out a great cauldron. He put water in it.

He built a fire under it. He cut up an animal and put it into the boiling water with all of the bones, with all of the meat. As it was boiling, of course, the scum formed, but he didn't wipe away the scum.

He continued the fire until the water was all boiled out, until the meat was burned to char, until the bones were charred. As he is describing to the people that God, because of the scum, because of the sin, was going to establish this siege against Jerusalem, and Jerusalem would be burned and would be destroyed because of the sin of the people. As God pronounces this judgment upon Jerusalem, he said, And I, the Lord, have spoken it.

It shall come to pass. I will do it. I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent.

According to thy ways, according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God. The Lord here gives a threefold confirmation of the truth of this matter. I have spoken it.

It shall come to pass. I will do it. There is no changing.

I will not go back. I will not spare. I will not repent or change.

What can you say that history tells us? It tells us that the siege of Jerusalem began on that very day, the ninth year of King Zedekiah, on the tenth day of the tenth month. And that Jerusalem fell to the Babylonian army, and that they were utterly destroyed. Those that survived physically were taken as captives.

God was faithful in keeping his word. And God is faithful to keep his word. That fact should bring you either great comfort or great terror.

It all depends on how you are living. If you've put your trust in the Lord, then what great comfort it is to know that God will indeed do what he said. If you've gone against the word of God, if you are living in sin, then you should be terrified by the fact that God always keeps his word.

In Psalm 91 it said, The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God. God keeps his word. The wicked shall indeed be turned into hell.

Jesus, who knew more and should know more than any person on the subject of hell, spoke about and warned about the judgment of hell more than any other writer in the Bible. Just one of the many examples of the declarations of Jesus concerning hell is found in Mark 9.45. Where Jesus said, If your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to be crippled through life than having two feet and to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched, where the maggots do not die and the fire is not quenched.

Some people say, Well, I don't believe in hell. Whether or not you believe it doesn't alter its existence. There may be aspects of it that I don't understand.

The torment and all. I don't fully understand. I don't pretend to fully understand.

But I take God's word for it. I believe what God's word says is true. There are many skeptics who sort of scorn the idea or the thought of punishment for the wicked.

But I will take the word of Jesus over the word of any skeptic. And if Jesus declares that it is better for you to be crippled through life than having two feet and to be cast into hell, then I believe that it is so, though I may not fully understand it. The Bible says, Let God be true and every man a liar.

Now, the Bible does affirm the certainty of God's word. What God has said is true and it shall come to pass. In Numbers 23, 19, we read, God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent.

What he has said, shall he not do it? What he has spoken, shall he not make it good? Isaiah wrote, The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of God shall stand forever. Jesus said, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Paul wrote, In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began.

Peter wrote, In hope of eternal life, but the word of the Lord endures forever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. In Ezekiel 36, we'll be getting there towards August, we read where God said, For I will take you, that is the Jews in the last days, from among the heathen. I will gather you out of all countries.

I will bring you into your own land. And the desolate land will be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that pass by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden.

And the waste and the desolate and the ruined cities are fenced and are inhabited. And then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I, the Lord, build the ruined places and plant that which was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken it and I will do it.

I like it when God sort of brags. He be sure. Now, had you gone to Israel a hundred years ago and you had seen Israel at that time, you would have said, God didn't keep his word.

For just a hundred years ago, the land was still very barren. If you read Mark Twain's account of his visit to Israel, as he talks about the barren wilderness and just how barren the land actually was. A hundred years ago, you would have said, well, God may have said it, but he sure didn't do it.

But if you go to Israel today and you see that land, which was once desolate and you see it today, as it is, as the garden of Eden, if you'd see all of the beautiful orchards, all of the fields of grain, if you would see how the land has been developed agriculturally, as you would see the trees covering the mountains and

all, you would have to say, he did do it. God said it, he did it. And you can see it today.

It's a witness. It's a testimony of the fact that God does keep his word. Ezekiel wrote these words in about 587 BC.

So a little over 2,500 years ago, and now they are fulfilled within the last 50 years or so. It is amazing to look at that land and see how God did exactly what he said he would do there in Ezekiel, as he prophesied in chapter six, the recovery of the land. I think of all of the wonderful things that Jesus has said, the promises that he has given to us, who will believe in him and follow him.

And what blessed assurance it brings to my heart to know that he will keep his word. Jesus said, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever would believe in him would not perish, but have everlasting life. Jesus said, let not your heart be troubled.

You believe in God, believe also in me. For in my father's house there are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you.

And I'm going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, then I will come again, and I will receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. And where I'm going, you know, and the way you know.

Thomas said unto him, Lord, we don't know where you're going. How can we know the way? And Jesus answered and said, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no man can come to the Father but by me. The word, the promise of Jesus.

If I go away, I will come again and receive you unto myself. And when I read these words of Jesus, I'm encouraged because I know that God keeps his word. His promises do not fail.

Because of my believing in Jesus, I have the promise that I will not perish but have everlasting life. Because I believe in Jesus, I have the promise that he is coming again to receive me unto himself, that where he is, there I might be also. In the book of Revelation, as Jesus is addressing the church, he gives many promises to those within the church that would overcome.

He gave many warnings to those who were going sideways, those who were not keeping his word, and many warnings to them. But to those who would overcome, he said that he would give to them to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. He said they would not be hurt of the second death.

He said that he would give them hidden manna to eat, and give them a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows except he that receives it. He said that he would give to them power over the nations. He said that he would confess their name before the Father and before his angels.

He said that he would write upon him the name of God, and the name of the city of God, which is the New Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven from God, and he would write upon him his new name. Then he also promised that he would grant to them to sit with him on his throne, even as he also overcame and has sat down with the Father on his throne. The Bible teaches that there are two basic paths that you can take in life, that one of them leads to eternal life, the other leads to eternal damnation.

Daniel wrote about just the two destinies for all men. He said, many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. The path that you are walking, where does it lead? There is a path to everlasting life.

There is a path that leads to shame and everlasting contempt. As we journey through life, all of us one day come to that cross in the road where we must make our decision as to which path we will take. The one is the path of the cross, the denial of self, that I might live as Jesus would have me to live.

To come after him, he said, you must deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow him. This is one of the things that I see as a danger in many of the churches today that are preaching a comfortable gospel. It isn't that what they say is necessarily wrong, but it's what they don't say that deceives people.

You don't hear of self-denial. You don't hear of taking up the cross. You don't hear of following Jesus fully and completely.

But that's what God's Word tells us we must do. The other path is a comfortable path. It's the path of self-indulgence, living to please yourself, the chief goal of life, your pleasure, your ease, and you are the center of your life.

The one path, Jesus, is the center of your life. In this path, you are the center of your life. But the one leads to everlasting life.

In Revelation 22 verse 1, he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. And in the middle of the street and on either side of the river, there was a tree of life which bore twelve different fruit, and it yielded her fruit every month. And the leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it. And his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. There shall be no night there, and there's no need for candle, neither the light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light, and they shall reign forever and ever.

And then in verse 6, he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true. God keeps his word. What God has declared, God will surely do.

As he said, I have spoken it, it shall come to pass, I will do it. He affirms that he will keep his word. The other path leads to, as Daniel said, shame and everlasting contempt.

Today, each one of us are walking a path through life. It would be well, it would be wise if each of us would carefully examine the path that we are on and ask ourselves the question, where does this path lead me? Does it lead me to everlasting life, or does it lead me to shame and everlasting contempt? God will keep his word one way or the other. Which path are you on? Father, help us this day to take a close examination of ourselves.

For you have told us that we should judge ourselves. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged by you. Help us, Lord, to take a look at our lives and the path that we are on.

Help us, Lord, to look at the center of our lives. Is Christ the center of our life, or are we living a self-centered life? Help us, Lord, to honestly evaluate and judge so that we might be sure, be certain, that

we are on the path of life. We know that straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to everlasting life.

May we be willing, Lord, to walk that narrow way as we deny self to take up the cross that we might follow you. Lord, we pray that today those that are on the broad path leading to destruction might be awakened by your Holy Spirit, might realize, Lord, where their path is leading. And may they, Lord, change from that path to the path that you have set before us.

For you are the way, the truth, and the life. May we know, Lord, the truth and experience that life. In Jesus' name, amen.

Shall we stand? The pastors are down here at the front to minister to you today who want to make sure that you're on the right path, that the path that you are trotting on today is going to lead you into the presence of God and the glory of God's eternal kingdom. If there's any question, any doubt in your mind, resolve those doubts today. Because when it comes to your eternal destiny, you don't want there to be any doubt at all as to where you are going to spend eternity.

Make certain God's Word is sure. What God has said, he will surely do. And if you will put your faith and trust in him, he will surely see you on into his kingdom.

May the Lord be with you, watch over, and guide, protect, and keep you in his love. And may you go with that blessed assurance today. You're on the right path, the path that leads to our Heavenly Father and his eternal kingdom.

The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee. And be gracious unto thee.

And be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace.

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