

CHARLES H. SPURGEON

Revised & Updated by Tim Chester

The
PROMISES
of
GOD

*A New Edition of the Classic Devotional
Based on the English Standard Version*

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

For as long as I can remember, my father has had a plaster bust of Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–1892) in his study. Like my father and me, Spurgeon was a Reformed Baptist pastor, and Spurgeon has always been one of our heroes. When, in 2017, my father preached his last sermon, he passed the bust on to me. So, as I write these words, Spurgeon is looking down on me.

Known as “the Prince of Preachers,” Spurgeon attracted large crowds, often speaking to over ten thousand people at a time before the days of amplification. His preaching was characterized by the directness of his address and the vividness of his language. In 1861, his congregation moved to the specially-built Metropolitan Tabernacle with seating for five thousand people and standing room for a further thousand. It would remain his base for the next thirty-eight years until his death in 1892.

Spurgeon founded a pastor's college to train church planters, opposed slave ownership, and opened an orphanage. He also fiercely opposed liberal theology. He paid a price for this workload and the controversies it brought, suffering for many years physically with gout and emotionally with depression. It is to these struggles that he alludes in his preface for this volume.

Spurgeon reached a still wider audience through his writings. His sermons were transcribed by stenographers as he spoke and on sale for a penny the following day. Among his many works was *The Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith*.

It was not Spurgeon's first book of daily devotional readings. In 1865, he published *Morning by Morning*, followed three years later by *Evening by Evening*. Soon they were combined into *Morning and Evening*, selling over 230,000 copies during his lifetime and many more since.

Twenty years or so later, Spurgeon wrote *The Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith* as a follow-up. And this was my father's favorite. He used to read it to our family during my childhood.

In *The Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith*, Spurgeon likens the promises of God in the Bible to checks (or "cheques" as Spurgeon himself would have spelled it). A check is a promise in written form. It promises to give the recipient the stated sum whenever they present it at a bank. The promises of God, says Spurgeon, are like checks waiting to be cashed in "the bank of faith."

In 2003, Crossway published an edition of *Morning and Evening* updated by Alistair Begg using the English Standard Version of the Bible. I have taken the liberty of doing the same with *The Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith*. I have replaced archaic words, shortened sentences, used modern word ordering, and added references to biblical allusions. I have also changed the title, partly because checks are becoming dated and partly to prevent a fight with my publishers over the spelling of "cheque" (the UK spelling) and "check" (the US spelling)! Apart from this, the content is the same. Only occasionally have I retained an archaic phrase to retain the poetic power of the original text. My aim has been to let Spurgeon speak to a new generation. Why? Not as an historical curiosity. But so the promise-making and promise-keeping God of the Bible speaks words of comfort to his people. As Spurgeon says in his preface,

I have written out of my own heart with the view of comforting their hearts. . . . May the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, inspire the people of the Lord with fresh faith!

Many thanks to Richard Chester (my father) and Tamsin Faiers for reading my draft to ensure it sounded contemporary while retaining the "voice" of Spurgeon.

Tim Chester
2018

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

A promise from God is like a check payable to order. It is given to the believer with the view of delivering to him some good thing. We are not meant to read it at our leisure and then forget about it. No, we are to treat the promise as a reality, as someone treats a check.

We are to take the promise and endorse it with our own name by personally receiving it as true. We are to accept it by faith as our own. We seal the deal by believing that God is true and true to this particular word of promise. We go further, believing that we have the blessing by having the sure promise of it. And therefore we put our names to it to acknowledge the receipt of the blessing.

This done, we must present the promise to the Lord in faith, as someone presents a check at the counter of the bank. We must plead it by prayer, expecting to have it fulfilled. If we have come to heaven's bank at the right date, we will receive the promised amount at once. If the date should happen to be in the future, we must patiently wait until it arrives. But meanwhile we may count the promise as money, for heaven's bank is sure to pay when the due time arrives.

Some fail to place the endorsement of faith upon the check and so they get nothing. Others are slack in presenting it, and they also receive nothing. This is not the fault of the promise, but of those who do not use it in a common-sense, business-like manner.

God has given no pledge that he will not redeem and encouraged no hope that he will not fulfill. To help my brothers and sisters to believe this, I have prepared this little volume. The sight of the promises themselves is good for the eyes of faith. The more we study the words of grace, the more grace we will receive from the words. To these encouraging scriptures I have added testimonies of my own, the fruit of trial and experience. I believe all the promises of God, but many of them I have personally tried

Author's Preface

and proved. I have seen that they are true, for they have been fulfilled to me. This, I trust, may be encouraging to the young and not without comfort to those who are older. One person's experience may be a great help to another. This is why the man of God of old wrote, "I sought the LORD, and he answered me" and "This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him" (Ps. 34:4, 6).

I commenced these daily thoughts when I was wading in the surf of controversy. Since then I have been cast into waters "deep enough to swim in" (Ezek. 47:5) which, but for God's upholding hand, would have proved waters to drown in. I have endured tribulation from many sources. Sharp bodily pain succeeded mental depression, and this was accompanied both by bereavement and affliction in someone as dear to me as life itself. The waters rolled in continually, wave upon wave. I do not mention this to win your sympathy, but simply to let the reader see that I am no dry-land sailor. I have traveled many times across those stormy oceans. I know the roll of the waves and the rush of the winds. Never were the promises of Jehovah so precious to me as during this time. Some of them I never understood until now. I had not yet reached the date at which the promise matured, for I myself was not mature enough to perceive their meaning.

How much more wonderful is the Bible to me now than it was a few months ago! In obeying the Lord and bearing his reproach outside the camp (Heb. 13:13), I have not received new promises, but the result to me is much the same as if I had done so. For the old promises have opened up to me with richer stores.

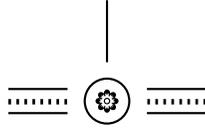
Oh, that I might comfort some of my Master's servants! I have written out of my own heart with the view of comforting their hearts. I would say to them in their trials: "My brothers and sisters, God is good. He will not forsake you. He will bear you through. There is a promise prepared for your present emergencies. And if you will believe it and plead it at the mercy seat through Jesus Christ, you will see the hand of the Lord stretched out to help you. Everything else will fail, but his Word never will. He has been so faithful to me in countless instances that I must en-

courage you to trust him. I should be ungrateful to God and unkind to you if I did not do so.”

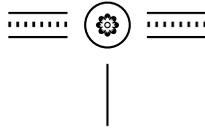
May the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, inspire the people of the Lord with fresh faith! I know that, without his divine power, none of what I say will be of any help. But, under his life-giving influence, even the humblest testimony will fortify feeble knees and strengthen weak hands. God is glorified when his servants trust him implicitly. We cannot be too much like children before our heavenly Father. Our young ones never question our will or our power. Instead, having received a promise from their father, they rejoice in the prospect of its fulfillment, never doubting that it is as sure as the sun. May many readers, whom I may never see, discover the duty and delight of such childlike trust in God while they are reading the little bit which I have prepared for each day in the year.

May our Lord Jesus accept this, my service for his sheep and lambs, from his unworthy servant.

Charles H. Spurgeon
1888



JANUARY



JANUARY 1

I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.

Genesis 3:15

This is the first promise to fallen humanity. It contains the whole gospel and the essence of the covenant of grace, God's eternal plan to save his people. It has been in good measure fulfilled. The seed of the woman, who is our Lord Jesus, had his heel bruised, and a terrible bruising it was. How much more terrible will be the final bruising of the serpent's head! This was mostly done when Jesus took away sin, vanquished death, and broke the power of Satan. But it awaits a still fuller accomplishment at our Lord's second coming and in the day of judgment.

To us the promise stands as a prophecy that we will be afflicted by the powers of evil in our bodily life, and thus bruised in our heel. But we will triumph in Christ, who sets his foot on the old serpent's head. Throughout this year we may have to learn part of this promise by experience as we experience the temptations of the devil and the unkindness of the ungodly, who are the devil's offspring. They may so bruise us that we are forced to limp with our sore heels. But let us grasp the second part of the text and we will not be dismayed. By faith let us rejoice that we will yet reign in Christ Jesus, the woman's offspring.

JANUARY 2

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

Romans 16:20

This promise follows yesterday's promise. It is clear that we are to be like our covenant Head, Jesus, not only in his being bruised in his heel, but also in his conquest of the evil one. Even under *our* feet is the old dragon to be bruised. The Roman believers were suffering from conflict in the church. But their God was "the God of peace," and he gave rest to their souls. The archenemy tripped up the feet of the unwary and deceived the hearts of the simple. But he would get the worst of it, for he would be trodden down by those whom he had troubled. This victory would not come to the people of God through their own skill or power, but God himself would bruise Satan. Though it would be under their feet, yet the bruising would be through the Lord alone.

Let us bravely tread upon the tempter! Not only lesser spirits, but the prince of darkness himself must fall before us. In unquestioning confidence in God, let us look for speedy victory. "Soon!" Happy word! *Soon* we will set our foot on the old serpent! What a joy to crush evil! What dishonor to Satan to have his head bruised by human feet! Let us by faith in Jesus tread the tempter down.

JANUARY 3

The land on which you lie I will give
to you and to your offspring.

Genesis 28:13

This promise is no one's private possession. It belongs not to one saint, but to all believers. If, my brother or sister, you can in faith lie down upon a promise and take your rest upon it, it is yours. Where Jacob came and stayed and rested, there he took possession. Stretching out his weary length upon the ground, with stones for his pillow, he little realized that he was entering into ownership of the land. Yet this is what happened. He saw in his dream that wonderful ladder which, for all true believers, unites earth and heaven. And surely where the foot of the ladder stood he must have a right to the soil, for otherwise he could not reach the divine stairway. All the promises of God are "Yes" and "Amen" in Christ Jesus. And, as he is ours, so every promise is ours if we lie down upon it in restful faith.

Come, weary one, use your Lord's words as your pillow. Lie down in peace. Dream only of him. Jesus is your ladder of light. See the angels coming and going on him between your soul and your God. And be sure that the promise is your own God-given inheritance. So it will not be robbery for you to take it for yourself, as if it had been spoken *especially to you*.

JANUARY 4

I will make you lie down in safety.

Hosea 2:18

Yes, *the saints are to have peace*. The passage from which this gracious word is taken speaks of peace “with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground” (Hos. 2:18). This is peace with earthly enemies, mysterious evils, and little annoyances! Any of these might keep us from lying down, but none of them will do so. The Lord will utterly destroy those things that threaten his people: “I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land” (v. 18). Peace will be profound indeed when all the instruments of discord are broken to pieces.

With this peace will come rest. “For he gives to his beloved sleep” (Ps. 127:2). Fully supplied and divinely quieted, believers lie down in calm repose.

This rest will be a safe one. It is one thing to lie down, but quite another to “lie down in safety.” We are brought to the land of promise, the house of the Father, the chamber of love, and the heart of Christ: surely we may now “lie down in safety.” It is safer for a believer to lie down in peace than to sit up and worry. “He makes me lie down in green pastures” (Ps. 23:1). We never rest till the Comforter makes us lie down.

JANUARY 5

I will strengthen you.

Isaiah 41:10

When called to serve or to suffer, we take stock of our strength. And we find it to be less than we thought and less than we need. But do not let our hearts sink within us while we have such a word as this to fall back on. For it guarantees us all that we can possibly need. God has strength omnipotent. That strength he can share with us, and his promise is that he will do so. He will be the food of our souls and the health of our hearts. And so he will give us strength. There is no telling how much power God can put into a person. When divine strength comes, human weakness is no longer a hindrance.

Do we not remember periods of labor and trial in which we received such special strength that we wondered at ourselves? In the midst of danger we were calm, under bereavement we were resigned, in slander we were self-contained, and in sickness we were patient. The fact is, God gives unexpected strength when unusual trials come upon us. We rise out of our feeble selves. Cowards play the man, foolish ones receive wisdom, and the silent receive words to speak at the very moment they need them. My own weakness makes me shrink, but God's promise makes me brave. Lord, "strengthen me according to your word" (Ps. 119:28).

JANUARY 6

I will help you.

Isaiah 41:10

Yesterday's promise secured us strength for what we have to do, but this promise guarantees us help in situations where we cannot act alone. The Lord says, "I will help you." Strength on the inside is supplemented by help from the outside. God can raise up for us allies in our warfare if it seems good in his sight. And, even if he does not send us human assistance, he himself will be at our side, and this is better still. Our Ally is better than legions of mortal helpers.

His help is timely: he is "a very present help in trouble" (Ps. 46:1). His help is very wise: he knows how to give each person help suited just for them. His help is most effective, though the help of people is empty. His help is more than help, for he bears all the burden and supplies all the need. "The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" (Ps. 118:6).

Because he has already been our help, we feel confidence in him for the present and the future. Our prayer is, "O LORD, be my helper!" (Ps. 30:10). And our experience is, "The Spirit helps us in our weakness" (Rom. 8:26). Our expectation is, "I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD" (Ps. 121:1-2). And our song will soon be, "You, LORD, have helped me" (Ps. 86:17).

JANUARY 7

You will see greater things than these.

John 1:50

This promise was spoken to a childlike believer who was ready to accept Jesus as the Son of God, the King of Israel, after just one convincing piece of argument. Those who are willing to see shall see. It is because we shut our eyes that we become so sadly blind.

We have seen much already. The Lord has shown us great and unsearchable things for which we praise his name. But there are greater truths in his Word, greater depths of experience, greater heights of fellowship, greater works of usefulness, greater discoveries of power and love and wisdom. These we are yet to see if we are willing to believe our Lord. The capacity to invent false doctrine is ruinous, but the power to see the truth is a blessing. Heaven will be opened to us, the way there will be made clear to us in the Son of Man, and the angelic movement between the upper and the lower kingdoms will be revealed to us. Let us keep our eyes open toward spiritual objects, and expect to see more and more. Let us believe that our lives will not drivel down into nothing. But instead let us believe that we will be always growing, seeing greater and still greater things, until we behold the Great God himself, and never again lose sight of him.

JANUARY 8

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Matthew 5:8

Purity, even purity of heart, is the main thing to be aimed at. We need to be made clean on the inside through the Spirit and the Word, and then we will be clean on the outside by consecration and obedience. There is a close connection between the affections and the understanding. If we love evil, we cannot understand that which is good. If the heart is foul, the eye will be darkened. How can those who love unholy things see a holy God?

What a privilege it is to see God! A glimpse of him is heaven below! In Christ Jesus the pure in heart see the Father. We see him, his truth, his love, his purpose, his sovereignty, and his covenant character. Yes, we see God himself in Christ. But this is only apprehended as sin is kept out of the heart. Only those who aim at godliness can cry, “My eyes are ever toward the LORD” (Ps. 25:15). The desire of Moses, “Please show me your glory” (Ex. 33:18), can only be fulfilled in us as we purify ourselves from all iniquity. “We shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure” (1 John 3:2–3). The enjoyment of present fellowship and the hope of this coming vision of God are compelling motives for purity of heart and life.

Lord, make us pure in heart that we may see you!

JANUARY 9

Whoever brings blessing will be enriched.

Proverbs 11:25

If I want my soul to flourish, I must not hoard up my stores, but must distribute to the poor. To be tight and miserly is the world's way to prosperity, but it is not God's way. For God says, "One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want" (Prov. 11:24). Faith's way of gaining is giving. I must try this again and again. And I may expect that as much prosperity as will be good for me will come to me as a gracious reward for a generous course of action.

Of course, I may not be sure of growing rich. I will "be enriched," but not with more riches than my soul can bear. Too many riches might weigh me down, tethering my heart to the treasures of this world or tying me down so I am no longer nimble in the service of God. Just as too much food can lead to heart disease, so too many riches can lead to soul disease. We must be learn to be content with the earthly treasure which God in his wisdom allows us to enjoy and look forward to the heavenly treasure that awaits the children of God.

But there is a mental and spiritual wealth which I greatly desire. And these come as the result of generous thoughts toward my God, his church, and my fellow men. Let me not be stingy, lest I starve my heart. Let me be bountiful and generous; for in this way I will be like my Lord. He gave himself for me: Will I grudge him anything?

“God has given no pledge that he will not redeem and encouraged no hope that he will not fulfill.”

CHARLES SPURGEON



For over 150 years, Charles Spurgeon’s classic daily devotional on God’s promises has comforted the hearts of God’s people. For each day of the year, Spurgeon reflects on a specific promise of God from Scripture that strengthened his heart in times of severe depression and suffering. Each daily meditation testifies to the goodness, faithfulness, and power of God.

In this volume, Tim Chester helps Spurgeon speak to a new generation, updating archaic words, shortening sentences, and streamlining sentence structure—all without losing Spurgeon’s passionate and pastoral voice. These devotional readings will inspire you with fresh faith in the promise-making and promise-keeping God of the Bible.



CHARLES H. SPURGEON (1834–1892) was an English Baptist pastor for thirty-eight years, attracting large crowds to New Park Street Chapel and then the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London. As the nineteenth century’s most prolific preacher and writer, Spurgeon’s legacy continues today.

TIM CHESTER (PhD, University of Wales) is a faculty member of Crosslands and a pastor with Grace Church, Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire. He is an author or coauthor of over forty books, including *A Meal with Jesus*; *Reforming Joy*; and, with Michael Reeves, *Why the Reformation Still Matters*.

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